

2018 SoTL USA - Mini-Grant Proposal	Proposal Quality Checks										
<p>This is a working document that is meant to be drafted, submitted for initial feedback from ILC reviewers, revised if time permits before the initial deadline of Wed Aug 1, and then followed by a peer review cycle by others submitting proposals. The final improved proposal will be the basis for a mini-grant award.</p> <p>You should build on the research planner that is in your individual folder in our shared Google Drive. Cut and paste what you've already worked on into the corresponding items below. The questions in this column may help you cover ground you might not have included previously. Once you've refined your proposal, you can use the "quality check" items in the right column to self-evaluate and refine further.</p> <p>If you get stuck somewhere, or aren't yet far enough along in planning to respond definitively, make that part of your draft. What questions do you have? What resources do you need? You'll get feedback to get unstuck.</p> <p><b>Timeline</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Draft proposals accepted</b> (rolling ILC feedback)</td> <td><b>Mon Jul 9-Wed Aug 1</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Draft proposals due</b></td> <td><b>Wed Aug 1</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Peer review cycle</b> (each proposer will review two)</td> <td><b>Fri Aug 3-Fri Aug 10</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Final proposals due</b></td> <td><b>Fri Aug 17</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Awards announced</b></td> <td><b>Tu Aug 21</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Draft proposals accepted</b> (rolling ILC feedback)	<b>Mon Jul 9-Wed Aug 1</b>	<b>Draft proposals due</b>	<b>Wed Aug 1</b>	<b>Peer review cycle</b> (each proposer will review two)	<b>Fri Aug 3-Fri Aug 10</b>	<b>Final proposals due</b>	<b>Fri Aug 17</b>	<b>Awards announced</b>	<b>Tu Aug 21</b>	<p>The prompts below are a type of self-evaluation "rubric". They are meant to provide a next level of scaffolding toward completion of a high quality study that will lend itself to dissemination in external, peer-reviewed outlet.</p> <p>There are no expectations that every criterion will be reflected in your proposal. Some may be more useful than others for your particular study.</p> <p>The format and flow is intentional with the sections mapping to a presentation or publication. In future scaffolds, as long as you keep up, you'll have the basis for a presentation or manuscript drafted.</p> <p>This will make dissemination in a USA outlet at the end of spring semester more manageable.</p> <p><b>Note: The IRB submission process will need your attention in parallel with the development of this proposal.</b> You MUST have approval or exempt status before you collect or access any data requiring informed consent from students fall semester. <b>Depending on your study design and timing of data collection, this may or may not have to occur prior to the start of the semester.</b></p> <p><b>Mini-grant funds may be awarded prior to IRB submission but no funds will be released until the IRB process has been completed. Please get this process going as soon as possible.</b></p>
<b>Draft proposals accepted</b> (rolling ILC feedback)	<b>Mon Jul 9-Wed Aug 1</b>										
<b>Draft proposals due</b>	<b>Wed Aug 1</b>										
<b>Peer review cycle</b> (each proposer will review two)	<b>Fri Aug 3-Fri Aug 10</b>										
<b>Final proposals due</b>	<b>Fri Aug 17</b>										
<b>Awards announced</b>	<b>Tu Aug 21</b>										

