Signature Pedagogies Learning Communities Call for Applications

As part of the Student Achievement Funding Initiative to support high-impact practices at Coastal Carolina University, the Center for Teaching Excellence to Advance Learning (CeTEAL) announces the Signature Pedagogy Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) for Summer 2018 through Spring 2019. The Signature Pedagogies FLC program encourages faculty to explore their teaching and reflect on disciplinary pedagogies. Faculty members will have the opportunity to research current literature to identify best practices and innovative pedagogy within their discipline. Successful recipients will participate in a multi-disciplinary learning community, design and implement a classroom research project, and disseminate the results to the CCU community and beyond when the project is complete. Fifteen spaces are available in the program. Two learning communities will be created with seven or eight faculty members. The deadline for submission is Friday, April 13, 2018.

Aim of the Program

The Signature Pedagogies program will support faculty members’ efforts to examine their own teaching practices and current practices within their disciplines with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. Faculty members will take part in a learning community over the course of a summer and two academic terms.

Applications are strongly encouraged that study implications for teaching within the core curriculum, interdisciplinary courses, and/or innovative teaching experiences and methods. Faculty may also consider how different delivery methods affect signature pedagogies. Through in-depth, contextualized, and evidence-based study, faculty members will examine the pedagogical literature in their field, design and implement innovative learning experiences, and share their results with the CCU community and beyond.

Upon completion of the Signature Pedagogies program, faculty will gain:

1. A community of colleagues from other disciplines who share an interest in improving student achievement through classroom research,
2. An introduction to classroom research and scholarship of teaching and learning,
3. An understanding of the research in current discipline-specific pedagogy and high-impact strategies for their classroom,
4. Strategies for classroom research (scholarship of teaching and learning),
5. Funding for a research project that can serve as the basis for an intellectual contribution to their field such as a conference presentation, journal article, grant or scholarly contribution appropriate to the faculty member’s discipline.

Background of the Program

When faculty improve their teaching practices, student learning is improved (Condun, Iverson, Manduca, Rutz and Willett, 2016). Every discipline has unique practices—methods for teaching, ways of thinking and professional practices, which define how a discipline prepares students—called signature
pedagogies. This program uses a faculty learning community structure to examine how signature pedagogies can improve student achievement at Coastal Carolina University.

Today’s students must be able to move beyond memorizing course basics; they must be able to think critically. Providing students with the opportunities to practice the thinking, the problem solving, the knowledge creation and the “doing,” within and across disciplines, will prepare them for the future. How do faculty prepare students within a program or a major to think, act and know as an expert in the field? Stated another way, how do faculty teach students to think like a scientist, a historian, a business manager, teacher or person within their discipline? Further, how do faculty encourage students outside of a program or major to value and apply discipline-based thinking, acting and knowing after one or two courses? The Signature Pedagogies Learning Communities Program will focus on improving curriculum, instruction and assessment practices through a disciplinary lens, which can have a high impact on student achievement.

In defining signature pedagogies, Schulman (2005) considers three dimensions: surface structure (operational acts of teaching and learning), deep structure (disciplinary assumptions about teaching and learning), and implicit structure (professional values and dispositions).

Using Schulman’s framework of signature pedagogies, this program will challenge faculty to consider:

1. How they teach and how students learn in their courses?
2. What disciplinary assumptions inform teaching in the discipline?
3. What are the disciplinary values, attitudes, and dispositions taught to students?
4. What is evidence of student learning within the discipline?

Developing the conditions and experiences under which students can engage in disciplinary habits of mind, even in courses outside of a major or program requires faculty to explore their own teaching to formally reflect on and question disciplinary pedagogies. This program proposes a faculty learning community structure for faculty to examine signature pedagogies at Coastal Carolina University.

About Learning Communities

A faculty learning community (FLC) is a group of faculty who work for the length of one year to examine one topic, in this case, signature pedagogies, from a multidisciplinary perspective. Members engage in disciplinary-based educational research, examine pedagogical literature within their individual disciplines, and participate in the larger conversation of their learning community.

These multi-disciplinary learning communities will participate in a set of activities designed to create a shared experience for exploring signature pedagogies. Participants will develop individual classroom research projects that result in an intellectual contribution. Learning communities provide a framework for sustained faculty development and have several advantages such as

- Building community and increasing collaboration across campus while honoring disciplinary expertise,
- Encouraging faculty to reflect on teaching and learning individually and with colleagues,
- Creating an awareness of scholarship of teaching and learning,
- Encouraging reflection on classroom practices,
 Producing intellectual contributions to be disseminated (Cox, 2004).

**Funding Opportunities**

Funding details are provided below and will only be distributed at the end of each semester in Fall 2018 and/or Spring 2019. Funding is contingent upon completion of reports and professional development activities. Faculty members who participate in and complete all activities may earn up to $3000.

