

# 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](mailto: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:**

David Rohall

**2. Email Address:**

[drohall@missouristate.edu](mailto:drohall@missouristate.edu)

**3. Campus Phone:**

836-5640

**4. Campus Location/Address:**

451 Strong Hall

**5. College:**

College of Humanities & Public Affairs

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

Sociology and Anthropology; Sociology

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

Pending

**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.

Yes

**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?**

Utilizing New Technology to Improve Writing Quality in Online Sociology Courses

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

Develop new ways to increase the practice of writing in online classes

**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.

Incentive for additional faculty work; the department will cover the costs of additional work by student workers.

**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.

The goal of this project is to find ways of increasing writing practice in introductory sociology courses without increasing the burden of grading this additional work. The sociology program relies heavily on per course instructors and they are regularly asked to teach large, online classes. New technologies such as Pearson's Intelligent Essay Assessor allows instructors to increase the amount of writing in their classes because it can grade short essays, a common requirement of these classes. Instructors would like to assign more assigns but are unable to do so because of time constraints, especially in 8-week classes. The goal of this assessment is to determine 1. is the technology viable from the perspective of the instructor, 2. will students actually improve their writing in the course, and 3. student reactions to this additional work. Ultimately, can a professor encourage more writing in large, online sections and still provide adequate feedback to make the student work meaningful.

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

Fall 2018

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

If this work shows evidence that both the faculty and students find the technology useful, we will consider encouraging the use of it in other classes as a means of improving writing skills.

**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 a brief report before May 15, 2019.

**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?**

The research question is whether students believe that have improved their writing skills during the course of the semester as well as substantive knowledge of the field. This study will be based on the same course, by the same instructor during two different sessions: the first and second blocks of the fall of 2018. The only difference between the courses is that one of them will receive additional writing using the new technology. This way, we are controlling for all other factors but the new technology. The first block will be taught using traditional methods which includes some writing in addition to discussion boards and multiple choice exams. The second block will include additional essays utilizing this new technology. Both classes will be given a questionnaire asking 1. their satisfaction with the course and 2. the degree to which they have learned different things in the class including a host of topics; writing is one of those things. Substantive knowledge of the field will be ascertain from test scores. Additional analysis of the writing quality between the groups will also be assessed if time permits.