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Request For Proposals: Engaged Department, Cluster, or Faculty Interest Group Grant Program

Engaged Department Institute

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Engaged Department, Cluster, or Faculty Interest Group Grant Program

University of Southern Maine

Submission Deadline: June 15, 2015

We are pleased to announce the availability of funding through the Metropolitan University Initiative to support departments or faculty groups that wish to develop or strengthen research- or teaching- focused *university/community engagement initiatives* for faculty and/or students. ***Grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to 5 departments or faculty groups to plan, establish, implement, and evaluate strategic initiatives that advance the integration of public engagement into the department's/cluster's research and teaching activities.*** *Additional support monies may be available to support high-impact practices during the implementation phase.*

Purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to advance the institutionalization of public engagement at the University of Southern Maine by furthering the integration of public engagement into the programmatic features of the department or faculty group. Through this initiative, a set of “engaged departments or clusters” will be established. An *engaged department or faculty* is one that: utilizes public engagement as a strategy to achieve key academic goals for students and faculty; encourages and supports high quality community-based research and engaged scholarship among faculty and/or students; incorporates public engagement into academic coursework to enhance student learning and development; and/or supports collaborative research and teaching activities between members of the department/faculty group and members of the community.

Focus

This engaged department/cluster initiative supports various approaches to public engagement that include, but are not limited to, community-based research studies, academic service-learning courses, internships, community-based participatory action research studies, issue-focused clinical practica, and community-based capstone experiences. The development of engaged department/cluster activities under this grant program might involve, but are not limited to, the following institutionalization activities: developing and piloting curricular materials that help better align community-based courses with overarching departmental or faculty group learning goals for students; supporting faculty members or leaders for professional development opportunities that enhance their capacity to do high quality community-engaged research and/or teaching; offering department/faculty-wide retreats that engage faculty, staff, and community partners in strategic planning to further the institutionalization of public engagement within the department's/faculty's work; building the department personnel's understanding of the principles of community-based participatory research; and/or developing instruments or benchmarking tools to assess the progress and outcomes of the department's or faculty's engagement activities.

Key Components

Activities that are part of the *Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program* should include all of the following components:

- (1) an identification of the department's/cluster's key teaching and/or research goals for students and faculty, as appropriate;
- (2) an articulation of some of the ways that public engagement activities can have value added in achieving the departmental/cluster's goals articulated in #1;
- (3) the development of collaborative partnerships with community members (local or global) that are based on producing mutual benefits, reciprocity, and long-term sustainability;
- (4) the development of a strategic, action-focused plan that advances the integration of public engagement into the programmatic features of the department/cluster;
- (5) the implementation of the activities of the action plan developed in #4; and
- (6) an assessment process that benchmarks the institutionalization of public engagement into the department's/cluster's teaching and/or research activities.

Team Criteria and Expectations

Department/Cluster Teams: Awards will be made to 5 *department/cluster teams*. Each team will consist of at least four individuals who represent the department's/cluster's engagement work. Each *team* must include the following members:

- (1) at least one leader (e.g., department chair or chair/cluster designee);
- (2) at least two faculty members from the department/cluster (at least one of whom is a tenure line faculty member); and
- (3) at least one other member, including but not limited to other faculty members, department staff members, students, and community partners.

The members of each of the selected teams will participate as a cohort in a three-phased, 18-month long program that includes: (1) *Planning and Development* of a strategic action plan for advancing public engagement within the department/cluster; (2) *Implementation* of the action steps within the plan; and (3) *Assessment and Reporting* to ascertain the strengths and limitations of the implementation activities, to identify lessons learned that can be shared with others, and to provide some documentation of the different approaches departments/clusters use to advance public engagement.

Planning and Development (Summer-Fall 2015):

The members of the five teams will have a mandatory meeting in August 2015 on action planning for public engagement institutionalization. This first meeting will explore the essential elements of high quality public engagement, as it pertains to advancing the research and teaching goals of the department/cluster. This meeting will conclude with each team's initiation of a preliminary *Engaged Department/Cluster Institutionalization Plan*. This plan will articulate goals to be accomplished and key action steps to be implemented to achieve each department's identified public engagement institutionalization goals. Following this first meeting, each department team will work during Fall 2015 semester to flesh out and refine their *Engaged Department/Cluster Institutionalization Plan*.

During another mandatory meeting, the members of each *engaged department/cluster team* will present their respective action plans and solicit feedback from the group. Each team will then refine its plans and finalize its action steps.

Implementation (Spring 2016 and Fall 2016): Each department/cluster team will implement its action plan during the Spring and Fall, 2016. Two mandatory 90-minute meetings will be held during the year to discuss each group's progress and share helpful materials and information.

Assessment and Reporting: One mandatory final meeting (3 hours) will be held at the end of the Fall 2016 semester to review each team's progress, assess the progress of engagement institutionalization within each department/cluster, and identify next steps.

