To: All University Faculty
From: Kate Krause, Dean of University College
Subject: An Invitation to Propose a First-Year Course for Fall 2014

University College prides itself on providing resources and services to all UNM students, with a specialized focus on freshmen and their success in college. UNM’s First-Year Learning Communities (FLCs) have had a positive impact on students’ success at UNM. Students praise these courses for reasons related to content, faculty interaction, and acculturation to a university setting during their first semester on campus. Almost all students who take a FLC Seminar at UNM tell us they would recommend that other entering students participate in the program. These courses impact students’ sense of community at UNM and are very popular, as is evident by an average fill rate of 96%. They directly contribute to achievement of students’ retention and graduation goals. FLCs serve as a high impact practice that helps students lay a strong foundation to their college experience. We would like to offer these positive experiences to as many students as possible.

We need your help. Please consider teaching in a First-Year Learning Community in fall 2014.

Proposals must be received by Monday, December 2, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

Proposal GUIDELINES may be found on the pages following, and at:


The proposal FORM is available on-line at:

FLC Fall 2014 Proposal

Deadline for submitting proposals is December 2, 2013 by 5:00 pm.

There will be two Proposal Workshops. See the guidelines for more details. For additional questions, contact – Sonia Gipson Rankin, Associate Dean, University College 505.277.6515 sgrankin@unm.edu
FIRST YEAR LEARNING COMMUNITIES

GUIDELINES

Please review these guidelines before you fill out the proposal form.

Deadline for submitting proposals is December 2, 2013
The proposal FORM is available on-line at:
FLC Fall 2014 Proposal

Please plan to attend one of the two FLC Proposal Workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Learning Community Proposal Workshops Schedule</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Main Campus:</strong> Wednesday November 6, 2013: 2:00 to 3:00 pm. Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), UAEC B24</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>North Campus:</strong> Friday, November 8, 2013: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. HSC DCWest DCW Room B114 (basement level next to the coffee cart in Domenici West)</td>
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Please contact Sonia Gipson Rankin, Associate Dean, University College 505.277.6515 sgrankin@unm.edu

WHAT IS A FIRST-YEAR LEARNING COMMUNITY?

A Learning Community consists of students enrolled in the same classes with a common theme or curricular link. Ideally, the classes are small enough that the students and faculty get to know each other and form a true community. Often, FLCs are two small enrollment courses. Students enrolled in both, and the instructors collaborated to link material across the two courses. We use the diagram below to illustrate that FLC format.

The success of FLCs in student engagement, retention and graduation has convinced us to expand FLCs so that more students could have the FLC experience. In expanding the reach of FLCs, we are also expanding the FLC model to include pairs in which one class is larger than 25. For example, a new FLC might link 22 students who are enrolled in a large lecture course with a 22-student section of English 101. Regardless of the configuration, the key elements are linked curriculum, shared academic experience, and close collaboration between the instructors. We help you accomplish these by the following:

- You propose a First Year Course that will be part of the community.
We will identify a **Linked Course** and instructor. If you have someone in mind, please let us know.

- The two courses are linked to create a **First-Year Learning Community**
- We will market your Community to interested freshmen.
- Paired instructors attend orientation sessions prior to the start of the semester.

Each instructor takes primary responsibility for his or her class in the FLC. Each class contributes to the discussions, readings, problems, papers, and presentations of the other class. You will work closely with your linked course instructor to coordinate and integrate your classes.

**WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THE FIRST YEAR COURSE?**
If you are proposing a traditional 25-student seminar, the emphasis will be on active, inquiry-based learning; on developing communication skills in the context of disciplinary knowledge; and on teamwork in faculty-student and student-student relationships. Small course FLCs are taught using cooperative and collaborative learning methods that engage freshmen as active, involved learners, with a minimum of "lecture". If you are proposing a link to a higher enrollment course, the instructor in that larger course must still collaborate with the instructor in the linked class. The emphasis will remain on providing the disciplinary knowledge that is used in some of the assignments in the Linked Class. All First-Year Courses are taught by UNM faculty.