1. **Faculty Research Stipend - $1000**
   A research stipend of $1000 is paid for research supporting the design and implementation of a classroom research project. The faculty member will design, develop and implement a classroom research project based on their research into their discipline’s signature pedagogies. Funds are distributed in the semester the classroom research project is completed, either Fall 2018 or Spring 2019.

2. **Learning Community Professional Development Activities – up to $1000**
   Professional development funds will be awarded for participation in the meetings, seminars, and activities established by the learning community. Each learning community will meet a minimum of ten times throughout the year. Learning community members must attend at least eight scheduled community activities during the year. Faculty members will receive $100 per professional development session or activity up to $1000. Funds are distributed at the end of Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 based upon the number of professional activities completed.

3. **Classroom Research Project Mid-Year and Final Report -- $500**
   Funds are provided for the submission of a detailed mid-year and final research report. Final reports are due in May 2019 and funds will be paid at the end of June 2019.

4. **Contribution to learning community final report – $500**
   Faculty members will contribute to the learning community final report by providing a summary of their research into the signature pedagogy of the discipline. Final reports will serve as the basis for a library of signature pedagogies for Coastal Carolina University. Final reports are due in June 2019.

**Optional - Faculty Learning Community Facilitator Stipend**

5. **Serve as Learning Community Facilitator -- $1500 (or $750 for co-facilitators)**
   a. This cycle of the Signature Pedagogies program will have two faculty learning communities. Two facilitator (or four co-facilitator) stipends are available for this cycle of the call for applications. Each FLC will have one facilitator or two co-facilitators.
   b. Community facilitators are responsible for assembling and submitting the final report, producing a schedule of activities for professional development and administrative details associated with the faculty learning community. Faculty members who wish to serve as a facilitator of a learning community may indicate their interest in the application.
Timeline

The project period for this semester’s grants is officially the Summer and Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. All research, activities and reports must be completed by June 2019. Learning Community participants will be expected to present the results of their Signature Pedagogies Classroom Research Study, as part of a CeTEAL session or other approved format such as symposium or webinar.

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<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 28, 2018</td>
<td>Call for Applications</td>
<td>Call for Applications distributed through the Office of the Provost</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13, 2018</td>
<td>Application Deadline</td>
<td>Applications to be received by April 13, 2018</td>
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<td>April 2018</td>
<td>Faculty committee meets to review Applications</td>
<td>Faculty committee meets to review Applications and select Applications to fund.</td>
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<td>End of April to Early May 2018</td>
<td>Notification of results</td>
<td>Faculty notified of the status of their Application.</td>
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<td>May 2018</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Orientation Sessions for FLC members and facilitators</td>
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<td>Summer 2018</td>
<td>Formation of Learning Communities, selection of facilitator, goal setting for Learning Communities</td>
<td>Learning community facilitator will contact members of the learning community to establish learning community goals, initial research for classroom research projects</td>
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<td>August 2018</td>
<td>Learning Community Fall 2018 Kick-Off Celebration Breakfast</td>
<td>Learning community kick-off breakfast with team building exercises and goal setting to begin the program</td>
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<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>Research, Design and Implementation Phase of Signature Pedagogies</td>
<td>Learning community members research the signature pedagogies of their field, design a classroom research project and attend learning community events.</td>
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<td>December 2018</td>
<td>Mid-year progress reports due</td>
<td>Members of the learning communities each submit a mid-year report of their classroom research project. Facilitators submit learning community mid-year report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>Continuation of Research, Design and Implementation Phase of Signature Pedagogies Continues</td>
<td>Learning community members research the signature pedagogies of their field, design a classroom research project and attend learning community events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>Open Classroom Project or CeTEAL presentation</td>
<td>Members of the learning community invite faculty into their classroom to</td>
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observe a Signature Pedagogies lesson or conduct a CeTEAL session on their Signature Pedagogies Classroom Research Project and attend learning community events

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<th>April or May, 2019</th>
<th>Learning Community Wrap-Up Celebration Dinner</th>
<th>Final meeting of learning community cohorts</th>
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<td>May 18, 2019</td>
<td>Individual reports containing classroom research projects due from Signature Pedagogies Learning Community participants</td>
<td>Final reports are submitted and received from individual participants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Learning Communities Reports Due</td>
<td>Learning community facilitators submit final reports for Signature Pedagogies Learning Communities</td>
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Guidelines

1. Eligibility
   a. All full-time, slotted Coastal Carolina University faculty members are invited to apply.
   b. Teaching associates who have taught an average of nine hours per semester for the past three years are also invited to apply.

2. Stipends
   a. Stipends are paid for research, reports and learning community professional development activities in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 at the end of the semester for completed activities. See Funding Opportunities for more information.

3. Commit to the year-long learning community format.
   a. Building community and collegiality are paramount to the success of a faculty learning community. Therefore, the expectation is that members consistently participate in their community. The grant requires investigation into disciplinary pedagogies, consistent participation in the faculty learning community, dissemination to peers both within Coastal Carolina University and beyond in an appropriate scholarly publication or presentation.

