

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE**

October 2009

**TO:** Members of the Faculty

**FROM:** David P. Dobkin and Nancy Weiss Malkiel

**SUBJECT:** The 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund for Innovation in Undergraduate Education

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We write to invite departments and programs to develop proposals for funding under the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund for Innovation in Undergraduate Education.

**We are looking for initiatives sponsored by departments or programs and submitted through department chairs or program directors.** We don't mean in any way to discourage imaginative thinking on the part of individual faculty members; to the contrary, the best ideas will often originate with individuals, and they are strongly encouraged to take the lead in instigating applications for funding. **But we expect those ideas to be discussed and ratified in the appropriate venue in the department or program** – for departments, in the undergraduate committee, with the chair and departmental representative, or by the entire department, as local culture dictates; for programs, in the program committee, and with the program director. **The point is to have proposals come forward with the imprimatur and support of the department or program, and wherever possible, to have them fully integrated into the curriculum of the department or program.**

The deadline for submission of proposals is February 5, 2010. Awards will be announced by the end of March.

**Categories for Proposals**

Departments and programs are invited to make proposals for curricular initiatives designed to strengthen their course offerings for specialists as well as non-specialists and to better serve their concentrators and certificate students. The categories identified below are meant to stimulate creative thinking. They are not intended to preclude other good ideas.

Key to successful proposals will be three things: explicit department or program review and support, a clear and compelling rationale for the proposal, and a plan to evaluate the success of the proposal. Department chairs, programs directors, and individual faculty members planning to participate in new initiatives may want to consult with Carol Porter, Director of the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Center for Teaching and Learning, or Amanda

Irwin Wilkins, Interim Director of the Princeton Writing Program, on course design and an evaluation plan in advance of submitting a proposal.

In most cases, departments or programs should propose new courses or other curricular initiatives that will be on-going rather than one-time offerings. **The normal expectation is that courses funded through the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund will be offered at least three times.** Departments or programs may seek up to three years of support for a new initiative; proposals for long-term initiatives should include a plan for sustaining (and funding) the proposal beyond the initial three-year period.

As departments or programs begin to shape their proposals, they are encouraged to contact Dean Peter Quimby or Dean Nancy Malkiel for early feedback—especially on ideas that may be unprecedented or very costly.

### 1. International Programs

Departments are strongly encouraged to develop semester-long or summer programs abroad. Such programs most often serve concentrators or prospective concentrators.

Examples: EEB semester in the field in Panama; EEB/GEO Bermuda summer program; GER 107G, the Princeton in Munich intensive summer language program.

### 2. Teaching Writing in the Disciplines

Writing is a distinctive feature of a Princeton education. The writing seminar taken freshman year serves as an introduction to the essential practices of intellectual inquiry and critical writing. To build on this foundation and promote students' development as writers in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering, departments are encouraged to design or redesign courses or create other structured opportunities that involve substantial writing and specialized writing instruction in the disciplines.

Possibilities include writing-intensive courses (or significant course components) in the sophomore or junior year, writing workshops or colloquia in support of junior or senior independent work, the use of Writing Center Fellows to enhance new or existing courses, the development of writing-related pedagogical materials, and seminars or symposia for faculty and graduate student instructors on the teaching of writing in the disciplines. Amanda Irwin Wilkins, Interim Director of the Princeton Writing Program, is ready to consult with departments and individual faculty members on relevant proposals.

### 3. New or Redesigned Introductory Courses

Introductory courses make all the difference in the effectiveness of general education and in students' decisions about further academic work. Departments and programs are encouraged to review their introductory courses in order to improve and enliven the experience of students in those courses. Funds are available to develop new courses and to renovate existing courses.

Examples: special lab section of PSY 101 for prospective concentrators; new course, MOL 101, “From DNA to Human Complexity”; revision of 100- and 200-level Math courses; new courses, CEE 105, “Lab in Conservation of Art” and CEE 263, “Rivers and the Regional Environment”; development of computer-based interactive strategy games for ECO 108, “Games of Strategy.”

#### 4. New or Redesigned Foundational Courses

Departments and programs are encouraged to renovate or create courses targeted specifically at prospective majors and certificate students. Foundational courses are distinct from traditional introductory courses insofar as they emphasize skills and analytic approaches over subject matter coverage or exposure. Such courses focus on what it is like to do history or physics or.... They should be designed to provide an intensive introduction to the concepts, methods, and issues of the discipline; they should immerse students in the discipline’s texts, sources, and materials.

Examples: new suite of 200-level “Approaches” courses in History; new suite of 200-level “Reading Literature” courses in English; new Physics seminars, 209, “Computational Physics,” 210, “Experimental Physics”; revision of FRE 221, 222, “French Literature, Culture, and Society” sequence.