**COURSE STYLES**
UNM’s successful FLC model has historically been based on linking a discipline-based three credit Freshman Seminar to a UNM Writing or Speaking Core course. The UNM Core course was most often English 101, English 102, or CJ 130 (Public Speaking). This year, University College welcomes proposals that expand the notion of “linked courses” to include other models. We welcome *outside-the-box* ideas and *innovations* that re-imagine First-Year courses and courses offered through the core and take advantage of best practices in your department. Some examples are:

- Linked courses between a First Year Course and a UNM core course (Example: current FLC model)
- Linked courses between two UNM core curriculum courses (Example: BIO 110 + ENGL 101)
- Linked courses between a UNM core course and a course required for pre-majors in your discipline or department (Example: AFST 103 + PHIL 156)
- Core courses paired with STEM courses (Example: POLS 200 + STAT 145)
- Subsets of students enrolled in large lecture courses linked to smaller core courses (Example: Math 121 + ECON 106)
- First-Year Courses with 1, 2, 3, or 4 instructors from multiple fields instructing on an interdisciplinary topic. (Examples: Food Security, Privacy, Sustainability that link a section of CJ 130 or ENGL 101 with faculty from several disciplinary traditions team teaching a single 3-credit seminar).
- Communities based on your department’s recitation or lab sections of large lectures in which one or more sections are paired with a second course. (Example: History recitation section + English 101)

Each seminar should normally be designed for three hours of credit, and must meet at least once a week. You are encouraged to include activities that take students outside of the classroom, e.g., attendance at a lecture, film, performance, or reading; visit to a research facility and to base evaluation on classroom participation, papers, projects, and other assignments. To create the communities that have made FLCs successful in the past, seminars are offered as co-requisites with a second class or subsection of a class. All UNM rules for adding, dropping, and withdrawal will apply; students who drop one course must drop the paired course.
Seminars that are offered under departmental course numbers will be given preference, but if your department does not have a course that would be appropriate for a First Year Seminar, University College staff will help you. Topics courses in your department may be appropriate. You also may propose a course to be offered under the Arts and Sciences First-Year Seminar course number ARSC 198 – Freshman Seminar Topics. The UNM Catalog description for ARSC 198 follows:

**Freshman Seminar Topics**

ARSC 198 (3) Variable content in an academic discipline. Through study of topic, develops academic skills including scholarship, research, comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, application, critical thinking, and communication of ideas. Most sections require coregistration in a specified "linked" course. Corequisite: some sections may require co-registration in another specified course. Restriction: freshman standing {Fall, Spring}

You may choose to include the participation of an upper division student to serve as a peer mentor and we encourage you to work with CAPS and CEP to identify peer support systems. Peer mentors can serve a number of roles, including: modeling active class participation; facilitating and enhancing participation in class activities; mentoring, facilitating electronic communications among the students; and serving as a resource and role model for the students. Since one of the goals of the seminar is to promote the interaction of faculty and first-year students, peer mentors may not take on primary instruction tasks such as leading class or grading assignments.

**WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN THE PROPOSALS?**

University College is offering financial support to departments and faculty to develop and teach courses for first year students. Proposals are invited on any disciplinary or interdisciplinary topic. Those that incorporate a faculty member’s research interests and activities are especially encouraged. We welcome:

- Courses from all departments and colleges on campus.
- Courses that satisfy UNM Core Curriculum requirements.
- Courses that promote the University’s strategic goals.
- Courses that form a creative connection to STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).
- Courses that form a creative connection to Entrepreneurship.
- Courses that bring an international connection to our undergraduate curriculum.
- Courses that incorporate service-learning.
- Courses that are pre-requisites for your department’s degree programs.
- We also look for courses that will help students to explore specific professional pathways such as research, teaching, law, engineering, management, and health related fields such as medicine, veterinary, and nursing.
- Additionally, we welcome proposals that may not fit those models that have potential to support and challenge freshmen in their first semester. Surprise us!
- Let us work with you to develop your ideas while you are developing your proposal.
- We require that certain learning objectives be incorporated in the context of your topic, and that those learning objectives be assessed. The required learning objectives are teamwork, critical thinking, and integrative learning as defined by the American Association of College and Universities VALUE rubrics (www.aacu.org/value/rubrics).
WHO MAY SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

- Faculty from all colleges and schools who are emeritus, tenured, tenure-track, clinical faculty, research faculty and/or full-time lecturers are encouraged to submit proposals, and **have priority in selection**. An objective of the FLCs is for full-time UNM faculty to teach first year students in the program.
- We will also consider proposals from UNM staff, part-time instructors and visiting faculty, if they have previously taught at UNM.
- Proposals may be submitted by a department chair with the instructor of the course specified or by an instructor (with approval of the department chair). You may co-teach with another faculty member if you wish.
- Outstanding Graduate Students (typically ABD and/or UNM Teaching Assistant Award recipients) may submit proposals.

