URSCA Course Redesign Grant

Background
The positive effects of an undergraduate research experience on student learning, attitude, and career choice have passed from anecdote to systematic data (Lopatto 2010). The URSCA Course Redesign grant provides funding for UWRF faculty and instructional academic staff members interested in enhancing a significant portion of a current course to incorporate an undergraduate research component. Proposals that emphasize collaborative and/or multi-disciplinary research projects and approaches as well as individual investigations are encouraged. We also encourage applications that feature undergraduate courses at any level, from introductory first-year courses through senior seminars and capstones. In many cases, first- or second-year research experiences are likely to be process-centered, and faculty-initiated, while upper level or capstone research experiences may be outcome-oriented, discipline-based, and with potential to be of interest to a professional audience. Although research expectations will differ across disciplines and levels, in almost all cases, course-embedded undergraduate research should include the following four steps (CUR 2005):

1. The identification and acquisition of a disciplinary or interdisciplinary methodology
2. The setting out of a concrete investigative problem
3. The carrying out of the actual project
4. The dispersing/sharing of a new scholar’s discoveries with his or her peers-the vital final step that reinforces that all research should be of some tangible benefit to society, not just the individual researcher, and thus must be shared and disseminated.

We seek course redesign proposals that support new, relevant, innovative, and/or inventive strategies to infuse undergraduate research into the curriculum. Proposals should include the four steps above (i.e. statements of methodology, background or problem identification, description and timeline for the actual project[s], and dissemination plan). Proposals should clearly identify a teaching or student learning challenge that currently exists in a course, and that can be addressed with the infusion of a significant undergraduate research project or component. A detailed plan for redesigning the course to address the issue with a clear description of the undergraduate research project should be included.

Funding
Ten applications will be funded for the 2015-2016 academic year. Participants will receive $1000 for the course that is being redesigned. Funding is provided on submission of 1) a redesigned or updated syllabus and associated course documents and 2) a submitted statement from the department chair indicating departmental approval and intention to include the revised course in a regular or semi-regular rotation.
The URSCA Course Redesign grant is funded by Falcon Promise funds dedicated to enhancing campus URSCA. Please be advised that by accepting this funding your updated syllabus may be made available to interested parties within the UWRF community.

Who Can Participate?
To participate in the URSCA Course Redesign, a course must be part of the regular curriculum. Applicants are welcome from Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff from all colleges and disciplines. Note that Faculty and IAS who will be inheriting an existing course are also welcome to apply; all proposals must have the approval of the appropriate department chair. Faculty and IAS may submit one proposal for consideration per year.

Application
Applications should be submitted online by Monday, April 20, 2015. (Note this is an extended submission deadline from the date previously announced).

Application Review
The URSCA Council will review all applications. Applications will be evaluated on 1) the relevance and invention of the redesign focus: to create a high-impact learning environment by connecting key concepts and questions with students’ early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research, 2) the strength and detail of the redesign plan. Does it include the four steps listed above, or a clear and convincing rationale for the proposed alternative to the four-step plan? 3) the sustainability of the proposed undergraduate research agenda across future course iterations, and 4) the total anticipated impact on student learning.

Questions about the URSCA Course Redesign grant opportunity?
If you are interested in participating in the URSCA Course Redesign, but have questions, please email the URSCA Director, Lissa Schneider-Rebozo, Ph.D. at elizabeth.schneider-rebozo@uwrf.edu.