2019 CANR Teaching Minigrants

The College will award approximately $50,000 in minigrants of up to $10,000 each for projects that enhance courses and curricula broadly, with preference given to projects that address graduate enrollment and programs, specifically micro-credentials, certificates and other innovative approaches to graduate education.

Background:
One of UD’s strategic goals is to double graduate enrollment over the next several years. Considerable emphasis is being placed on developing courses and programs for non-thesis Master’s programs that meet societal needs for highly educated STEM professionals. CANR currently has successful MS programs in statistics, both face-to-face (F2F) and online, and the department of Animal and Food Sciences will launch non-thesis MS programs this fall. We would like to see programs expanded to all departments and support existing efforts with this RFP.

Development of entirely new master’s degree programs is time consuming, risky and may not be warranted in some cases. Increasingly, non-traditional students and employers are looking for specific skill sets and competencies rather than degrees, as students often cannot spend the money and time to obtain a 30-credit Master’s degree. Both non-profit and for-profit higher education institutions have responded to this demand by offering certificates, micro-credentials, “badges” and “nano-degrees”. Definitions of these terms vary, but all are designed to confer specific competencies in students. The State University of New York System (SUNY) has an excellent, recent publication on micro-credentialing [here](https://www.fashion.udel.edu/graduate/graduate-certificate/certificate-requirements). Quoting from SUNY:

*The potential uses for micro-credentials are far-reaching: offered within an existing degree program, micro-credentials can motivate current students to persist; as an add-on to an existing degree program, micro-credentials allow students to distinguish themselves in a competitive marketplace through mastery of skills complementary to their chosen field of study; for adult learners looking to start or return to college, micro-credentials can be used to break a degree program down into smaller sections of curriculum that stack toward a degree; and, micro-credentials can be terrific tools to support life-long learning and professional development.*

Currently, UD defines a graduate certificate as a minimum of nine credits of focused coursework but does not have definitions for other forms of micro-credentials. The graduate certificate in Socially Responsible and Sustainable Apparel Business at UD is composed of a series of 1-credit courses, each of which might be considered micro-credentials:

[https://www.fashion.udel.edu/graduate/graduate-certificate/certificate-requirements](https://www.fashion.udel.edu/graduate/graduate-certificate/certificate-requirements)

Purdue University offers a series of “digital badges” in their online MS in Learning Design and Technology:

[https://www.fashion.udel.edu/graduate/graduate-certificate/certificate-requirements](https://www.fashion.udel.edu/graduate/graduate-certificate/certificate-requirements)

edX ([https://www.edx.org/](https://www.edx.org/)) offers 30 “MicroMaster’s” programs that can be stacked (chained together) toward degrees. Udacity ([https://www.udacity.com/nanodegree/plus](https://www.udacity.com/nanodegree/plus)) is perhaps the best-known micro-credential entity in the for-profit sector. Using partners such as Google, Facebook and IBM, Udacity delivers “nanodegrees” and other micro-credentials online.
Importantly, micro-credentials can be extracted from existing courses or programs, i.e., they do not have to be created entirely from scratch. They are the “Lego blocks” of curricula, designed to be used in multiple contexts, thus having utility for traditional F2F instruction as well as online and non-credit or extension instruction.

Learn more about micro-credentials at the upcoming workshop sponsored by Professional and Continuing Studies:

Credentials for an Unpredictable Market: Aligning the Portfolio to Market Needs
9am-12pm
Tuesday, June 25th, 2019
Room 155, 501 S. College Ave (old Girl Scout Bldg)
RSVP to Jessica Netta, jrnetta@udel.edu

Professional and Continuing Netta can help faculty with market research for graduate programs, courses and alternative credentials.

Incentive:
UD’s new budgeting process will roll out on July 1, 2019. To incentivize the growth of tuition-paying Master’s programs, the Assanis administration has proposed to share 50% of the incremental revenue from such programs with colleges and departments (evenly with 25% to each). Coincidentally, this aligns with current practice in CANR, i.e., 50% of the net tuition generated in the Statistics MS program is shared with the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics, which they use to support graduate education and other departmental programs.

“Special Academic Revenue”, defined as revenue generated from teaching activities in winter and summer terms, is also proposed to be shared at the 50% rate, again, split evenly between the college and department. The goal is to better utilize campus resources during the winter and summer terms, which currently generate only 6-8% of total tuition revenue for UD. Courses can be online or F2F in winter or summer and qualify for the revenue share.

Eligibility:
- Eligible recipients include faculty, staff and graduate students in CANR. Only one proposal will be considered for funding if two or more proposals are (co-)authored by the same person.
- Proposals must involve new or existing courses/programs in CANR, but can include co-authors from other colleges or be directed at interdisciplinary programs that involve other colleges or institutions.

Deliverables and Timeline
- The deadline for proposal submission is July 1, 2019. Proposals must be submitted using the format provided below. Applicants will be notified by July 31, 2019 regarding funding.
- Deliverables are courses, certificates, or micro-credentials that are ready for implementation on or before Winter Term, 2021.
- Recipients are required to submit a final project report within one month of the end of the term that the instructional materials are first used or program is launched.

Budget
- A brief budget and justification is required. Acceptable expenditures include: instructional materials or software, instructional design, travel costs for instructional training, temporary labor, and up to $5000 of summer salary for 9-month faculty. Minigrants may not be used for purchasing goods/services normally covered by departmental teaching budgets.
- Funds must be spent by the last day of classes in the term that the instructional
Proposal Evaluation

- The proposals will be evaluated by a panel of faculty appointed by the dean. Evaluation criteria include societal need for the program/course/micro-credential, demonstrated demand/likelihood of student enrollment, potential impact on graduate education, potential to grow Special Academic Revenue, and plans for sustained use.
- Rankings and comments will be submitted to the dean for final decisions regarding funding. Constructive comments from the panel will be shared with the applicant.

Proposal Format and Submission

- Proposals should be submitted to Mark Rieger, mrieger@udel.edu, by 1 July 2019.
- Maximum proposal length is two pages.
- Proposals that do not include all required components will be returned without review.
- Proposals should include subheadings as follows:

  - Title:
  - Author(s):
  - Total funds requested: $_____
  - Department(s)/Program:
  - Description of course, certificate program or micro-credential, including intended audience and demonstrated demand for the associated competencies:
  - Semester/term to be first used in teaching (no later than Winter 2021):
  - Sustainability plan in the context of revenue sharing in UD’s proposed budget:
  - Itemized budget and budget justification:

For questions: Mark Rieger, mrieger@udel.edu