COMPENSATION

Compensation will depend on whether the course is taught on-load or as an overload, but all participants will receive a $1,000 stipend as payment for attending two orientation events and for the time it takes to coordinate with your teaching partner. If a seminar is taught by more than one faculty member, compensation will be apportioned between them.

You will be compensated by University College for developing and teaching your FLC and for full collaboration with your “linked” instructor and course. Subject to approval by your chair and dean, you can teach your course for extra compensation as an overload. Or you and your chair may agree to have us “buy out” a regular course you would otherwise teach. Funding will be determined by whether the course is taught on-load or as an overload. **Whether this course is taught as an overload or on-load will also be taken into account during the selection process.**

If you teach the course as an “overload”, you will receive the following compensation:

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<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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**Summer compensation is for “linking” your course. We define linking as the following:**

- Working (on your own schedule) with your “linked” instructor before fall semester to prepare your FLC and generate one shared syllabus for your FLC.
- Accepting occasional invitations to meet freshmen or their parents at periodic orientations in the summer (subject to your availability).
- Attending and participating in all pre-semester mandatory meetings.
- Working with your “linked” instructor during fall semester to coordinate your classes. Regular meetings with your teaching partner are strongly advised.
- Teaching your course during fall semester.
- Occasionally attending the linked class in your FLC, and accommodating your linked instructor’s attendance at your course.
- Completing a post-semester assessment and evaluation of your FLC with your linked instructor.
SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Teaching in an FLC is a highly collaborative process, requiring time, cooperation and consultation with a teaching partner and others. You know your schedule, personality and preferred teaching style best. (Please, review “What does Linking Look Like?” and “The Challenges of Teaching with Others” included with these guidelines.)

- Virtually all students in an FLC are 18 years old and in their first year of college. We address the issues related to teaching freshmen at the Faculty Institute.

- We will work to market your FLC classes. In fall 2013, FLC classes are filled to 96% of capacity.

- Your course and the linked FLC class should meet in the same classroom or relatively close together, and the two classes will be scheduled back-to-back, with a 10- or 15-minute break in between. You must be available to occasionally attend the class linked to yours, so your schedule must leave you free to attend your linked class.

- It is difficult to attract freshmen to classes that meet in late afternoon. We rarely schedule FLC sections that end later than 4:00 p.m. Mornings and mid-day are preferred. There have been rare exceptions. We always need to offer more MWF class schedules, and fewer T TH class schedules, but don’t let that stop you from proposing.

- You may submit more than one idea and proposal. Distinct ideas should be submitted in separate proposals. If you prefer one proposal to another, please let us know.

YOUR CHAIR OR DIRECTOR...
Because your participation in this program may affect your department’s course offerings and your other work, we require that you discuss your proposal with your chair or director before submitting it and that you have their support. Your participation is contingent on approval of your chair and dean and requires the Chairs/Deans Approval Form for FLCs. Please separately submit a statement of sponsorship and endorsement from your Academic Department. After you submit your proposal, you will receive a form for your chair/director/dean to complete.

FLC FACULTY INSTITUTES AND MEETINGS-
If you are selected to teach in the Freshman Learning Communities, you will work with your teaching partner to start developing your courses at the FLC Faculty Institute shortly after the Spring semester ends (full Day) and during the second week of August (morning only). All FLC faculty attend. This gives you a chance to work with experienced FLC faculty and learn from them. If you may have a conflict with attending the workshops, be sure to contact Sonia Gipson Rankin, Associate Dean, University College 505-277-6515  sgrankin@unm.edu
REVIEW OF PROPOSALS
Proposals will be reviewed in December, 2013 by a sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee on First-Year Academic Curriculum and must fit at least one of the following categories, in addition to meeting the requirements specified above:

1. Course adds significant value to the delivery of first-year education.
2. Course will meet critical student and university needs.
3. Course is required or highly encouraged by existing undergraduate degrees, certificates, or minors at UNM.
4. Course has potential to fill to capacity.

