Office of Faculty Development and Curriculum - Division of Academic Affairs

2009-2010 Mini-Grants Competition

Mini-Grant Theme: Student Persistence & Motivation

COBI—Call for Beautiful Ideas

Drawing on the success of previous Title V COBI faculty development programs, the Professor Magda Vasillov Center for Teaching and Learning and Hostos Office of Academic Affairs are pleased to announce the faculty development support program for the academic year 2009-2010. The Committee On Beautiful Ideas will award seven $2,000 mini-grants to improve student persistence and motivation through classroom engagement.

“...effectively tie classroom activity to general education learning outcomes...” Read more about the proposal stages inside.

The theme this year is “Student Persistence and Motivation” and faculty will be encouraged to reflect on ways to create community within their classrooms with sharpening course goals and outcomes. Mini-grants will support teams of two faculty members, from the same or different disciplines, working on new pedagogical approaches, re-developing existing curricula, re-imaging syllabi, etc., with an eye to purposefully challenge Hostos students to take responsibility for their education. Proposals that effectively tie classroom activity to general education learning outcomes are especially encouraged.

Interested faculty teams should contact the CTL and submit an application by Friday, December 4, 2009. Teams with especially promising proposals will attend a retreat and then be asked to re-submit a more detailed plan that includes descriptions of the proposal’s intellectual significance, intended outcomes, work plan, and assessment procedures. A committee will then award mini-grants of $2,000 to the seven winning project co-developers. Grantees have one year to implement their proposals. For more information, please contact the CTL at ext. 6699/6609.

Committee On Beautiful Ideas (COBI): A History

Established in spring 2005, a Title V subcommittee was appointed by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs to assist the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning in the development of the faculty development component of the Title V grant. The subcommittee was charged with ensuring the success of an initiative that targeted shifting the paradigm on teaching and learning through pedagogical innovations to improve student learning outcomes.

The resulting grassroots movement was designed to motivate faculty to re-craft pedagogical practices to incorporate innovative, ideas, which was manifested as a competitive call for beautiful ideas (proposals) for which successful faculty teams would be rewarded with a prestigious recognition ceremony and three hours of release time during the fall or spring semester in the following academic year.

The subcommittee worked diligently week after week to create the context, structure, and competition guidelines; submission, review, and selection requirements; retreat goals, purpose, coordination, and execution; award ceremonies and mechanisms to recognize our outstanding faculty; procedures for documenting the productivity of faculty release time; finding conceptual space for the institutionalization of winning, innovative projects, among other responsibilities. As the immensity of the task began to sink in, so did the impending, potential burden that the project could have created for Hostos faculty.

In an intentional effort to keep the proposal, selection, and implementation processes manageable and inviting, the initiative was divided into three, user-friendly, stages of development. More information about the stages is found throughout this call for beautiful ideas.

The mantra of this creative and innovative committee was to employ the concepts that defined the competition: proposals became beautiful ideas; the call for beautiful ideas replaced the call for proposals; the Title V subcommittee became known as the Committee On Beautiful Ideas, and the resulting COBI acronym has become synonymous with innovation in teaching pedagogy in order to enhance teaching effectiveness and engage students intentionally and actively in the processes of learning and of creating community.

The blue monarch, as an evolutionary entity, was selected to represent the work of this ever-evolving committee which has continued to morph from year to year incorporating the needs of the college into the priorities of COBI and the calls for beautiful ideas. The 2009 call for mini-grants is the first of its kind, and was based on the foundation established by COBI. Instead of receiving release time, seven mini-grants of $2,000 per project were awarded, and all winning mini-grant projects are expected to be completed and incorporated into the life of the faculty or the college by the 2010-2011 academic year. A similar mini grants competition is launched for AY ’09-’10.
GENERAL EDUCATION CORE COMPÉTENCES (LEARNING GOALS)

ACADEMIC LITERACY & INQUIRY SKILLS
- Utilize higher-level critical and analytical skills in reading and in personal and professional settings.
- Access and evaluate critically current events and issues from many perspectives.
- Distinguish factual/documentary evidence from rhetorical/anecdotal evidence.
- Locate, evaluate, and use information in a variety of formats and organize, analyze, evaluate, treat critically and present that information in a cohesive and logical fashion. [Information Literacy]
- Acquire important knowledge and information for life-long learning.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- Read, write, listen and speak effectively.
- Recognize the need for precision in vocabulary appropriate to the writing task at hand, and comprehend the interplay of abstract ideas and concrete details.
- Use appropriate communication and educational technologies in order to express and present ideas effectively. [Technological competency]
- Comprehend and learn from a text or a lecture: to take notes, analyze and synthesize the material, and respond with informed questions / reports.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND LIFE COMPETENCIES IN A MULTICULTURAL PLANETARY CIVILIZATION
- Function effectively as a member of the local and global community by utilizing prior knowledge and the knowledge gained through study as demonstrated by writings, actions, and oral communications.
- Exhibit an appreciation, understanding, acceptance and respect for human differences in ethnic and cultural perspectives, race, class, gender, sexual orientation and ability.
- Analyze global environmental issues and ethics and develop personal standards of responsibility and action.
- Develop and evaluate personal values, principles, and ethics and to interact with others espousing different views.
- Cultivate an understanding and appreciation of aesthetic literacy.
- Develop and demonstrate leadership and interpersonal relationship skills.

