

Assessment Grant Proposal Form

Assessing student learning is an essential component of general education and in the major. This grant supports innovative practices in the assessment of student learning. The Assessment Grants are intended for faculty in their efforts to support and assess student learning in public affairs and general education.

Assessment Grant applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the Spring 2018 semester. For more information, contact Julia Cottrell via email at JuliaCottrell@MissouriState.edu.

Please fill out the form below which will become your grant proposal and click "submit" at the bottom of the page.

1. First and Last Name:

Avery Russell

2. Email Address:

averyrussell@missouristate.edu

3. Campus Phone:

417-836-3067

4. Campus Location/Address:

Temple Hall 110

5. College:

College of Natural & Applied Sciences

6. Please list the department and program to which you belong.

Biology

7. Have you received written approval from your department head or dean?

Yes

8. Will your program, department, or college support this project in any way? This is not a requirement, but "matching" makes dollars stretch farther and the request may help a broader audience understand and support your work.

No

9. Provide the budget (FOAP) number to which funds should be transferred should the proposal be approved.

10. What is the title of your proposal?

Toward enhanced teaching of Evolution: supervised peer-mentoring by graduate students

11. Please select from the eligible projects listed below. If "other", please contact an Assessment staff member for approval.

Incentivize faculty for the extra work involved in assessment

12. What do you plan to purchase or pay for? Please specify what line items will be funded through the assessment grant and what line items will be funded through other sources.

No equipment will be purchased; funds will pay for faculty time in developing the assessment.

13. What contributions will this work have on enhancing student learning? Briefly describe the learning, writing, or thinking need that you intend to address with this grant.

Graduate students taking the BIO 515/616 (Evolution) course will be identified as peer-mentors. Prior to each weekly Recitation, peer mentors will familiarize themselves with Recitation materials and be offered the opportunity to ask the instructor any questions they have. During Recitation, peer-mentors will assist the faculty instructor in guiding undergraduate students through the Recitation materials. Studies show that those who have just learned are better at conveying that knowledge to others versus someone who has learned much previously (i.e., see literature on 'expert bias'). Because graduate peer-mentors are much closer to the learning process (having just learned the Recitation materials), they will be more effective at conveying this information to their undergraduate peers. Likewise, by increasing the number of 'instructors'

in the room, all students will have more 1:1 time with a knowledgeable teacher, enhancing learning. Simultaneously, by engaging in peer-mentoring, graduate students will become more effective teachers: they will learn strategies to guide the learning process, emphasize with students, and evaluate the course materials.

14. What is your time frame for the proposed project?

The assessment plan would be trialed in Spring 2020 for BIO 515/616 (Evolution) and then, if successful, carried on permanently each Fall semester thereafter.

15. How will the results of this project be used for program improvement? Please describe any anticipated outcomes.

After each Recitation, graduate trainees will be asked to assess the exercise and to report to the faculty instructor how the exercise affected their learning. Post Recitation Self-Assessment Questions: • Did you have difficulty explaining any concepts in

16. If funded, a short, written report is expected. The interim report will include the following information: Minutes of meetings (include attendees, date, items discussed, actions), project results, outcomes addressed, changes that will occur in the future due to this project, new learning, new curriculum, recommendations for future projects, and any handouts, student work, survey results, etc.

I agree to write and submit a brief report within one year of the projects start date.

17. Do you agree to share the funded project at the time of its completion? This may include sharing the proposal itself, outcome data from the grant's effect, or student work generated from use of the grant.

Yes

18. How do you plan to show evidence of student learning?

This project will improve the program in three ways:

1) By providing detailed feedback on each Recitation, the peer-mentors will help the instructor to identify sections of this upper division course that are too difficult or that need to be explained differently.

2) The project will facilitate both undergraduate and graduate student learning of the course materials by facilitating accessibility to the course materials and to instruction.

3) The project will facilitate graduate peer-mentors in becoming independent mentors and at teaching a diverse array of concepts