

Flexible Learning Departmental Development Grant Opportunities

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Instructional Design Engagement and Support (IDEAS) group are seeking applications for the new FlexLearning Fellows (FLF) program. Funded through the Chancellor's Office, the FLF program will support departments, faculty, and staff interested in developing and implementing flexible learning opportunities. A description of the program and application guidelines are included below.

What is the FlexLearning Fellows (FLF) program?

The FLF program is modeled on other CTL successful programs (e.g., Lilly Teaching Fellows, TBL Fellows, TEACHnology Fellows). However, it differs from past fellowships by taking a departmental approach to teaching innovation. The FLF program acknowledges the role that departments and a range of department members including faculty, staff and students will have in supporting the university's vision to expand flexible learning opportunities (Bayview Alliance, 2017--[Leadership: It Takes a Village \(and Time\) - Bay View Alliance](#)).

The FLF program provides departments the opportunity to identify a path to flexible learning that reflects their unique contexts including their disciplinary focus, degree programs, and students; and provides the participating faculty leaders with a faculty-centered learning community in which they can further their knowledge and skills of flexible pedagogy and, in turn, serve as leaders and models in their department and the university.

What is the application process?

Applications for the FLF program are made by departments (and approved by the department chair or head) rather than individual faculty members.

The proposed project should in some way serve to help the department to support the overall goals identified for flexible learning including:

- Providing students with the flexibility necessary to complete their degrees, certificates or other educational goals;
- Facilitating the ability of students to access courses delivered in any flexible learning modality; and
- Allowing students to seamlessly transition between all forms of learning with approaches and curricular structures determined to be most well-suited for departmental courses, learning goals, and student needs. ([Interim Report on Flexible Learning](#)).

Departments are encouraged to develop proposals that meet the unique needs of their faculty, staff, and students. There are many ways this could be done. For example, departments could target upper division courses that would enable students to take advantage of internships or other off-campus experiences, or expand General Education curriculum to include enrollment by both UWW and university (on-campus) students. These are but two examples, and

departments are encouraged to think broadly and creatively about how best to develop flexible learning opportunities within their contexts.

What are the expectations for the Flexible Learning Fellows?

While program teams can be any size, departments should identify only two faculty leads who will participate directly in the fellows program and provide leadership in support of the departmental goals for Flexible Learning. Those faculty fellows will attend CTL/IDEAS fellowship meetings and trainings, and are expected to share what they learn in the fellowship program with the entire departmental team throughout the fellowship.

The FlexLearning Fellows will work closely with staff in the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Instructional Design, Engagement and Support (IDEAS) group as a learning community to:

- Explore and share models of best practices for flexible learning teaching and learning
- Build departmental and disciplinary expertise within a supportive learning community
- Identify flexible learning approaches that are most appropriate for their departmental flexible learning projects and the resources needed to support their departmental projects
- Explore course design models for flexible learning to support departmental and/or course needs

CTL/IDEAS staff will meet bi-weekly with the FL Fellows throughout the academic year to:

- Provide resources on best practices of instructional design and pedagogies for flexible learning
- Assist faculty in the implementation of the departmental projects, including the evaluation of departmental proposal goals and objectives
- Facilitate departments in accessing other campus resources and supports needed for departmental projects (e.g., information technology, classroom audiovisual services, classroom scheduling assistance, libraries)
- Help departments to explore and apply the instructional and technology frameworks needed for flexible learning courses (e.g., Moodle course design resources, Echo video repositories, interactive H5P elements)
- Help faculty identify and address issues of equity and access related to their program designs

Project Proposal Guidelines

Proposal Narrative (3 - 5 pp.)

Departments are asked to submit a project proposal that outlines how their department will develop and implement flexible learning courses. The proposed activities should be aligned with the overall campus vision for flexible learning (see Chancellor's white paper, and reports from the Flexible Learning Task force [here](#)) and identify short term objectives attainable by Spring

2022 and overall project objectives achievable by the end of the funding period (summer 2023). Departments are encouraged to submit projects that are appropriate to their individual contexts.

Budget and Budget Rationale (1 page rationale; budget spreadsheet)

Typically budgets for departmental projects are not expected to exceed \$30,000. However, departments proposing projects with high impact and scope and/or departmental proposals that include other funding sources may have a higher budget. FLF funding may be allocated flexibly in ways that align with the departmental project goals. For example, it may be used for additional compensation for the two FL fellows or specific course instructors; course buyouts; staff support; undergraduate or graduate teaching assistants; or to support course development, specific technologies, or other resources needed to carry out the project.

The budget should be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet with a 1-page budget rationale.

The primary commitment of the department's two Faculty Fellows is the 2021 - 2022 academic year. However, the project budget may extend through the end of fiscal year 2023.

Proposal Checklist

Full proposals should include:

- Department head approval and statement indicating how this project aligns with long term departmental plans (1 pp.)
- The identification of two FLF faculty nominees, and a brief bio of each.
- Proposal narrative (3 - 5 pp.) detailing how the departmental flexible learning option aligns with the university's vision for flexible learning and identifying short-term objectives attainable by spring 2020, longer-term goals achievable by the project conclusion, and how flexible learning will be sustained in the future, including the metrics which will be used to evaluate the goals (e.g., overall enrollment in flexible learning courses, percentage of departmental courses adapted to flexible learning, impact on time to degree, diversified enrollment).
- Budget and budget rationale (1 page rationale, plus Excel spreadsheet)

Project proposals will be due mid-September with a project start date of September 30, 2021. The funding period will be September 2021 through May 2023. Faculty fellow participation will be for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Proposal Review Criteria

- Alignment of department project with campus goals for flexible learning
- Potential impact of the departmental flexible learning option (e.g., enrollment capacity, impact on degree completion)
- Potential scope of the flexible learning option (course offerings, degree requirements)
- Project feasibility in meeting short term objectives and project goals

- Project sustainability (how the flexible learning options will be maintained after the funding period)
- Quality of flexible learning options (the degree to which flexible learning course offerings and/or programs provide students to access courses through a suite of choices in terms of mode, place and pace).
- Leveraging of existing departmental expertise in flexible learning