



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY


WASHINGTON, D.C.

SCOTT A. BASS
PROVOST

MEMORANDUM

October 12, 2009

TO: Full-Time Faculty

FROM: Scott A. Bass, Provost 

SUBJECT: Bridges to Collaboration

One of the most frequently discussed topics at the February 2009 Faculty Summit concerned the ability of faculty to teach and work with colleagues across colleges, schools, and departments. Faculty identified allocation of instructional credit, barriers across the units, and the absence of incentives as problems preventing faculty from team teaching courses.

In consideration of these challenges, the Office of the Provost, in consultation with the Deans, implemented *Bridges to Collaboration* as a Spring 2010 pilot program to facilitate cross-unit instruction. The pilot program invited proposals from the participating units and funding was awarded to support the development of the program on a competitive basis. Based on the results of that pilot, the Bridges to Collaboration program will continue for the 2010-2011 academic year with some modifications to stimulate and facilitate faculty engagement in the development of new cross-disciplinary and cross-school/college courses. Funding will be available for both the Fall and Spring terms in 2010-2011.

The Office of the Provost has earmarked \$35,000, of which ten awards of \$3,500 each will be made available campus-wide as replacement resources to units that release their full-time faculty to team-teach newly designed courses. We expect to support five new courses in Fall 2010 and another five in Spring 2011.

For funding consideration, the faculty team must submit a proposal containing the following materials:

- A one page cover memo attached to the syllabus making a case for: (1) why this course furthers the intellectual collaboration deemed important; (2) how this instructional approach and course enhances student learning; (3) how this course improves the curriculum; and (4) the academic unit where the course will be housed.
- A proposed course syllabus developed collaboratively. The syllabus must demonstrate involvement by both faculty members for the entirety of the course. The course must be a true collaboration for the entire term and not a joint effort with part-time support from each individual.

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- A memorandum of approval from the chairs/directors of the academic units. With this approval, the unit losing a regular scheduled course agrees to accept \$3,500 from the Office of the Provost in lieu of one regular course that would have been offered otherwise by the faculty member. No additional compensation will be made to the unit gaining the course. Should the course be cross-listed, the proposal should determine the unit receiving the funding or, alternatively, the funds may be shared. Funds will be awarded to the Dean's office. The funds must be used to provide instruction normally delivered by the faculty for the semester in which they will team-teach.

Complete proposal packages (cover memo, syllabus, approval from academic unit chairs/directors) must be submitted to the Dean(s) by December 1, 2009, for courses to be taught in Fall 2010. The corresponding deadline for Spring 2011 course proposals is April 1, 2010.

The Dean(s) will review and forward applications for undergraduate courses to Vice Provost Phyllis Peres for review and approval. Graduate course applications should be sent to Vice Provost Rosemary Wander. Approval or denial of completed proposals will be made by the relevant Vice Provost based on merit and resources available. Questions regarding this program should be directed to the relevant Vice Provost.

We hope this provides additional incentive and flexibility and a chance for creative initiatives for the 2010-2011 academic year.