EX[L] Center
Faculty-Driven Initiatives
Requests for Proposals

Background

The Experiential Learning Center, or EX[L] Center, was formed in 2015 as a means to more efficiently facilitate experiential learning at UA. To that end, a main goal of the EX[L] Center is to “to support, expand, and create new, transcripted, experiential learning opportunities available to all UA students.”

Experiential learning opportunities are critically important aspects of a university education, because these provide students and faculty with a chance to learn more deeply by applying scholarly insights and rigorous analytical skills learned on campus to real world problems.

At The University of Akron, experiential learning already exists in many forms. However, in an effort to expand the number of students involved and the range of opportunities available to students, the EX[L] Center aims to support a number of faculty-led proposals each year that represent innovative, even entrepreneurial, ways to engage students in experiential learning. These proposals should be first shaped by what faculty and students would like to explore (they should be inquiry driven and problem solving focused) as significant and beneficial learning experiences to UA students. The EX[L] Center supported three faculty-driven initiative (FDIs) in year one (Paha Sapa Program, Unclasses, and Right Message, Right Messenger: The Currency of Compassion) and three FDIs in year two (Demystify, Barbados/St. Lucia Power Project of the RCWG; SolidWorks 3D teaching initiative).

As a faculty-led program, we are inviting all tenured, tenure track (TT), and non-tenure track (NTT) faculty to apply for support for their ideas for this third year. Described projects may be experimental in nature, such as pilot projects in an area, or broader templates that create the framework for future activities.

Proposal Details

Proposals are limited to two-pages (front-side) with 11 pt. font (minimum) plus budget and biosketches. They should be submitted to Carolyn Behrman, EX[L] Co-Director by October 15, 2017. It is expected that proposal budgets fall within a single fiscal year, to commence in fall/winter 2017 and that all funds will be spent by the end of the 2017-2018 fiscal year (ending June 30, 2018). Proposals may be resubmitted in subsequent years if appropriate.
Proposals should address the following within the two-page limit:

1) Description and Objective(s) of the proposed activity
   Include specific need this experiential opportunity is addressing.
2) Evaluation of proposed activity
   Address what will determine if the activity is successful.
3) Fit of proposal with the goals of the EX[L] Center
   Consider hands-on, team-based, and or problem-based learning;
   interdisciplinary emphasis; clear and direct impact (number of students and
   nature and intensity impact) and sustainability, as applicable.
4) Specific ask
   Include details regarding how the EX[L] Center can assist you, financially or
   administratively, in achieving the objectives.
5) Community/industry partnerships
   Identify who you are working with (as appropriate).
6) Scalability
   Explain how this activity may be expanded to impact a larger number of
   students after the pilot phase, if applicable.
7) If any aspect of these criteria prevents you from adequately explaining your
   innovative idea, ignore that criteria and focus on explaining your idea. We will read
   and consider all submissions and we do not want our expectations outlined here to
   suffocate any colleagues’ creativity. At the same time, if we conclude that the
   criteria you chose to ignore could have been meaningfully addressed in your
   proposal that will weaken your submission.

Budget: List costs with short explanations. If the project is leveraging other funds in
support of this work (internal or external), please indicate.

Biosketches: In addition to the application, please send a 1/2 page biography for each
faculty member involved underscoring interests and experience as they relate to this
project.

Here are some of the current ways UA delivers experiential learning to our students:

- Undergraduate Research
- Field Work
- Student Teaching
- Service Learning
- Community-based Research (Participatory Action Research)
- Internships
- Co-Ops
- Practicum
- Clinical
- Directed Volunteer or Co-Curricular Activities
- Study Abroad
- Unclasses
- Juried Exhibitions & Performance