<b>Working Title</b>	
Click here to enter text.	Do this last, after you've determined your research question. The title turns your research question into a statement – instead of “how does x affect y” or “what describes y” the title becomes “the effects of x on y in [descriptor of student population]” or “a study of y in [descriptor of student population]”
<b>Brief Description (Future Abstract)</b>	
Click here to enter text.	<p><b>Quality check: (Note: this language describes exempt research)</b></p> <p>The following should be evident from your abstract. This research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● is being conducted in a commonly accepted educational setting</li> <li>● observes or applies normal, benign educational practices</li> <li>● will not interfere with the learning of required educational content</li> <li>● is intended to describe the nature and/or improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: This description will work for the methods description in IRB Form B Step 7. Pare down what you describe for your methods (from below).</i></p>
<b>Introduction</b>	
<p><b>What's the context for your study?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Teaching:</b> What is your unit of analysis - what course(s), program, or student service are you going to focus on? What are the basic details (format, credit hours, class meetings, etc.)? What is the broader teaching context – semesters offered, number of faculty assigned, course coordinator oversight, master syllabus, etc.</li> <li>● <b>Students:</b> What defines the student population you are studying – are there distinguishing characteristics that are intentional? How many groups of students will be involved? How many students will be in different groups (your sample size or “n”)?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unit of analysis is a well-defined (i.e., bounded) educational setting</li> <li>● Succinct description of relevant contextual characteristics is provided</li> <li>● Student population being studied is unambiguously defined</li> <li>● Distinctive student characteristics relevant to the study are identified</li> <li>● Intentional or inherent distinctions between any groups are described</li> <li>● Sample size is approximated and small sample sizes (&lt;25) are noted</li> </ul>
Click here to enter text.	
<p><b>What's the learning problem or opportunity?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe your evidence in terms of student outcomes – what do you see in students' work, performance, behaviors or communications?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Problem/opportunity is stated broadly enough to be of interest to and/or observed by other faculty</li> <li>● Specific observable student outcomes are cited as evidence</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes this evidence tangible to another observer – what documents it?</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Citing specific evidence of the problem/opportunity can indicate the data that answers your research question. For experimental/ quasi-experimental designs, this would be considered a dependent variable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence can be established through systematic documentation</li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>What does your experience tell you about the problem/opportunity?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long have you observed or wondered about this?</li> <li>• How do you account for what you’ve observed?</li> <li>• What have you tried previously to understand or change outcomes?</li> <li>• What insights has your experience given you?</li> <li>• What may happen if the problem/opportunity goes unaddressed?</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The above can guide your lit review and inform possible actions</p>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations have occurred over time - there’s a pattern</li> <li>• Observations have been confirmed systematically (informally or formally)</li> <li>• Previous efforts to understand or improve outcomes inform this study</li> <li>• Significant benefits to students can result from this research</li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>What’s the purpose for your study?</b></p> <p><b>Local and Short-Term Research Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the immediate goals for your student population?</li> </ul> <p><b>Broader and Long-term Goals (if applicable)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What’s the higher purpose for conducting this study?</li> <li>• What personal or professional goals are involved?</li> <li>• Program or department goals?</li> <li>• Goals beyond the university?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research aims to benefit student learning</li> <li>• Language implies that research is not intended to be generalized beyond the student population defined by the researcher</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: This corresponds to “research objectives” on IRB Form B Step 1</b></p>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>Literature Review (Preliminary)</b></p>	
<p><b>What’s your theoretical framework - how is the literature being used to inform your study?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cite at least three journal articles related to the problem/opportunity, teaching context, relevant pedagogical techniques/methods, and/or study design</li> <li>• Annotate each citation summarizing its relevance to your study</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles include research that describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ background information about the problem/opportunity</li> <li>○ pedagogical techniques/methods to be examined in the study</li> <li>○ teaching contexts and techniques/methods in higher education</li> <li>○ study designs that can inform implementation and data work</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>Methodology</b></p>	
<p><b>What will you do to better understand or address the problem/opportunity?</b></p> <p>Identify the pedagogical condition (i.e. teaching context) and/or change(s) (i.e., technique or method) you want to describe or evaluate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why have you chosen this?</li> <li>● What makes you believe this context or change corresponds to student outcomes of interest?</li> <li>● Is this something that you can study systematically by documenting specific student outcomes?</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> For experimental/quasi-experimental studies, a pedagogical change being studied would be considered an independent variable.</p>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The pedagogical condition or change being studied: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ is specific enough to describe to other faculty to replicate</li> <li>○ is described in research literature (e.g., is evidence-based)</li> <li>○ is likely to directly affect student outcomes of interest</li> <li>○ can be described using direct evidence generated by students</li> <li>○ can reasonably be studied in your specific teaching context</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>Pose a SMART research question based on the above.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Descriptive studies:</b> Consider questions in this form for baseline or exploratory studies where you aim to characterize a population without trying to establish causal relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What happens when condition x is present in population A?</li> <li>○ How does implementing x compare in populations A and B?</li> <li>○ How is y described in population A?</li> <li>○ How does y compare in populations A &amp; B?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Correlational studies:</b> Consider questions in this form when you want to determine if two or more conditions or student outcomes are related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is there a relationship between x and y in population A?</li> <li>○ Does x relate to y in the same way in populations A and B?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Experimental/quasi-experimental studies:</b> Consider questions in this form for studies designed to detect change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How will doing x affect y in population A?</li> <li>○ What's your independent variable? Your dependent variable?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> X and Y are variables that need to be as specific as possible. If you</p>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <p><b>Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Condition/technique/method:</b> Is identified by a succinct descriptor (e.g., class size, peer evaluation, TBL, etc.)</li> <li>● <b>Student outcome(s):</b> Are identified by a succinct descriptor that can quantified and/or qualified (e.g., exam scores, skills assessment, efficacy, attitude, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>Measurable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quantitative and/or qualitative techniques can systematically document student outcomes of interest</li> <li>● Systematic techniques can be used to analyze quantitative data (e.g., statistics) and/or qualitative data (e.g., coding, themes, triangulation)</li> </ul> <p><b>Action-oriented</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Study involves describing, implementing and/or informing pedagogical conditions or change to improve student outcomes</li> </ul> <p><b>Research-based</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Problem/opportunity, pedagogical condition or technique/method, and study design are informed by credible research and widely accepted</li> </ul>

