

Grant funding to expand course sharing at the University of Missouri

The University of Missouri System is providing funding to encourage faculty members to share their expertise with other UM campuses. The initiative is designed to encourage the sharing of courses among the four UM campuses to increase options for students, provide opportunities for faculty development leaves, or even expand departmental offerings. In the past, one of the major barriers to sharing courses has been that when students from one campus take courses from another UM campus, the home campus loses tuition fees. Based on the work at other universities, this initiative is designed to promote course sharing and collaborative programs and overcome that barrier.

Grants will be awarded to develop and offer “shared courses” where courses are available to students on at least one other UM campus. The courses could be delivered through conferencing software (e.g. Adobe Connect, WebEx), as a blended or hybrid class, a fully online class, or through other similar methods. A total of \$250,000 is available and awards will be made in the spring of 2014. Proposals will be funded for up to \$10,000* per course. Preference will be given to proposals that tie multiple courses together that can be shared across at least two campuses – thus increasing the overall impact.

Background and course sharing in Missouri and elsewhere:

- The Board of Curators has expressed interest in seeing more collaboration among the UM campuses in sharing courses, faculty, and in developing collaborative degree programs.
- Each of the campuses already has similar arrangements with community partner institutions (e.g., UMSL and Washington University or St. Louis University, MU and Columbia College, etc.)
- Other university systems like the University of Maryland and Penn State have used course sharing or course cooperatives for a number of years (Maryland for over 20 years).
- UM campuses have participated in the Missouri Alliance for Collaborative Education (MACE) - but only on a limited basis.

Guidelines for course sharing:

- Collaborations should be as flexible as possible, not prescriptive and provide flexibility to allow academic programs to decide what will be most efficient.
- Faculty will provide oversight for the shared courses and monitor the quality of the offerings.
- The shared courses should be seen as valuable to the department so the proposals should have the support of the department chair.
- The primary goals of this effort would be to expand course offerings and to share department faculty across campuses. This course sharing initiative can free up faculty time for other activities such as research, teaching additional courses for majors, or to take on special

department or college assignments. In other cases, courses with low enrollments could be offered by enrolling students from other campuses.

Definitions:

Home institution: campus where student is admitted and currently enrolled

Host institution: campus that is offering the course

Shared courses: courses designed to allow students from other UM campuses to enroll in them

Basic principles#:

1. UM campuses would develop a course cooperative – a system where campuses could share courses that are not at capacity and students from other UM campuses could enroll.
2. Students pay the tuition and fees for the shared courses to their **home** campus.
3. Students register for courses at their home campus though the course is being taught by an instructor at another UM campus. Thus students will NOT transfer credit and courses are considered in-residence courses.
4. All UM campuses use Blackboard as the learning management system, but modifications will have to be made to allow students at another campus have access to the host institution's course.
5. Grades are awarded by the host institution and sent to cooperating instructors at the home institutions.
6. Semester schedule will follow the host institution. UM campus schedules vary only slightly but some consideration will be given to allow for students to match with their home campus schedule (tests, papers, etc.).
7. Faculty panels can review courses for appropriateness and quality control to ensure courses meet local campus standards with appropriate faculty credentials, etc.

Financial Incentive

To promote the cross-campus course sharing, UM Academic Affairs will provide an incentive of \$300 to the host campus for each student who enrolls in the course from another UM campus. For example, if UMKC offers a course that has capacity of 20 students and only 10 UMKC students enroll, but five enroll from other UM campuses, the UMKC campus would get an additional \$1500. This arrangement would provide incentives for campuses to offer courses in the “cooperative” and share courses with the other campuses. While the campuses will likely have different policies on how these incentive funds are distributed – some of the incentive funding should go to the faculty member teaching the course that is shared.

Application for funding

Proposals for funding should be a brief summary describing the rationale for developing a shared course and the results that will be achieved. At least two campuses must be involved to secure funding but three or more UM campuses would be ideal. The proposals should be brief - no longer than 5 pages – and address the proposal elements listed below. The goal for each shared course or set of courses is to create release time for other campus faculty, increase the offerings available to students on other UM campuses, or provide additional opportunities for the home department.

Budget note: proposals will be judged on their overall merit with an eye toward development that stretches the funding as much as possible. Typically the funding would cover the cost of finding a replacement to provide a course release for faculty members so they can develop a new course. Proposals can also include funding for special materials needed as well as design costs if appropriate.

Proposal elements (5 pages maximum)

Each proposal should include a brief section to address the following:

1. Name of course and typical enrollment
2. Rationale for developing a shared course
3. Budget
4. Nature of impact if course is developed and shared
5. Campus partners – including names of cooperating faculty members
6. Support from the home and cooperating departments (e.g., signature approval, or letters or emails indicating support from department chair and dean)

Review criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on their creativity, design elements that foster learning, collaborative elements (e.g., cooperating faculty, campuses and departments), and potential for overall impact. A committee comprised of IFC faculty members, provosts' office representatives and a representative from the UM System academic affairs will review the proposals.

Deadline for Proposals

Proposals are due **April 15, 2014** and should be submitted to Academic Affairs, 309 University Hall, University of Missouri System, Columbia, MO 65211. Prior to their submission to the UM System Academic Affairs office, the proposals should be submitted to the respective campus provost's office for a final campus review.

Ideas adapted from University of Maryland Inter-institutional Registration Procedure [University of Maryland Regents Bylaws 71.0 III-2.40 and 73.0 III-2.41] and the Missouri Alliance for Collaborative Education [described in Redmond, W. 2012, Collaboration in Missouri Higher Education, *Teacher-Scholar*, 4(1)]

* Where multiple departments are developing courses the maximum could be as high as \$15,000 per course