

Pedagogy, Identity, and Community Series

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Units: IAH and WRAC

Engaged Pedagogy Grant Proposal submitted April 2022

Proposal includes:

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Budget
- CVs of PIs and proposed presenters
- Rubrics from Chair of WRAC and Associate Dean of CAL Undergraduate Studies

Evaluation Rubric for Unit Head(s)

Name of unit: XXX

Name of unit head: XXX

(Fill out on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being “excellent”)

_____The proposal meets the requirements as outlined in the call for proposals: Evidence of a collaborative proposal that meets the call for application standards above, including: addressing intersectionality, inviting one or more guest speakers or engaging with the community, including an event organized for the entire College community, and a complete application with clear budget page.

_____The proposal has great potential to advance course development in the proposed area and make an original and significant pedagogical contribution to the College curriculum.

_____The proposal is of high quality with regard to its clarity, methodology, scope, theoretical framework, and relevance to stated applicant and College pedagogical goals.

_____The project is feasible and the likelihood that the applicant(s) will execute the work within the proposed timeframe is high.

_____The teaching and scholarship record and career trajectory of the applicant(s) is strong.

_____ Includes an event organized for the entire College community.

Comments:

Abstract

This proposal outlines a series of events that focus on empowering instructors to craft a transformative learning experience for a broad student population at MSU. This series focuses on affirming and valuing student identities and lived experiences while actively challenging the erasures of culture and community that higher education has traditionally enacted. We target areas that address key instructor concerns and needs: assignment and curriculum design, leading dialogue on high-stakes topics, and incorporating student voices. Instructors will leave with a toolkit of concrete ideas and skills that will speak directly to key DEI priorities of IAH, WRAC, and the College.

Narrative: Series on Pedagogy, Identity, and Community

The arts and humanities have contributed immensely to academic inquiry about diversity, equity, culture, and identities. This series of workshops and panels focuses on empowering instructors in IAH, WRAC, and CAL to craft a transformative learning experience for a broad student population at MSU. Specifically, this series promotes pedagogies that affirm and value student identities and lived experiences while actively challenging the erasures of culture and community that higher education has traditionally enacted. The \$XXXX requested funding will enable us to meet these goals by bringing in external guest speakers with expertise in these topics and help us engage local community members with this work.

Together, IAH and WRAC teach over 20,000 seats per year. The reach of instructors in these units have the potential to offer transformative learning experiences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. These events will be open to the College but will particularly address the needs of instructors in these units who teach undergraduate students. These units have made DEI a priority, through WRAC's Equity and Justice Committee, IAH's work on the IDN requirement (MSU's Diversity Requirement to graduate, which is housed in Integrative Studies), and many other efforts in DEI in both units related to teaching and learning. This project would significantly contribute to the pedagogical priorities for both units, as well as offer outstanding professional development opportunities for CAL more broadly, and would align with CAL's DEI work, the Inclusive Pedagogical Initiative, and the Compelling Curriculum initiatives.

At the heart of many conversations about DEI and teaching, from abolitionist teaching to anti-racist pedagogy to accessibility, is the idea that traditional academic ways of doing things have actively excluded, erased, or demeaned some students' experiences, cultures, and identities. Various academic disciplines continue to grapple with how their fields have contributed to cultural erasure, colonialism, racism, sexism, and other intersecting oppressions. These conversations can be difficult, but they have been richly generative, both intellectually and otherwise. This proposed series is united by a vision of how general education, which includes all of IAH and many WRAC instructors, can provide a learning experience that values diverse student experiences, cultures, and identities as essential parts of academic inquiry in writing, the arts, and the humanities.