Initially, we will be using these considerations to evaluate proposals:

- Faculty from all colleges and schools who are emeritus, tenured, tenure-track, clinical faculty, research faculty and/or full-time lecturers have priority in selection. (This is not just a preference; an objective of the FLCs is for full-time UNM faculty to teach freshmen in the program.)
- Is the title/content/theme attractive to freshmen?
- Does the proposed course meet a graduation, Core Curriculum, or pre-requisite requirement in some academic area? (Highly desirable, but not required)
- Does the proposed course introduce freshmen to a field of study, major, profession or career area?
- Will this instructor teach these students well in this environment (You have to convince us in your proposal; tell us anything you think is relevant).
- Does your course provide opportunities for students to learn about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), Entrepreneurship or offer an international connection to undergraduate curriculum?
- Is there a pedagogical “fit” with the linked course?

Additionally, we look for:

- Balance of disciplines
- A representative faculty

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD
Decisions will be announced to applicants in early January, 2013. Upon acceptance, a faculty contract will be drawn up with the department and faculty for course production, use of course and materials, control and credit, distribution of supporting funds, and teaching.

Please consult with us while developing your proposal. Please contact Sonia Gipson Rankin, Associate Dean, University College  505-277-6515  sgrankin@unm.edu

Deadline for submitting proposals is December 2, 2013 by 5:00 pm.
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FLC Fall 2014 Proposal
FIRST YEAR LEARNING COMMUNITIES
What does “linking” look like in an FLC?

a) Integration of subjects studied in the two classes
• For example, in a linked English class, student writing is prompted by the readings, reports, discussions and topics in the other course. Additional readings usually are about the topics of the FLC.

b) Professional interactions between linked instructors
• The two instructors demonstrate mutual respect, cooperation, collaboration and coordination with each other.
• The two instructors meet regularly to plan their linked courses, before and during the semester. They occasionally are both present in the classroom at the same time. They share issues, challenges, successes, and problems. They discuss individual students in their FLCs.

c) Coordination of course policies
• This is related to attendance policies, "make-ups", late work, grading practices, typed vs. non-typed written assignments, participation, and even classroom behavior practices and standards. Students initially expect complete consistency between the instructors, but are very satisfied if non-consistencies are consciously identified and declared and accepted by the instructors (especially if there was an explanation of rationale). Inconsistencies resulting from lack of coordination are evident to the students and frustrate their learning.

d) Integration of work and assignments,
• Is there congruence and parallel-ness (especially in timing) of readings, writings, discussions, projects, deadlines, presentations, meetings?
FIRST YEAR LEARNING COMMUNITIES

THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING WITH OTHERS

This chapter looks at some of the challenges present when two or more faculty work in a team to develop and teach a course. It is from Chapter Four, “Pedagogy That Builds Community” by Jodi Levine Laufgraben and Daniel Tompkins in, Sustaining and Improving Learning Communities by Jody Levine Laufgraben, Nancy S. Shapiro and Associates. Published by Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint, 989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741. Copyright © 2004 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

The pedagogical approaches described in this chapter may involve a different type of teaching for some faculty members. As described by Jean MacGregor (2000), in learning communities, teams of individuals need to sail a single vessel. "For a sustained period of time—a quarter or a semester or even a year—teaching teams commit themselves to a course or program with a common group of students. Sailing together requires teamwork, collaborative skills, and collective responsibility that are less familiar to those of us in the habit of sailing solo").

Teaching in a learning community requires faculty members to change how they teach. "The first step in interdisciplinary collaboration, whether in teaching or research, is accepting the different practices and beliefs of others" (Cornwell and Stoddard, 2001, p. 162). Teaching is no longer an isolated activity but rather a community commitment. By design, learning communities promote transformations. In addition to transforming courses to programs and disciplinary perspectives to interdisciplinary contexts, good pedagogy in learning communities requires moving from teaching alone to teaching with others. Team teaching requires team building, collaborative skills, and collective responsibility.

