

2014 TransCanada Collaborative SoTL Inquiry Grants

The Institute for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at MRU is pleased to announce a call for applications for the 2013-2014 TransCanada Collaborative SoTL Inquiry Grants. These grants are designated for collaborative teaching and learning inquiry projects which go beyond an inquiry about teaching and learning in a single class. Note that while the Nexen Scholars Program is designed to support scholars in developing a project, the TransCanada grants require a complete research proposal including literature review, research question, methodology and dissemination plans.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is inclusive and unified by its potential to have impact in the classroom and to deepen our understanding of student learning, but diverse in discipline, theory, methodology, and method. Eligible projects must propose rigorous, systematic, evidence-based study of teaching and learning and must be:

- focused on student learning,
- situated in the existing literature,
- grounded in context,
- methodologically sound, and
- publicly disseminated.

Some examples of collaborative inquiries include, but are not limited to, inquiries about teaching and learning that:

- will be investigated in multiple courses and/or sections in a department or program (for example, studying student learning over a series of courses)
- will be investigated in courses from different programs and faculties (for example, studying students' writing skills development in courses from a variety of disciplines)
- will be investigated in courses from multiple contexts (for example, studying the effect of a certain pedagogy at institutions with varying class sizes)
- have a student as a co-investigator (a senior student collaborating to design/conduct a study in a lower-level class)
- require the expertise of a variety of co-investigators due to the size and scope of the project (for example, a technical writing expert collaborating to study student report writing skills in a science lab)

For multi-institutional projects, a MRU faculty member must be the principal investigator on the project.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Project proposals will be evaluated based on 3 main criteria: quality of the project; likelihood of impact beyond the research group; and expertise of the research group, as demonstrated by the submitted application and CVs.

Project Quality (50% of overall evaluation):

- explicit focus on teaching and learning in post-secondary education,
- clear goals and rationale supported by literature review,
- quality and appropriateness of the methodology,
- suitability of proposed strategies and timelines,
- appropriateness and justification of proposed budget.

Likelihood of impact (30% of overall evaluation):

- potential for impact on teaching and learning,
- potential to contribute to existing literature,
- training, mentoring, and dissemination opportunities provided to students, if applicable,
- dissemination plan, including venues for appropriate dissemination within and beyond Mount Royal.

Expertise (20% of overall evaluation):

- quality and significance of previous and current scholarship activity within the research group, particularly related to teaching and learning,

- suitability of the research team including evidence of methodological expertise and capability to undertake the project.

All proposals will be required to be rated “acceptable” by the review committee on each of the 3 main criteria, in order to be funded. If more applications are received than can be fully accommodated, then applications may be ranked according to the weighting scheme above and/or partial funding may be awarded.

Funding and Eligible expenses

The maximum allowable budget for each grant depends on the size of the project (number of co-investigators, number of classes being investigated, number of years of study, etc.). Multi-year projects can be supported but in these cases, proposed budgets must be broken down by year. Multi-year projects include not only studies where data is collected over multiple years, but also studies where so much data is collected in one year that another year would be required to complete the data analysis. All proposed budgets must fall within the following constraints:

- research expenses to a maximum \$2,000 per section/course/context in which the study is being conducted, to a maximum of \$6,000
 - acceptable expenses for the conduct of the research (data collection and analysis) include student research assistant compensation, transcription, photocopying, analytical software etc. as well as travel between institutions for multi-institutional collaborations
 - note that research expenses do NOT include the purchase of teaching equipment e.g. classroom technology, which must be secured elsewhere
- plus
- one conference presentation per researcher/RA per year to a max of \$2000 per person; collaborative dissemination plans with the entire research team, including student RAs, present are strongly encouraged.

If applications exceed the budgeted amount for any given year or if the proposed budget is not adequately justified, partial funding may be awarded.

Note that while ethics clearance is not required before an application is approved, funds cannot be released until clearance has been given by the Mount Royal University Human Research Ethics Board. For multi-institutional studies, the PI is responsible to ensure that appropriate ethical clearance is also attained at all applicable institutions.

Reporting

All successful grant applicants will be required to disseminate their findings at least once in an on-campus forum such as a departmental colloquium or an Institute-organized presentation, to which other SoTL scholars could be invited.

Also, successful applicants will be required to report to the Institute on their projects, in a format of their choosing (for example, a paper, presentation, or poster), and notify the Institute yearly of all dissemination activities. For multi-year projects, a brief report will be required every May 15, with description of progress made in data collection, analysis, etc. and any changes to the proposed research or budget. Research budgets for multi-year projects will be transferred on a yearly basis so a yearly report also serves as a funding request for the following year. A final report will be required of all projects at the end of the proposed research timeline. Faculty will not be considered for subsequent research grants unless their reporting obligations with the Institute and the Office of Research Services are up to date.

Process

Applications are due **March 31 and Oct 31** each year and will be reviewed by the SoTL Scholarship Review Committee, chaired by the Director of the Institute. Applicants will be notified of the committee’s decision approximately 2 weeks after the deadline, and funding will be available immediately or as soon as appropriate evidence of ethics clearance is provided.

To apply for the 2013-2014 TransCanada Collaborative SoTL Inquiry Grant, Principal Investigators should submit a completed application form (in the form of a doc or pdf file) clearly addressing the above criteria. The application form is available [here](#).

For additional information please contact the Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning through Anne Johnston at ajohnston@mtroyal.ca.

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