<p>can't describe X or Y so that another researcher can envision or replicate your context or study methods, you need to get more specific.</p>	<p>research methodology</p> <p><b>Time-bound</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enough progress can be made by the end of spring semester 2019 to disseminate findings (including preliminary) at USA</li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>How will you implement your study?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is your unit of analysis (from above)?</li> <li>What defines your student population (from above)?</li> <li>What type of study will you do (descriptive, correlational, experimental/quasi-experimental)?</li> <li>How will you implement the study with your student population?</li> <li>Will you be making comparisons, and if so, how? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will you use historical data to make comparisons?</li> <li>Will you make comparisons before and after?</li> <li>Will you repeat the same intervention more than once?</li> <li>Will you compare intervention and non-intervention groups?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The unit of analysis is a section, course(s), or defined service</li> <li>Subjects are a defined student population</li> <li>Type of study is identified and matches the methods described</li> <li>Methods for making comparisons (e.g., with baseline data or a control/comparison group) are adequately summarized</li> <li>Extraneous (e.g., uncontrolled, non-random, nuisance) variables that may affect the teaching context and/or student outcomes in unintended ways are recognized and, to the extent possible, controlled</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: Pare this down for IRB Form B STEP 7 and for the abstract above</b></p>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>What will be your methods for collecting data?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will your study involve quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods?</li> <li>What data sources will you use (e.g., exams, assignments, surveys, pre/post-tests, observations, interviews/focus groups, etc.)?</li> <li>What instruments –tools for collecting data – will be applied? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will you need to locate or create any instruments?</li> <li>If yes to the above, how will you do this?</li> </ul> </li> <li>When will you collect or access data from the students?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data types are identified and match the methods described</li> <li>All planned data sources are identified (critical for IRB)</li> <li>Specific instruments appropriate for documenting the input for each data source are identified</li> <li>Means of locating or creating instruments are adequately described</li> <li>When possible, already-validated instruments are applied</li> <li>Timing of data collection is adequately described</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: Pare this down for IRB Form B STEP 7 and for the abstract above</b></p>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>How will you adhere to ethics for Human Subjects Research?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will you recruit and/or incentivize students?</li> <li>How will you obtain informed consent?</li> <li>How will you address confidentiality and anonymity?</li> <li>How will you address concerns about participation influencing grades?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentives for participating in non-routine course activities (e.g., videotaping, focus groups, surveys, etc.) do NOT benefit grades OR students who don't participate are offered equivalent benefits</li> <li>The researcher is not present to obtain informed consent</li> <li>Measures are taken to collect, access and report data in ways that maintains confidentiality and anonymity</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When methodologically possible:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the identities of non-consenters aren't known to the researcher until after grades are submitted</li> <li>○ data with identifying information aren't accessed until after grades are submitted</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: This applies to Steps 2, 4-6, and 8 on IRB Form B.</b></p>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>How will you disseminate your findings?</b> In addition to disseminating your research here at USA, in which OTHER forums might you consider "going public?" Which journals or conferences might you consider?</p>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awardees of 1K mini-grants must identify one or more potential external outlets</li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>What is a preliminary timeframe for the above plan?</b></p>	<p><b>Quality check:</b></p> <p>Timeline accomplishes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human subjects training is completed prior to IRB submission</li> <li>● Consent forms and data collection instruments produced in advance of IRB submission</li> <li>● IRB submission done enough in advance to receive approval or exemption letter BEFORE students provide data requiring consent</li> <li>● Draft proposal is submitted by Wed Aug 1 and final proposal is submitted by Fri Aug 17</li> <li>● Study is initiated and initial or all data are collected in Fall 2018</li> <li>● Data collection is complete or near completion and analysis of data has been initiated by April 1, 2019</li> <li>● Findings (preliminary or final) are disseminated in a USA outlet by June 1, 2019</li> <li>● For 1K grant recipients: By Aug 1, 2019, manuscript has been submitted to a peer-reviewed SoTL, educational, or discipline-based journal or paper has been accepted through a peer-reviewed process to a SoTL, educational or discipline-based national conference.</li> </ul>
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>If awarded a mini-grant, how would you anticipate using funds to: a) support this project; and/or b) further pursue SoTL-related activities?</b></p>	
<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	

Lastname, Firstname  
Date sent to applicant

Dept  
College

<b>What types of SoTL support do you think you'll need to successfully implement your plan (e.g., from the ILC, your colleagues, your dept.)?</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>What concerns do you have at this point? What might be a barrier to successfully implementing your plan?</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>Any questions, comments, ideas that you need to address before moving forward?</b>	
Click here to enter text.	