SCIENTIFIC AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING
- Interpret scientific observations and delineate conclusions.
- Identify and analyze relevant aspects of the natural and ecological realities and apply to environmental challenges.
- Explain the importance of biophysical systems and value the various ways human societies cultivate an awareness of their natural surroundings.
- Develop and apply the methodological and computational skills necessary to attain literacy by applying different uses of quantitative and qualitative data to problem-solving in the sciences and mathematics, as well as in the social/behavioral sciences and in disciplines requiring artistic, literary, and philosophical investigation.

General Education at Hostos Community College is reflected by the faculty members, students and administrators working together on the implementation of interdisciplinary ideas and conversations across the curriculum. Our goal is to educate the human being and develop the global citizen behind each professional. We endeavor to see the principles of general education in our college reflected in the lives of our liberal arts and career program students as they achieve success inside and outside the classroom and beyond Hostos itself.
**BEAUTIFUL IDEA MINI-GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS**

This is a 3 stage application process:

- Stage 1 – Submission of a short proposal
- Stage 2 – Participation in faculty development retreat and submission of a full-length proposal
- Stage 3 – Winning faculty awarded $2,000 per project and honored in AY 2010 –2011

To apply, submit a brief 1-2 page narrative (not including cover page) according to the Beautiful Idea Guidelines that appear below. Applications can be sent through intra-campus mail to Center for Teaching and Learning (B439), emailed to sbrennan@hostos.cuny.edu, or submitted online at www.hostos.cuny.edu/oaa/ideas.

**BEAUTIFUL IDEA MINI-GRANT CONSIDERATIONS**

The following considerations are encouraged

- Proposals should be specific with a tangible product. Whether it be a major revision to a curricular unit or a major overhaul of an existing course syllabus including experimental teaching practices-competitive proposals will focus on the inclusion of Hostos general education concepts such as core competencies or the AAC&U Principles of Excellence or High Impact Practices as a part of the curricular change.

- Competitive proposals might weave theoretical pedagogical approaches to teaching with technology with practical applications that enhance existing courses with the use of Blackboard 8.0, E-Portfolios, digital storytelling, podcasting, or any other host of options development of new courses, teaching modules.

- Faculty are encouraged to include high impact practices in their proposals; pedagogical ways of creating community within the classroom setting; curricular innovations and teaching strategies that use electronic resources.

**BEAUTIFUL IDEA GUIDELINES**

1. All full-time Hostos faculty are invited to participate.
2. Stage 1, or short, proposals may be developed by one (1) or two (2) faculty members. Stage 2, or full-length, proposals must be developed by two (2) faculty members.
3. The submission deadline is Friday, December 4, 2009*. *This date includes the extension.
4. All submissions will be retained by The Professor Magda Vasillov Center for Teaching and Learning.
5. Notification will be emailed to project co-directors before the first day of spring semester classes.

*All proposals must adhere to the following:*

Format: Cover Page (1-2 pages) & Project Description (1-2 pages)

The cover page must include the following information for each co-director listed on the proposal:

- Title/Rank
- Campus and home mailing addresses
- Campus phone
- Email address
- Fax number (if applicable)
- 13-15 lines, typed description of the project (size 12, font Times New Roman)

The project description must include the following in (1 to 2 pages):

- Narrative
- Goals and Anticipated Outcomes
- Support in the Literature
- Timeline for Implementation

MOTIVATE
Hostos changed my life and let me tell you how:

A couple of years ago, I was unsure and afraid to even think about going back to school. I hadn't used my brain, school-wise, for many years. I didn't think I could do it. However, the environment of Hostos is set up to reinforce in every student the ideal that if you work hard enough the school will give you all of the resources you need to succeed. It just so happened that in the first semester, I met people who inspired and motivated me. This was the push I needed! After completing my first semester, I received an invitation to attend the Hostos Summer Institute; the faculty and the students that I met during that summer inspired me to broaden my knowledge and global thinking. I never thought that I would obtain a college degree. However, I was wrong and I have to thank Hostos for allowing me to see that I was ready and willing to study; sometimes all week long and other times all weekend long—though I had other responsibilities. Most importantly, Hostos Community College provided me with a wealth of resources that helped me address my weaknesses and steadily resolve when things got tough.

The programs that this school offers, such as the Honors Program and the Global Scholars, give students like me the opportunity to travel and explore other cultures. This is why when I heard a fellow student one day disparaging the college, I thought, I don't understand. How could the experience at Hostos be so different for two individuals? After talking to her I realized that it is not enough just to offer these great opportunities, but rather, very important that we make sure that all members of the Hostos community are aware of them.

I am thankful for the opportunity to have met professors and faculty who had an impact on my life in a very positive way. I embraced the challenge and opportunities given to me by this school. I arrived here as a shy, somewhat insecure, recent immigrant, mother of three. I left this school a confident scholar, who went on to complete her baccalaureate degree at Lehman College, and now I am working on my master's at John Jay. Thank you Hostos... Thank You CUNY!

Enrolling at Hostos was one of the best decisions I ever made. I thought I had all my goals figured out five years ago, but all the work and distractions—including a language barrier—were drawing me away from my dreams. I decided to start school in the spring 2006 and work full time at the same time. It was difficult to do both, but there was no way I could live in an expensive city and succeed. While at school I had to make many decisions in my career goal in order to pass my classes and learn. One thing I did was to prepare myself economically for six months in order to enroll in a program that offered to help me quickly jump forward in terms of learning the language. As an Engineering student, I had to deal with a lot of math courses. I spent my time studying but it was not enough. I started to have a better vision of what I wanted. I approached my classmates and started to meet them to practice what we learned in our math courses. After a while, other students were joining us. Now I feel more confident because of what I decided when I first started. I don't have all I want, but I love what I have achieved so far and I will not stop until I do.

Some Principles of Excellence—Adopted from Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) published by American Colleges and Universities