

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Provost Initiative: Sustainability Across the Curriculum

APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE: Jun 12, 2020

PURPOSE

The ability to sustain ourselves, our population, and our way of life without harming the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is a major challenge of our time. The environmental problems of climate change, resource depletion, food production, waste generation, biodiversity loss, etc. will have effects across all parts of society and thus need to be resolved while also addressing equity and economic development. True sustainability is achieved by addressing all three of these pillars (the three Es of sustainable development). It is USC's vision to develop our students into engaged human beings who are empowered to have an impact on society. To this end, an understanding by our students of sustainability as one of society's greatest challenges is essential.

In accordance with the recommendation of the President's Working Group on Sustainability that all students at USC receive sustainability education, this pilot program puts forth a model for developing sustainability teaching/learning material and building capacity for sustainability education through incorporation of these concepts into existing courses at USC. Sustainability in concept and practice is pervasive and cuts across many disciplines; therefore, USC aims to teach these concepts in a similar fashion: by incorporating concepts and real-world examples throughout the curriculum of many classes and through the lens of different disciplines.

The Provost's Office is soliciting applications from faculty colleagues across USC interested in integrating sustainability content or activities into existing courses. Sustainability content may be incorporated in a variety of ways: considering the moral, economic, or scientific dimensions of sustainability, making use of sustainability data in problem sets, addressing the psychological or political resistance to sustainability, or using other approaches that suit the learning objectives and subject matter of the class. Courses that develop sustainability content through this program will be included on a list identifying "Sustainability Education" courses at USC.

Two application categories are available: 1) "Course Instructors": enthusiastic faculty from the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences who are currently teaching general education or large-enrollment introductory classes with the desire to incorporate sustainability into existing syllabi, and 2) "Development Partners": faculty from the Dornsife College with expertise in a range of sustainability issues eager to assist with the development of substantive, sustainability-related course material. The program is designed to create partnerships between instructor and developer that will expand disciplinary and educational perspectives of curriculum and facilitate collaboration across campus. Once paired, these "course instructors" and "development partners" will work together to determine what type of instructional material and desired sustainability concepts/competencies the students will learn; create appropriate learning

outcomes, assignments and course materials; and assess program outcomes. Any materials created should have the ability to be delivered in an online format, as well as in person.

This initiative will leverage USC's interdisciplinary strengths and present new opportunities for cross-department and collaboration. In the first year of the program, 5 collaborative projects will be funded.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Course Instructors: Instructors of any undergraduate class in the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences will be eligible to apply. In the first year, preference will be given to large classes, including General Education courses, large introductory major and minor courses, and classes in which students from many majors participate, in order to maximize the number of USC students exposed to sustainability content. We envision this scope to be broadened in subsequent years.

Development Partners: Faculty and researchers with sustainability expertise and from any discipline in the Dornsife College are eligible to apply.

APPLICATION EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated by the pilot program managers in partnership with the Dornsife Dean's office Undergraduate Education personnel. In the initial phase, the program will be managed by Directors at the USC Dornsife Environmental Studies Program (Dr. Jill Sohm) and the USC Dornsife Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies (Drs. John Heidelberg and Jessica Dutton).

NOTIFICATION AND TERM OF AWARD

Award amount: \$3000 will be allocated in course development funds for each collaborative project, with half going to the course instructor and half to the development partner.

Applicants will be notified by August 2020. Awardees will receive awards at this time and copies of the notifications of the award will be sent to school deans.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Before preparing a proposal, applying faculty should read the program description closely, including the sections on eligibility and evaluation criteria. Applicants should be prepared to submit the following information at the application portal:

For Course Instructor Applicants:

- a) Faculty Name(s)
- b) USC School and Department
- c) Course Name and Number
- d) Average number of students enrolled in the course
- e) Semester taught (no earlier than Spring Semester, 2021)
- f) Course Description
- g) Course Syllabus
- h) Course Learning outcomes
- i) Explain why are you interested in participating in this program
- j) Explain why this course is ideal for incorporation of sustainability principles
- k) Describe any ideas you may have for incorporating sustainability principles into this course material, or any work toward this end you have already undertaken on your own

For Development Partner Applicants:

- a) Name
- b) Department
- c) Field of Research
- d) Provide a brief CV
- e) What qualifications do you bring as an expert to this sustainability education initiative?
- f) What types of courses (disciplines) can you contribute to as a subject matter expert? This is not to limit the courses you could contribute to, but to best enable matching with a course instructor.
- g) Please give an example of any sustainability-related lessons or assignments you've developed.

TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

Once paired, “course instructors” and “development partners” will work together to review instructional materials and determine what type of desired sustainability concepts/competencies the students will learn; create appropriate learning outcomes, assignments and course materials; and assess program outcomes once delivered.

Additionally, all participating faculty will commit to take part in a year-end symposium to share their project ideas with each other; the symposium will be open to all USC faculty in order to disseminate ideas from the program to a wider audience.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Applications should be submitted via online portal. The application for both Course Instructors and Developers can be found here: https://usc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_23Pr0tMSCebBM7H

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By submitting the online application, applying teams indicate their agreement to comply with the terms

and conditions of the Provost Sustainability Across the Curriculum Program, as well as all other applicable USC policies.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND PROGRAM CONTACT

For additional information or inquiries about the program or the application submission process, please contact: Jill Sohm at sohm@usc.edu.