Expectation and Deliverables

It is expected that the members of each *engaged department/cluster team* will:

- (1) actively participate in all aspects of the engaged department/cluster institute, including participating in the required two day planning meetings, the two 90-minute implementation meetings, and the 3-hour final assessment meeting;
- (2) develop, implement, and refine an engaged department/cluster action plan that will further the integration of public engagement into research and/or teaching activities within the department/cluster;
- (3) participate in pre-post assessments (questionnaires) that measure team members' changes in their understanding of engaged research and teaching and benchmark the department's/cluster's progress in institutionalizing public engagement; and
- (4) submit a brief final report (3-5 pages) at the end of the program that articulates the department's/cluster's experience in this engaged department/cluster initiative.

Funding Priority

Priority for funding will be given to proposals that:

- *offer specific details on *program-wide, cluster-wide* or *department-wide efforts* that will take place to integrate public engagement more fully into the department's/cluster's teaching and/or research activities;
- *include plans to assess the short and/or long-term benefits to faculty, students, the department, and/or the community;
- *articulate the importance of this grant to advance and/or sustain public engagement activities;
- *offer visions for what the department/cluster will look like at the end of the grant period and beyond;
- *use the *engaged department funding* to leverage other resources to support engaged research and engaged teaching.

Funding Criteria

Funds from this grant initiative can be used for any purpose that supports the advancement of the team's engagement action plan. An 18-month budget, against which department teams can charge expenditures, will be allocated in July 2015. However, the actual disbursement of

funds will occur in three phases: 50% of funds after submission of a completed action plan, 25% of funds at the end of the Fall 2015 semester, and 25% of funds at the end Spring 2016, after final reports and documents are submitted.

Application Process

Complete and submit the attached application by 5:00 PM, Monday, June 15, 2015 to: *Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program*, Metropolitan University Initiative, 607 Law or via email (as a PDF document) to Emma Gelsinger <egelsinger@usm.maine.edu> .

Questions: Please direct questions to Lynn Kuzma kuzma@usm.maine.edu

APPLICATION COVER PAGE
Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program

DEPARTMENT(S):

SCHOOL/COLLEGE(S):

Principal Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

Department Chair's Signature of Approval:

Dean's Signature of Approval:

Project Narrative

In a maximum of five pages (single-spaced), please address the following items (bulleted points are acceptable):

1. Describe the department's/cluster's interest in and experience with community-based teaching and/or community-based research. Why does the department/cluster want to integrate community-focused activities more fully into its programmatic features?
2. How would you characterize the support for community-engaged work among members of the department/cluster?
3. Identify a set of institutionalization goals to be addressed within the terms of the grant, and specify the activities that will be implemented to address these goals. Identify measureable outcomes that will indicate that the goals have been accomplished.
4. Explain the rationale for the desired public engagement efforts.
5. How will the department's/cluster's engagement work and/or other work be different as a result of participating in this grant program?
6. Describe how the public engagement institutionalization initiative will advance the research and/or teaching goals and activities within the department/cluster?
7. List the members who will serve on the *engaged department/cluster* team. Include their title, role(s), and their specific duties and responsibilities. Include any specific area of interest, expertise and/or experience in relation to community-engaged teaching or research. Describe why these members are key personnel for the team.
8. Provide a statement that confirms the team's agreement to participate fully in all aspects of the *Engaged Department Grant Program* activities.
9. What strategies will you employ to evaluate the impact of the *engaged department/cluster* project on faculty, students, and/or community?

Budget

In a maximum of two pages (not counting the above pages), please address the following:

1. State the dollar amount requested to be applied to achieve the goals outlined in the project narrative
2. Specify how the funds will be used or allocated. Indicate how budget figures were determined.
3. If appropriate, describe other sources of support for the project goals.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The following review criteria will be used to judge proposals submitted for the Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program.

1. The proposal demonstrates strong interest in and experience with community-based teaching and/or community-based research among members of the department/cluster.
2. A compelling rationale is provided for advancing the institutionalization of community-focused activities into the department's/cluster's programs and activities.
3. The proposed team meets the representation criteria (*one department/cluster leader, two faculty including one tenure-line faculty, and at least one other person who plays an important role in developing an engaged department/cluster*).
4. The departmental/cluster goals that the participating team members will achieve through the Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program are appropriate, clearly stated, and achievable.
5. The proposed action steps to achieve the stated goals are appropriate (given the stated goals and reasonable (given the timeline, resources, etc.).
6. A clear vision is presented for how the department's/cluster's work with engagement will be different as a result of participating in the *Engaged Department/Cluster Grant Program*.
7. The goals of the department's/cluster's public engagement institutionalization plan will further the integration of public engagement into the departments'/cluster's research and/or teaching initiatives.
8. A viable strategy to evaluate the impact of the *engaged department/cluster* initiative on faculty, students, and/or community has been articulated.
9. A set of measurable/observable outcomes that will indicate that the goals have been accomplished are stated.
10. The dollar amount requested is appropriate for the scale and scope of the proposed goals. The use and allocation of funds are appropriate and are related to the goals of the project.
11. Other sources of funding, if appropriate, to support the work of engagement team are identified.