UTM Funding Opportunities

UTM offers two funding opportunities for instructors developing or implementing an innovative course practice, performing SoTL work, or presenting work at a conference with a pedagogical focus or track:

- Teaching Development and Innovation Grant (TDI): February 27, 2017
  *The TDI is a seed grant that provides a maximum of $2000 for a UTM faculty member to support the implementation and assessment of innovative practice in an undergraduate course at UTM.*

- Teaching Development Travel Grant (TDT): February 27, 2017
  *The TDD provides a maximum of $750 for a UTM instructor to present at a pedagogical conference or in the pedagogical track at a disciplinary conference.*

Submission Instructions

To apply for one of these grants, please prepare a two-page document that includes:
- an abstract for the work being proposed/presented;
- (for the TDT) conference information;
- (for the TDI) if not in the abstract, a description of the impact of the project;
- (for the TDI) a timeline for the work being proposed that includes plans for assessment and/or dissemination; and
- an estimated budget.

Three example applications, adapted from proposals funded in a previous call, are attached to this document with permission from the applicants:
- *Developing GGR385: Experiential Learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing* (Nicole Laliberté)
- *An Experimental Evaluation of Test Preparation Techniques* (Jayne Baker and Nathan Innocente)
- *Stress Intervention Strategies and Test Performance* (Brett Beston)

Please email your materials to andrew.petersen@utoronto.ca by February 27, 2017. All submissions will be reviewed by a panel of four faculty, including the Vice-Dean, Teaching and Learning and one faculty member each from the humanities, social sciences, and sciences.
Developing GGR385: Experiential Learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Abstract
Dr. Nicole Laliberté, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream of the Department of Geography, in collaboration with Mr. Cat Criger, Aboriginal Elder in Residence at UTM, is seeking ways to incorporate indigenous ways of knowing into our current curriculum in alignment with the University of Toronto’s mandate for Aboriginal inclusion (University of Toronto 2014). Towards this end, we have recently added a third year course on the Geographies of Indigenous Identity and Well-being to our curriculum. This course not only introduces students to literature on indigenous knowledges and indigenous identity, it also strives to guide students through an inquiry-based learning process inspired by the current best practices in Indigenous pedagogical studies. Funding from the UTM Teaching Development Grant in combination with matching funds committed by the Department of Geography would provide resources to support the experiential and inquiry-based aspects of this course through Teaching Assistant training, on-campus Teaching Circles and off-campus field trips to places of significance for local Indigenous communities. The effectiveness of these programs will be assessed via student and TA reflections and surveys. Lessons learned from this project will contribute to future collaborations across disciplines and departments in a concerted effort to increase indigenous experiential learning opportunities at UTM.

Timeline
Funding will be used during the Fall 2016 semester. TA training will occur in early September. The learning circles will occur throughout the semester, and the off-campus programs will occur during the middle of the semester. The findings from this programming will serve as leverage for a LEAF application to further develop the program and facilitate future collaborations at UTM to increase student access to indigenous experiential learning.

Assessment
Teaching Assistant Training: Teaching assistants will complete a reflection survey after their training, half way through the semester, and again at the end of the semester to evaluate the uniqueness of the TA training as well as its effectiveness as a mode of preparation for course responsibilities. These surveys will include a series of open questions that encourage TAs to reflect on their role in the course process, the support they received, and the transferability of these skills to future work. Feedback from these surveys will be used to improve future training designs.

Student Learning: The effectiveness of experiential learning will be assessed using DEAL-model reflections. DEAL reflections guide students through the reflection process by requiring them to do three things: 1) Describe the activity or experience, 2) Evaluate the experience in terms of how it relates to their personal lives, civic engagement, and academic knowledge, and 3) assess how they will Apply the Learning to their future lives. Students will complete a DEAL reflection for all experiential activities they participate in during the course. In addition, students will complete an anonymous survey in the middle and end of the semester to assess how effective they found different components of the course to be in achieving the learning objectives. This will allow us to assess the relative importance of the experiential activities in relation to other aspects of the course design.
**Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Cost/Unit</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TA training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hour</td>
<td>49.08</td>
<td>687.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA training facilitation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Circles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>¼ day</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip 1 (e.g. The Enabling Garden)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation (Mr. Criger)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport (+tax)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bus/day</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip 2 (e.g. Peel Aboriginal Network)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation (Mr. Criger)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport (+tax)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bus/day</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip 3 (e.g. Northern Lights)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation (Site staff honorarium)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport (+tax)</td>
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<td>Bus/day</td>
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<td>476</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<td>Lunches</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3994.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Budget Justification**

Funds will be used to support three primary types of pedagogical interventions. The first is the TA training. TAs will be paid at the negotiated hourly rate while Mr. Criger will be paid a daily honorarium of $300 for his work with the TAs (which is standard for his honorarium rates at UTM). The second use of funding will be to support additional Teaching Circles facilitated by Mr. Criger at UTM. Although Mr. Criger already hosts one weekly Teaching Circle through his position at Student Life, additional Teaching Circles will be required to handle the demand of 75 students who will participate multiple times. These Teaching Circles will be cost $75, a quarter of Mr. Criger’s daily honorarium rate of $300.

