PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING PROJECT

Come Join Us for the 2017-2018 Academic Year!

What is the Peer Review of Teaching Project?

Even if you value and support excellence in teaching, it is often difficult to capture the intellectual work of your teaching in a form that can be conveyed easily to others. Some questions you might ask include the following:

- How does one document, make visible, and assess the careful, difficult, and intentional scholarly work entailed in planning and teaching a course?
- How can I show the intellectual work of teaching that takes place inside and outside my classroom?
- How can I systematically investigate, analyze, and document my students' learning in relation to my teaching?
- How can I communicate this analysis and documentation of my teaching to campus or disciplinary audiences?

Whether you are a successful teacher who seeks to document the impact of your teaching more visibly, you desire to improve your teaching of a particular course, or you want to investigate a particular issue in your teaching, Peer Review is designed for you.

The Peer Review of Teaching Project provides a model for how you can document, assess, and make visible your teaching and your students' learning. A faculty member's experience consists of a year-long (August to May) fellowship that supports the writing of three short essays on different aspects of teaching (intellectual content, teaching practices, and student understanding). Faculty combine these essays into a reflective document (a course portfolio or case study) that illustrates inquiry into the success of a course in helping students learn. Previous participants have used their portfolios as evidence of teaching effectiveness for teaching awards, promotion and tenure files, and accreditation reviews.

What Type of Outcomes Result from Participating?

In the past twenty years, over 300 UNL faculty members (from at least 53 units; 8 different colleges) have participated. Specific outcomes resulting from your participation in the Peer Review of Teaching project will include:

- Reflecting upon, developing, and writing a course portfolio about one of your courses
- Identifying common teaching and curricular issues across academic disciplines
- Becoming skilled as a reviewer of a course portfolio (and other teaching materials)
- Discussing the challenges in teaching and addressing the needs of diverse student learners
- Developing a common vocabulary for assessing the intellectual work of teaching
- Being nurtured to become a leader in creating and advocating campus teaching policies

What about My Course?

A key requirement is that you must be actively involved in teaching a course during the **Spring 2018** semester because this is the course you will highlight, collect data on, and discuss during the year. Preference will be given to having a mix of faculty members from different disciplines and for courses focused on teaching undergraduate students, although graduate classes will be eligible.

What Financial Support Is Provided?

You will receive a $1000 salary stipend for time devoted to project activities (*e.g.,* writing essays, completing the course portfolio, and participating in project meetings) upon the completion of the May 2018 workshop and the posting of a completed course portfolio by early June.

What Exactly Do I have to Do?

Writing a course portfolio for your **Spring 2018 target course** involves writing three memos about your course.

The first memo, *Reflections on Course Content,* asks you to discuss your course syllabus and reflect on the course goals and the intellectual rational for these goals. The second memo, *Teaching Practices*, asks you to reflect on the teaching methods, course assignments, and course materials. The third memo, *Student Learning*, asks you to reflect on teaching in terms of student learning.

Once the three memos are completed, you integrate them into a reflective document (a course portfolio) that will potentially be made available to selected external reviewers at participating universities.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, participation and attendance at key meetings is required. Tentative dates for all of next year's meetings are:

- Friday, **August 18, 2017**: 9 am to 12 pm (Fri before classes start)
- Sat, **September 30, 2017**: 9 am to 1 pm (away football game day)
- Oct. & Nov. → individual team meetings with project coordinator (to be arranged around everyone's schedule)
- Friday, **December 1, 2017**: 1:00 to 3:00
- Friday, **January 19, 2018**: 1:00 to 3:00
- February & March → individual team meeting with project coordinator (to be arranged around everyone's schedule)
- Sat, **April 14, 2018**: 9 am to 1 pm
- Tue, **May 8, 2018**: 9 am to 2:30 pm (Tuesday after graduation)

Note: the meetings in September and April are on a Saturday. The May meeting is the week after final examinations

What Type of Time Commitment Is Involved?

Previous Peer Review of Teaching participants have suggested the following time estimates: Memo #1 (4 hours), Memo #2 (4 hours), Memo #3 (10 hours), development of a reflective memo or course portfolio (8 hours). Additional time is required to prepare for meetings by reading books and materials; attending the 1-day kick-off meeting (in August 2016); attending general peer review meetings (3 over the academic year); individual team meetings (approximately 2 times over the academic year); attending a 1-day seminar (in May 2018). **The amount of time one puts into any of these Peer Review activities is variable from person-to-person, though as we tell our students, the more time you can commit, the greater the learning experience.**

Any Final Thoughts I Should Be Aware Of?

Most UNL faculty who have completed the Peer Review of Teaching process speak very highly about their experiences. Many have indicated that it has had a positive impact on their approach to teaching and being able to document their students' learning. Hopefully your participation will have a measurable impact on your teaching abilities, teaching philosophies, and your understanding of the teaching profession and faculty peer review.

Below are the results of a recent survey of former project participants:

QUESTION	FACULTY PARTICIPANT RESPONSE (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)
As a result of my Peer Review of Teaching Project (PRTP) participation, I am better at defining course goals	4.56
As a result of my PRTP participation, I am better at identifying, articulating, and revising student learning objectives	4.56
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have changed the design of my course(s)	4.26
As a result of my PRTP participation, my expectations for my own teaching have increased	4.26
As a result of my PRTP participation, my expectations for my students' learning have increased	3.94
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have improved the assessments I use in my courses	4.29
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have questions about my students' learning that I would like to explore	4.32
Even after my PRTP participation, I have continued to frame and investigate questions about teaching and learning within my own classroom.	4.35
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have documented improvements in my students' learning	4.15
As a result of my PRTP participation, I am more familiar with the vocabulary used for discussing and evaluating teaching as intellectual work	4.12
As a result of my PRTP participation, I feel more capable of reading and assessing others' teaching materials	4.15
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have benefited from learning about teaching issues in other academic areas/departments/programs	4.42
As a result of my PRTP participation, I have taken on a leadership role related to teaching and/or student learning in my department/college/campus	4.03

How Do I Find Out More or Sign Up?

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Jody Koenig Kellas (jkellas2@unl.edu) or Eve Brank (ebrank2@unl.edu) or visit our website (http://peerreview.unl.edu/). To be considered for the project, by **July 15**, please complete the following brief survey https://ssp.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_dbz6HmVBrQmeiuV about why you wish to participate in the program and the course you think you might like to assess in Spring 2018.