We have designed this series of events to meet the interests and needs of instructors teaching. We plan to assess the effectiveness of this series with short surveys after events as well as asking widely for examples from instructors who made changes as a result of this series. Our outcomes are to provide instructors with concrete tips, concepts, and strategies to:

- Lead class discussion on high-stakes or "difficult" topics (Events 1 and 3)
- Develop innovative assignments and class activities to teach concepts (Events 1, 2, 3)
- Use pedagogical approaches and assignments that empower students to have agency in working for positive change (All 4 Events)
- Help students connect academic course content with their own lives (Events 1, 2, 4)
- More easily incorporate topics that may be outside of their own academic training (Events 1, 2, 3)

The series will include these four events (Only events 1-3 would be largely funded by the grant):

1. Workshop: How to dialogue about high-stakes topics: This workshop will provide instructors with the tools and concepts needed to develop skills at facilitating classroom dialogue on high-stakes topics, especially systemic oppressions and race, LGBTQ+ identities, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and other intersecting identities. Dialoguing is a particular type of skill for using experience to generate understanding about topics related to identities and systems of power. This workshop addresses: key issues in dialoguing methods that are specific to general education (student population, class size, wide variety of instructor areas of expertise);

promoting dialoguing in ways that are mindful of student stress, trauma, and mental health; strategies for ensuring that students from marginalized communities benefit (i.e., addressing the concern that students from marginalized groups teach other students about DEI but learn less themselves). Example facilitator: Adrianna Crossing

2. Panel on incorporating students' home languages into writing and arts and humanities courses: One seminal approach to resisting cultural erasure is institutional investments, commitments, and engaged actions devoted to antiracist pedagogies. The second component of the proposal centers language, particularly the home languages of "US Latinx, Native Americans [labeled semilingual], World English speakers [labeled second-language learners], and Ebonics speakers [labeled as nonstandard]" (CCCC Statement on White Language Supremacy, 2021). Baker-Bell (2020) has solidified the argument of linguistic injustice for Black Language speakers due to "linguistic violence, persecution, dehumanization, and marginalization that black language-speakers experience in schools and everyday life" (p. 11). Other marginalized groups within Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities experience and navigate linguistic racism, as well. As an antiracist move, we will invite language experts to discuss linguistic (in)justices regarding marginalized linguistic systems within the US and approaches to Incorporating students' home languages into writing, arts, and humanities courses. In alignment with its land grant identity, MSU commits to connections with and service to communities in the state and it attends to pressing social inequities (Land Grant Identity). This panel, thus, will activate that land grant commitment. Furthermore, the panel will provide instructors with concrete tips, concepts, and strategies for constructing more inclusive teaching and learning that affirms student identities, particularly linguistic identities. As part of the community outreach for this event, five Lansing School District employees will be given \$XXX each to be fellows. They will attend this panel and work with the co-PIs on sharing this knowledge with Lansing K-12 teachers and developing a relationship with IAH and WRAC that can be built on for community-based learning opportunities for IAH/WRAC in the future. Example speaker: Dr. Bonnie Williams-Farrier.

3. Panel on how to teach about atrocities and cultural erasures. This panel will ask panelists to share the key intellectual concepts that they focus on in their teaching and specific strategies, activities, and assignments to teach about these topics with sensitivity to communities affected by the atrocities, attention to student wellness, and ways of helping students investigate these topics in intersectional and socially responsible ways.

4. Student panel on lived experiences: "The person doing most of the talking is doing most of the learning." The fourth panel will highlight student voices, enabling seven students to share their specific cultural knowledge, particularly lived experiences. Students will address the question, "What I wish instructors would ask me about my home culture." Student empowerment will be engendered through this panel as well as providing participants with lived experiences that have typically been elided within postsecondary contexts. The panel, then, enables/activates our goal of empowerment (students and instructors) and demonstrates transformative learning. The epigraph situates student empowerment, specifically elevating local knowledge/epistemologies as inducers of socially real learning. Thus, students garner benefits and support that their marginalized communities exude unsung epistemologies, which deserve recognition, respect, and inclusion within classroom settings. Instructors/participants become empowered to (co)construct more equalitarian sites of learning, thus gaining new/transformational perspectives, which can lead to deeper, non-hegemonic understandings.