Learning Community Participant Expectations

1. Attend an Orientation Session
   a. Participants must attend an orientation session as part of the Signature Pedagogies program. Learning community facilitators will attend a separate session that will further delineate the responsibilities of the facilitator and the community

2. Design and Implement a Signature Pedagogy Classroom Research Study
   a. Identify a course that will be taught in Fall 2018 or Spring 2019 for the Classroom Research Study Project. The project will be tied to a course that is scheduled to be taught in Fall 2018 or Spring 2019
   b. Learning community participants will design, develop and implement a Classroom research study based upon disciplinary specific educational research.
   c. Core curriculum courses and interdisciplinary courses are strongly encouraged.

3. Learning Community Professional Development Activities
   a. Learning communities will establish their schedule of activities meet the needs of the community. Each learning community will set goals, activities and the schedule for the faculty learning community. Activities may include monthly working meetings to share research projects updates, discussions of a shared text or readings, or CeTEAL sessions.

4. Prepare an individual report and contribute to the learning community final report (prepared by the learning community facilitator)
Criteria for Awards and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated on several criteria:

1. Selected course(s) for the research project,
2. Impact on CCU student learning within the course,
3. Demonstrated commitment to quality teaching and improving student learning,
4. Potential contributions to a learning community,
5. Ability to commit to the learning community for the year,
6. Desire to engage in classroom research and the scholarship of teaching and learning,
7. Impact within discipline-based educational research,
8. The quality of the proposed scholarly product and its potential contribution to signature pedagogies and the scholarship of teaching and learning,
9. How this process can serve as a basis for an intellectual contribution to the field such as a journal article submission, curricular innovation, grant applications, conference paper or presentation or types of scholarly contributions appropriate for the discipline,

Guidelines for Applications and Application Process

Applications must be submitted online through the Signature Pedagogies Learning Communities application website.
Application Requirements:

Part A. Answer the following questions on the Application website.

1. Provide a professional bio of 100-150 words.
2. Describe the nature of your current teaching responsibilities.
3. In which course will you conduct a classroom research study? List the course number and title.
4. Please list the University Catalog course description, the course objectives and student learning outcomes associated with your course.
5. Describe your efforts to improve your teaching (e.g. professional development, development of courses, classroom research, pedagogical service, curricular development, assessment, etc.).
6. Describe two or three of your most pressing needs regarding teaching and learning.
7. Describe how participating in signature pedagogies research may improve your teaching and student learning?
8. What do you hope to gain from the experience of a learning community?
9. Part of the program is a classroom research project that will result in an intellectual contribution. What ideas do you have for this project?
10. What do you think you can contribute to this community? (e.g. special teaching experience, project management, research methods, etc.)

Part B. After submitting the application, email the following to gsneyers@coastal.edu by April 13, 2018:

1. Signed copy of the Chair and Dean Support Letter form
2. Copy of the course syllabus for the class in which you intend to conduct the Classroom Research Project
3. Any other documentation you think may be helpful in the review of your application

Applications that do not contain the above elements or clearly address the goals of the program may be rejected.

Deadline for Applications

Applications should be submitted online and with appropriate signature pages no later than Friday, April 13, 2018. Applications received after this date will not be accepted.
Signature Pedagogies Learning Communities Connection to the University Strategic Plan and Departmental Assessment

Signature Pedagogies addresses a key institutional strategy and goals of the CCU Strategic Plan.

*Strategy 1. Academic Excellence and Instructional Quality*

In support of Strategy 1, the Signature Pedagogies program will provide faculty with the opportunity to be grounded in the pedagogical literature of their field. This program furthers teaching effectiveness (Goal 1.1) by providing CCU faculty a community of practice with colleagues from across campus to develop highly impactful and engaging instruction. Signature pedagogies extends the teacher-scholar model (Goal 1.3) by promoting disciplinary-based educational research and classroom research. In this program, faculty will reflect on their teaching practice and apply the rigor of scholarly research and teaching and learning become a scholarly activity. Students benefit from faculty who are rooted in their teaching practice and who seek to improve instructional experiences (Goal 1.4) by examining teaching through a scholarly lens.

CeTEAL’s mission “seeks to promote a culture of excellence in teaching and learning at Coastal Carolina University by facilitating the integration of proven pedagogical techniques into the instructional process and encouraging the development of a university-wide community of reflective practitioners.” As such, our goals are to provide opportunities and experiences for faculty to improve their teaching and student learning. The Signature Pedagogies Program will provide a sustained faculty development experience with the proven structure of learning communities (CeTEAL Goal 1) in which faculty turn their classroom into a research setting to inform their teaching. When faculty critically reflect on their teaching, apply the framework of discipline-based classroom research, disseminate the results in a public forum, students can participate innovative, high-quality instruction and experiences (CeTEAL Goal 3).

Cox, M.D., (2004) Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities. In M.D. Cox & L. Richlin (Ed.), Building faculty learning communities (pp. 5-23) New Directions for Teaching and Learning No. 97, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

