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WSU accepts Smith Teaching and Learning Grant applications through April 1

PULLMAN, Wash.—Washington State University faculty with innovative ideas to enhance teaching and learning are encouraged to apply by April 1 for a Smith Teaching and Learning Grant of up to $5,000, announced Mary F. Wack, vice provost for academic engagement and student achievement.

There are three focus areas of this year’s awards: increasing course completion by reducing high C-DFW rates (grades of C-minus, D, F, or Withdraw) and/or closing equity gaps; incorporating undergraduate research in lower-division curriculum; and, improving student writing in M courses (Writing in the Major). Proposals should address one of the areas through innovative practices that improve student learning.

“Creative faculty have received dozens of Smith Grant awards over the past two decades, and their diverse projects have resulted in many educational advances and new programs and pedagogies,” said Wack. “Thanks to Smith Grants, thousands of undergraduates have reaped the benefits throughout their educational experience at WSU.

“We expect to receive many excellent proposals this year. It is always invigorating to see what fresh new ideas will come forward.”

Eligibility and procedures

Faculty, including those who are clinical-track and instructors, from all campuses are eligible to submit proposals. Among other qualifications, they must have instructional responsibilities and a half-time or more appointment, with continuing employment in 2020-21.

Applicants cannot have received this grant in the past four years and must be endorsed by their chair. A wide variety of information must be included in each proposal, including a budget showing proposal expenditures, plus an outline of the proposal work to be undertaken and a timetable. Answers must be provided to such questions as, “What pedagogical or curricular issue will be identified, and how does your approach address it?,” “To what departmental undergraduate assessment report does your proposal respond?,” and “What is the scope of impact of this proposal?”

Details are included in the online request for proposal (RFP); frequently-asked questions are noted at the end of the RFP document. Proposal submissions must be electronic and sent to Jeannie Holt at jmholt@wsu.edu by the deadline. Questions can be addressed to Wack at mwack@wsu.edu, or to Holt by email or by phone at 509-335-8044.
Awards announcements

Those selected to receive the awards will get word in late April. The funds can be used as summer salary; benefits are paid from the award amount. Awardees must submit a final project report by Aug. 15, 2021.

The Samuel H. and Patricia W. Smith Teaching and Learning Endowment was established in 2000 when WSU President Smith retired after 15 years of service to the university. The fund’s purpose is to recognize and reward innovative ideas to enhance teaching and learning at WSU.

Complete information is available on the webpage at https://vpue.wsu.edu under the “faculty grants” tab.