Faculty Senate Diversity & Social Justice Award

Purpose:

On behalf of the Faculty Senate and University Provost’s Office, the Diversity and Social Justice Awards support Western Washington University’s strategic goals for the enhancement of equity, inclusion and diversity.¹ The award will provide resources to actively undertake the development of educational practices that support and enhance diversity and social justice in and beyond the classroom at WWU, or to engage in social justice projects that will result in the significant advancement of their professional development and field of research, scholarly or creative work. Diversity, conceived broadly, refers to typically underrepresented cultures, groups, or identities² and their relationships to structures of power. Practices focusing on the advancement of social justice do “not merely examine difference or diversity but [pay] careful attention to the systems of power and privilege that give rise to social inequality and [encourage] the critical examination of oppression on institutional, cultural, and individual levels in search of opportunities for social action in service of social change” (Hackman, 2005, p. 104).³ Collaborative projects between faculty, students, staff, community, and/or others are welcomed. Proposals rooted in a variety of disciplinary contexts that engage these questions and challenges are also welcome.

This award offers a current faculty member either a summer award of $6,000 (paid as salary) or a one-course release (for tenured and tenure-track faculty) or equivalent pay (for non-tenure track faculty) during one academic year for the development of educational practices, course development, research, or initiatives that support and enhance diversity and social justice in and beyond the classroom at WWU. In addition, award recipients will contribute to furthering campus-wide dialogue through their participation in six Faculty Learning Labs in which they will share their work with one another. These Labs will meet twice per quarter for two hours each for three consecutive quarters. Then each awardee will report on the experience and effects of their work in a public colloquium during the following academic year.

Eligibility:

- All tenured, tenure track and non-tenure track faculty employed at Western Washington University are encouraged to apply.
- To be eligible, faculty applicants must be employed by WWU for the current academic year and have a contract (or formal agreement of employment with the university) for the academic year following the grant period.
- Collaborative projects between faculty, students, staff, community, and/or others are welcomed.
- Faculty may not receive this award in consecutive years.
- If the award would immediately follow or precede professional leave, it should be clarified in the proposal what will be accomplished through this award, as distinct from the project undertaken or to be undertaken during the professional leave.
- Faculty members may not receive this award and a WWU Summer Teaching Grant, Summer Research Grant, Project Development Award, or Thaddeus Spratlen and Lois Price-Spratlen Inclusion and Diversity Grant concurrently.
- All summer appointments combined may not exceed 100% effort.

¹ See http://www.wwu.edu/president/strategic-plan.shtml
² Including, but not limited to, categories of identity such as race/ethnicity, ability, religion, sexual orientation, language, gender, gender identity, national origin, socioeconomic status, age, or any other typically underrepresented group and their intersections.
Evaluation of Proposals

Diversity & Social Justice Awards are awarded for activities that substantially enhance the university’s academic programs by incorporating diversity and social justice concepts, materials, pedagogies, and perspectives and/or by addressing the needs of underserved learners.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Is the proposed work centered around diversity and social justice, as defined above?
- Is the proposed work transformational, specifically …
  - Would the proposed work have broad impact on the WWU campus and/or in the community? For example, a project could have broad impact by serving a large number of students from a variety of majors, through enhancing the capacity of community groups engaged in social justice work, or by changing the climate within the department for all students. The applicant should explain in what way they believe their project would have broad impact.
  - Would the proposed work lead to sustainable, structural changes? This could include changes in curriculum, changes in unit policy, changes in the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of faculty, enhancement of on-going programs, etc.
  - Does the proposed work significantly add to existing programming and offerings at WWU? Any similar programs at Western should be mentioned, and the applicant should explain how the proposed work serves a different purpose or reaches a different audience than those programs.
- Does the proposed work go beyond what is typically expected of someone in the applicant’s position and in the applicant’s unit? At the same time, is it reasonable for the applicant to accomplish the proposed work within the timeframe of the award and with the provided resources?

In making these evaluations, the committee recognizes that different applicants may have different levels of knowledge and experience with diversity and social justice work, and may work in environments with varying amounts of support for such work. Thus, what counts as “transformational” is not fixed, but depends on the context in which the work will take place. Applicants are reminded that committee members may not be familiar with their department or program, and are encouraged to briefly discuss this context in their proposal. Similarly, the committee recognizes that diversity and social justice work may not be specifically referenced in the applicant’s unit evaluation plan. Thus, proposals that would also contribute to the applicant’s portfolio in the recognized areas of teaching, scholarship, and/or service are welcome.

Proposal Guidelines:

Applications should include:

- Title of proposal, author, department, rank, and contact information (i.e. email address and phone number).
- Two-page narrative proposal, single-spaced (excluding citations). The narrative should address the criteria listed above and should provide a description of projected project plans and outcomes. Applicants should not assume that the reviewers are familiar with the details of their individual programs and should offer sufficient background information to assist the reviewers.
- A brief justification for the selection of award type ($6000 vs. course release). If applying for course release, applicants should verify that they have provisional approval of Chair for release.
• A timeline for the project, including a brief statement indicating that the activity can be accomplished during the award period or how it will be sustained past the award period.

Questions can be addressed to SJEC@wwu.edu. Applications must be emailed to SJEC@wwu.edu as a single pdf by November 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.

Selected sources used to inform our work: