



April 25, 2013

TO: College of Arts and Sciences Faculty
FROM: Ian F. McNeely, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education
RE: General Education course redesign initiative

The College of Arts and Sciences seeks faculty available during summer and/or fall 2013 to explore General Education course redesign. These faculty will help plan and participate in a three-year General Education improvement initiative to begin in 2014, and supported by substantial grants from the Rippey Teaching Endowment.

The aim of this initiative is to recruit faculty to work in interdisciplinary clusters to redesign or create courses linked by a common academic theme and tied to UO's General Education objectives [1]. The purpose of the clusters is to incubate cross-disciplinary creativity among faculty members who will be accountable to each other for articulating how their disciplines contribute to the solution of a complex intellectual problem. While students will not necessarily enroll in multiple courses offered by a given faculty cluster, faculty may yet coordinate their offerings through inter-class guest visits, blogs, shared advising and publicity strategies, co-curricular activities, and other features that make the boundaries of individual courses more permeable.

Another expectation is that these courses will serve as models of pedagogical innovation and academic excellence catalyzing improvement across the General Education curriculum. Special emphasis will be placed on enlivening large lecture courses with innovative teaching techniques, such as the flipped classroom, role-playing simulations, online enhancements, or the integration of faculty research.

In a "pre-proposal" phase, a group of roughly 7-10 faculty will meet this summer and fall, as their availability permits, to identify promising approaches to General Education course redesign. Working in collaboration with the CAS Dean's Office, the Teaching Effectiveness Program, the Undergraduate Council, and other groups, they will also recruit and lead colleagues in forming faculty clusters and developing proposals for Rippey grants, described below. Faculty members active in this pre-proposal phase will have access to a \$10,000 pool of funds for retreats and workshops, books and journals, conference travel, campus fact-finding visits, and other appropriate expenses.

This phase will overlap in the fall with a formal call for Rippey grant proposals open to all CAS faculty, with applications due January 15, 2014. Both the "pre-proposal" group and other interested faculty will be encouraged to apply. After review, CAS anticipates making three initial Rippey grants of \$40,000 apiece to faculty clusters for use during summer 2014 and the 2014-15

academic year. Two more cycles of applications and grants are planned for 2015-16 and 2016-17. Funds may be used for faculty and GTF support (including stipends), journal clubs, professional development, technology and media services, course materials, student outreach and advising, and other needs. Awardees will be expected to study the impact of their efforts, present formally on their results, and serve informally as consultants for other faculty in the future. Due to the terms of the Rippey endowment, clusters must be led by tenured professors in CAS but may include others.

Faculty who wish to participate should send a letter of interest to Ian F. McNeely, CAS Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, at adue@uoregon.edu by May 31, 2013. Please indicate availability over summer and fall 2013. Preliminary inquiries are welcome. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend TEP's Best of UO General Education Workshop on May 17 [2].

[1] http://ugs.uoregon.edu/US_Pages/US_GenEdu.html

[2] http://tep.uoregon.edu/workshops/events/year12-13/spring/general_ed.html