

CATL COURSE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Funding source: CATL

INTRODUCTION

Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning (CATL) grants support instructors undertaking projects intended to improve teaching and student learning. These grants foster effective teaching that is organized, evidence-based, technology-supported, inclusive, feedback-enriched, and/or programmatic in nature.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

All instructors engage in course preparation as part of their regular teaching duties. Course Improvement Grants are intended to support *intentional* and *intensive* course design and redesign projects that go *above and beyond* the work of normal course preparation.

Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- Converting an in-person class into an online asynchronous class
- Infusing diverse content and inclusive teaching strategies into a course
- Integrating research-based learning strategies (e.g., practice-testing, spaced practice, etc.)
- Creating a learning module that can be shared across class sections
- Adding a course-embedded undergraduate research component to a class
- Incorporating high-impact practices into a course (e.g., writing-intensive courses, community-based learning, etc.)
- Developing a systematic approach to classroom assessment
- Making a course more accessible and user-friendly for students

Course improvement projects identify improvement goals in a class you teach and provide a rationale for making proposed changes. Upon completion, funded projects culminate in artifacts that can be included in portfolios as evidence of teaching improvement.

AWARD INFORMATION

Course Improvement Grants support instructors to carry out a course design or redesign project in fall or spring of the funding year, which begins July 1. An individual applicant is eligible to receive a \$1000-\$3000 stipend for one project per funding cycle. Funding level will be based on the scope of the proposed project. Stipends are equivalent to the approximate level of work of a 1-credit course overload, which is about 45 hours of work.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Faculty and instructional academic staff with at least a 50% FTE during the cycle of application.

Faculty/staff from fully self-supporting programs are not eligible to receive funds from UWL-sponsored grant programs. Faculty/staff from self-supporting programs are encouraged to contact their department chair/unit director to request funds in support of their research, scholarly, pedagogical, and professional development endeavors.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Review grant guidelines.
2. If a proposal includes services, support, or effort from other campus unit(s)/department(s), applicants should discuss logistics (e.g., budget requests, availability to perform proposed work) and obtain approval from that unit/department before an application is submitted. Examples include but are not limited to proposed efforts by Graduate & Extended Learning, Murphy Library, Reservations, Statistical Consulting Center, or University Communications.
3. Complete an application narrative (see below) as a single PDF file.
4. Create your application narrative as a single PDF file. Enroll in the following Canvas course to submit your application:

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APPLICATION NARRATIVE

Narratives should be no more than three pages. Label the sections of your narrative with the headings below.

1. **Contact information.** Include name, email, and department affiliation.
2. **Improvement goal(s).** Describe the improvement goal(s) you plan to achieve in your design or redesign project.
3. **Course context.** Describe the course you plan to focus on in your project, including course title, class level, number of students, etc. Explain how the course context will be enhanced by your project.
4. **Proposed changes.** Outline changes you plan to make to the course. For each change, present a brief rationale. Explain how changes go above and beyond the work of normal course preparation.
5. **Work plan.** Describe action steps you plan to take in order to complete your project within the timeframe of the grant.
6. **Previous experience.** Describe any previous training or experience related to your improvement goal(s). (Previous training and experience is *not* required of applicants.)

DUE DATES AND SUBMISSION

Grant narratives are due as a single PDF file by noon the Monday of finals week during Spring semester. Academic Year 25/26 grant applications are due by noon on Monday, May 12, 2025. To submit your application, enroll in the following Canvas course: <https://uwlac.instructure.com/enroll/A8FD3K>

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by a committee composed of CATL staff members.

The following criteria will be used during the review process:

1. Does the improvement goal (or goals) require intentional and intensive course design or redesign work that goes above and beyond the work of normal course preparation?
2. Is the course context described in sufficient detail?
3. Is there an explanation of how the course context will be enhanced by the project?
4. Is a clear rationale included for each of the proposed changes?
5. Are action steps achievable given the scope of the project?
6. Is the application narrative clear and complete?

Preference will be given to applicants who have not been previously awarded a CATL Course Improvement Grant and to projects that have the greatest potential for impact.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs will notify applicants of their funding status.

EXPECATIONS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Funded grant projects and final reports will be showcased in CATL resources and events.

Grant recipients are expected to

1. Arrange a meeting with appropriate CATL staff members before beginning grant work.
2. Engage in course improvement activities during funding year.
3. Share their project with the UWL campus in an appropriate format to be determined in consultation with CATL staff.
4. Submit by June 1st a final report using the following guidelines.

- **Name:**

- **Email:**
- **Department:**
- **Primary college or division:**
- **Project title:**
- **One-sentence summary:** Describe how you improved your course through intentional and intensive course design or redesign.
- **Improvement goal(s):** Describe the improvement goal(s) you achieved in your design or redesign project.
- **Course context:** Describe how the course context of a specific class was enhanced by your project.
- **Action steps:** Describe specific changes you made to your course and why you made them.
- **Assessment plan:** Describe how you plan to gauge the effectiveness of the improvements you made.
- **Attachment(s):** Attach examples of course materials that have been designed or redesigned as part of this project.

CONTACT

Questions, if any, can be directed to the CATL Teaching & Learning Specialist, Bryan Kopp: 785-6936, bkopp@uwlax.edu.