The final major category of expenditure is tied to off-campus trips designed to bring students into contact with spaces that are consciously constructed as Indigenous spaces. Students will be required to participate in one of the three trips offered leading to an average of 25 students per trip. Two of the trips will be in the Mississauga region while the third will be in a non-urban setting further away. These trips will incur a similar set of costs. All three will require the hiring of a bus to transport students. All three will require the payment of an honorarium to the host site (approximately $100) and to Mr. Criger for his facilitation of the trip. Finally, for the long-distance trip, we have included some funding for lunch for the students as the trip will be of a longer duration than the others. In summary, funding provided by a UTM Teaching Development Grant with matching funds from the Department of Geography would support the process of exposing students to different types of educational environments and providing them with meaningful instruction once there.

The Department of Geography has committed to match the UTM teaching development grant funds to cover the full cost of the project.
The UTM Teaching Development and Innovation Grant: Application

Project Title: An Experimental Evaluation of Test Preparation Techniques

Jayne Baker
Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream
Department of Sociology UTM

Nathan Innocente
Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream
Department of Sociology UTM

Abstract

Is it possible to create and manage active learning opportunities in the context of a large course without the benefit of tutorials or labs? This research project explores that question by comparing test preparation strategies in the context of 500-person sections of Introduction to Sociology (SOC100) at UTM. Since January 2014 (research phase I), we have used a research survey and focus groups to gauge perceived effectiveness of three test preparation strategies, described below, and solicit students' feedback on the strategies and their expectations around instructor involvement in test preparation. The next phase of research (to begin September 2016) involves a randomization experiment in the Fall 2016 sections of SOC100 (2 sections of 500 students) where students will be randomly assigned to participate in one of three test preparation strategies (or a control group). Doing so will enable us to measure the actual effectiveness, if any, of one test preparation strategy over another, as measured by test performance. We believe that our results will be valuable across campuses and disciplines, in any course with large numbers of students.

Timeline

February 2016: Submit ROP and select ROP student
Summer 2016: Ethics protocol and graduate student recruitment
September 2016: randomize students and conduct test preparation activities
November 2016: complete focus groups with students
December 2016: complete data analysis
January 2017: prepare manuscript for submission to American Sociological Association (ASA) annual meeting

Attend ASA meeting in Montreal
Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Resources</th>
<th>Research assistant (graduate student)</th>
<th>30 hours x $31.92 ($28 + 4% vacation + 10% benefits)</th>
<th>$957.60</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Resources</td>
<td>Conference travel (undergraduate student)</td>
<td>Economy train fare to Montreal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel $220 x 3 nights</td>
<td>$660</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ground/station transportation</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Budget** | **$1892.60**

**Budget Justification**

**Human Resources:** This item is for research support from a sociology PhD student, who will assist in data management and descriptive statistics and multiple regression.

**Other Resources:** Our budget includes the conference travel cost for an undergraduate ROP student. We believe that including our ROP student in this conference is a unique opportunity for him/her to participate in a professional scholarly meeting and have exposure to research-in-progress in all subfields of a discipline. The annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in 2017 is conveniently held in Montreal.

Our department will cover the cost of conference registration for the ROP student ($210 USD= $303). We will use department or UTFA funds to cover the "IFAT" lottery scratch cards used in small group tutorials. As in the past, we will secure funds for focus group transcription through the ROP. Finally, UTM computer labs are equipped with the statistical software required by our graduate student.
UTM Teaching Development Travel Grant

Application Information
Brett Beston, Ph.D.
brett.beston@utoronto.ca
Assistant Professor – Teaching Stream

Summary
I am seeking travel funding to present my research on stress intervention strategies on test performance. These funds would represent much needed support in my professional development as I establish my scholarship and research of teaching. I would also value the opportunity to present to, and connect with colleagues who share similar professional interests.

These funds will be used to pay a significant portion of the costs needed to present my research at the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) conference in London Ontario (June, 2016). This research fits well within the conference theme of ‘Empowering Learners, Effecting Change’. My research is centres around simple strategies (no training required) that students can employ to reduce academic related stress and improve test performance.

Abstract.
Stress is a common experience in undergraduate education with nearly 85% of students reporting moderate to severe stress. This stress is not a product of ‘Life stress’, but rather, is often attributed to pressures to perform at a high academic standard and taking tests. While stress can provide a strong motivational drive to perform well, the acute stress of a ‘test’ often negatively impacts test performance.

It seems reasonable to assume that managing stress will improve test performance, but the outcome of recent studies highlight that not all stress-intervention approaches benefit students, or can provide instructors with a practical tool that can be easily implemented in a large classroom setting. However, the practice of integrative body-mind training (or simply called ‘mindfulness’) is a relatively simple and cost-effective approach that requires no prior training, and can be implemented in a large classroom setting. Mindfulness sessions can range in duration, but typically only requires 15 minutes of guided practice. The benefits of this minimalistic practice approach have been found to be lowered anxiety and increased attention. As such, this research extends prior findings to examining simple, easy to implement stress reducing practices in real-world testing situations.

The goal of this research is twofold: First, to test the effect of brief mindfulness activities to reduce test ‘stress’ and measure the effect on test performance. Secondly, it is to understand ‘why’ this intervention might work. In particular, what mental and physiological states predict treatment success? Our findings suggest that brief mindfulness activities lead to lower physiological indicators of stress and improved academic performance. Those students who previously reported higher levels of academic stress benefit most from this stress-intervention.
Budget

1. registration is expected to be ~$500
2. transportation (gas) ~ $80
3. accommodations, 3 nights - $118/night = $354
4. meals, 3 days - $55/day = $165
Total Expense Estimate = $1099

I am asking to be supported with $750 from the UTM Teaching Development Travel grant to help offset a significant proportion of the costs associated with attending this conference.