Collaborative Skills
In addition to teamwork, teaching in a learning community requires important social skills, including trust, mutual understanding, communication, and conflict management. Traditionally, teaching is a private activity; in learning communities, it is public. Individuals need to share information about their courses and teaching with others in their program or community. A supportive context for discussion teaching and providing feedback is important to collaboration. Each team member must take care and responsibility for building and respecting this context.

Collective Responsibility
The success of the learning community depends on students' and teachers' experiences across the community and not just in one or the other course. From pre-semester planning to reinforcement of the curricular theme to assessing student learning, teaching in learning communities is a collective responsibility. At the program level, faculty development and teacher materials should outline the expectations for teaching teams; individual teaching teams should then
reach consensus on shared responsibilities for community planning, assignments, class activities, assessment, and so on.

**Faculty in learning communities share responsibility for becoming a teaching team.** Problems arise when a teaching team fails to gel. This may happen for a variety of reasons: varied levels of interest in the goals and expectations for learning communities, different teaching and learning styles, conflicting priorities, competing schedules. Level of commitment is another potential problem. After strong initial interest, one or some members of a teaching team may fail to carry their load or may stop attending planning meetings. Once the semester gets under way, faculty are busy with course management, department obligations, and off-campus commitments. "The best-laid plans" becomes a reality, and the full potential for the learning community may not be realized. Program leadership plays an important role in helping teaching teams come together and stay on task. Schedule opportunities for all learning community faculty to come together to share successes and frustrations, be a facilitator to help teams stay focused and functioning, acknowledge up front that problems arise, and offer steps that other teaching teams took to move beyond barriers and function as a team.

**Teachers in learning communities also have a collective responsibility to articulate the community or program theme.** Do not assume that students are as aware of the curricular theme as you believe. Constant references to the theme will reinforce expectations for deeper learning and curricular integration. Communicate often with teaching partners. Share "hits" as well as "misses" in terms of instructional goals. Talk about student performance and ways to improve the community. Ask, How are we doing as a community of teachers? For faculty, regardless of the model of learning community, satisfaction with the learning communities teaching experience often depends on the shared responsibility for the curriculum, teaching, and learning. According to one experienced learning communities teacher: "For me, the satisfaction comes from the degree of integration and collaboration, no matter which of the two models I'm teaching in" (L. Dunlap, personal communication, September 2002).

In addition to the interpersonal challenges, **those teaching in learning communities may encounter structural barriers to forming and participating on teaching teams.** Systems for calculating workloads, release time, and rewards may not recognize or properly value team teaching. Conflicts may arise between the goals for learning communities and department objectives or institutional priorities. A department may discourage junior faculty members from teaching in learning communities to allow professors on the tenure track time for research and scholarship. A college or university may consider teaching a one-credit seminar linked to a learning community as voluntary overload. However, when teachers come together to teach in learning communities and the program steadily expands across campus, there is a tremendous potential for change. Additional challenges, strategies, and benefits specific to teaching in the different models of learning communities are described in the next section.
## Goals for Students

- Improve retention
- Increase student learning and achievement
- Increase time on task both in and out of class
- Promote active learning and teamwork skills
- Develop student leadership
- Increase the success rate for under-represented students
- Increase entry and completion in certain majors

## Goals for Faculty

- Increase experimentation within curriculum
- Broaden pedagogical repertoire of faculty
- Increase faculty engagement with one another
- Promote deeper interaction among faculty and students
- Promote interaction between junior and senior faculty
- Promote stronger relationships among faculty and student affairs staff

## Goals for Student Affairs Staff

- Promote deeper interaction between student affairs and faculty
- Create meaningful opportunities for student leadership development
- Broaden pedagogical repertoire and deeper interaction among student affairs professionals and students

## Goals for Curriculum

- Increase coherence of general education program
- Make curriculum more interdisciplinary
- Infuse skills such as writing and speaking across the curriculum
- Create more engaging entry points to certain majors
- Create coherent linkages for students in a minor

## Goals for Institution

- Enhance the quality of undergraduate education
- Foster a climate of innovation
- Increase the sense of community within the institution
- Promote meaningful collaboration between faculty and staff, faculty and administration
- Promote a culture of assessment, of learning about student learning

## Goals for Community

- Increase connection between the academy and the community by building learning communities with service or civic learning components

## Goals for Parents

- Enroll their son or daughter in an institution that promotes student success, active learning and intellectual engagement