#### 5. Interdisciplinary Course Sequences at the Introductory Level

Increasingly, departments are collaborating to develop innovative interdisciplinary sequences at the introductory level.

Examples: the year-long, multidisciplinary integrated science sequence, ISC/CHM/COS/MOL/PHY 231-234, sponsored by the Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics; EGR 191-194, the year-long “Integrated Introduction to Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics” sequence, sponsored by the Center for Innovation in Engineering Education; the two-course HUM/EAS/COM East Asian humanities sequence.

#### 6. Rethinking of Departmental Curricula

In previous competitions, departments have drawn on the 250<sup>th</sup> Fund to support a wide-ranging renovation of their curricula, from introductory courses for non-specialists through upper-level courses for concentrators.

Examples: new and redesigned courses in Anthropology; Art and Archaeology; Spanish and Portuguese Languages and Cultures.

7. Make the case for a uniquely valuable idea that doesn’t fit in the categories above, including, but not limited to, suites of Freshman Seminars and new or redesigned advanced courses with unusual impact.

## **Selection Process**

Proposals may involve projects in one or more of the specified categories; the likely impact and success of the proposed initiatives will figure significantly in the selection process.

Departments or programs should specify the faculty who will be teaching courses or supervising programs during the duration of the grant period.

Departments or programs are expected to submit full budgets specifying the funds requested and the purposes for which they are to be used. Budgets should also explain how any continuing costs will be borne once 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund support expires.

Proposals should be submitted by department chairs or program directors. Proposals from the School of Engineering and Applied Science should be submitted through the Keller Center for Innovation in Engineering Education.

In formulating proposals, departments or programs are encouraged to make use of the resources and guidance of the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Center for Teaching and Learning (contact the director of the McGraw Center, Carol Porter, at 8-6920 or [cporter@princeton.edu](mailto:cporter@princeton.edu)) and the Princeton Writing Program (contact the interim director, Amanda Irwin Wilkins, at 8-2703 or [awilkins@princeton.edu](mailto:awilkins@princeton.edu)).

Proposals are due in the Office of the Dean of the College, 403 West College, by February 5, 2010. Recommendations on funding will be made to the president by the dean and the deputy dean of the college, the dean and two associate deans of the faculty, the director of the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, and the interim director of the Princeton Writing Program.

Recipients of awards will be expected to provide reports, after the first year of implementation and annually thereafter, accounting for the use of the funds and providing data on the success of the initiatives undertaken.

Department chairs and program directors who have questions about the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund or the suitability of particular proposals should call Dean Nancy Malkiel or Dean Peter Quimby at 8-3040. They will be ready and willing to discuss and provide advice about ideas at an early stage before formal proposals are submitted.

## **Budget Guidelines**

The purposes for which departments or programs may spend money include (but are not necessarily limited to): support for research assistance for course development; collection of new teaching materials; development of computer software or the adoption of technological innovations; purchase of equipment (beyond what should be routinely budgeted in the department or program); unusual instructional enhancements; special AI allocations to support experimental teaching formats; special training for AIs; subsidies for summer programs; subsidies for break-week travel in conjunction with courses; and faculty summer stipends for course development.

Where proposals are made for break-week travel in conjunction with courses, there must be a compelling case made for the travel experience as integral, indeed critical, to the academic content of the course. Proposals for funding for such travel should contain as much detail as possible about the itinerary and academic content of the trip, a detailed budget, and a plan for the department or program to continue funding the trip after the initial period of support from the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund. Cost-sharing by the department or program during the initial period of support will be a factor in decisions about funding.

The 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund provides faculty summer stipends for course development. The Fund does not enable faculty members to be relieved from teaching for purposes of course development. Nor does it provide departments or programs with any additional FTEs.

**The faculty summer stipend for course development is \$10,000.** In cases where a faculty member draws summer support from other sources (University funds and/or research grants), the course development stipend will need to be approved in the Office of the Dean of the Faculty as part of the ordinary process of approving summer support. In certain instances, it may be necessary to modify the stipend to comply with University policies. Recipients of stipends from the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund are not necessarily limited to two months of summer salary. For questions concerning summer support, call Dean Sandra Johnson at 8-5230.

Research assistants must be either Princeton undergraduates or graduate students who will be paid at prevailing University rates. Last year the range for undergraduates was \$10.60 to \$14.40 per hour, depending on the nature of the job. For graduate students, it was \$18.45 to \$19.00 per hour for library research and \$24.85 to \$25.45 for work that involves programming or other specialized skills. Funds may not be used to support part-time additions to staff or to employ outside consultants.