Learning$^2$
[Interdisciplinary Team Teaching Program]
College of Arts and Sciences

Description:
The purpose of Learning$^2$ [Learning Squared] is to allow for the creation of 2-4 co-taught, interdisciplinary classes each semester. This initiative will foster interdisciplinary work within the College of Arts and Sciences and allow faculty members who participate the opportunity to create unique learning environments for students. These classes will be advertised prominently by the college and over time may become a key feature of what the College of Arts and Sciences provides to its students. Initially, this program is restricted to on-site three-credit courses.

Expectations:
The expectation is that two faculty members from different departments/disciplines will co-teach a section of a unique interdisciplinary class.

- A college committee will receive proposals jointly written by the co-teaching faculty members and will select the 2–4 proposals to be offered in the following fall or spring semester.
- The intention is for participants and course topics to change from semester to semester. Occasional duplication of popular and successful courses is possible, at the discretion of the reviewing committee and the participating departments.
- The expectation is that both instructors will be present at the same time in each classroom session.

The idea is not to create a class in which half of the classes will be taught by one faculty member (with the other absent) and vice versa; rather, the idea is to exploit the unique learning opportunities available for the students by having two professors in the classroom at the same time, truly co-teaching each class session. The spectacle of two professors from different disciplines engaging each other in discussion over a chosen interdisciplinary topic will itself provide unique learning opportunities and distinct learning environments for the students.

Workload Implications:
For each approved class, the two participating faculty members will be permitted to count the course as .25 FTE on his/her semester workload report. In other words, both of the instructors get to “count” the course as on-load.

Eligibility:
The program is open to any active faculty member in good standing in the College of Arts and Sciences, subject to the approvals below.

Approvals:
- Faculty members (and their joint-proposals) must have the approval of their department chairs prior to the submission of their proposal to the reviewing committee.
In giving their approval, chairs certify that the courses exist in the curriculum to make the collaboration work in a cross-listed manner with the partner department.

Partner departments are responsible for scheduling the courses.

Learning^2 classes should fulfill the stated learning objectives of both cross-listed classes in order to ensure that students in either program will be able to count the course appropriately in their plan of study.

At the same time, however, partner departments may wish to suspend certain prerequisites for the Learning^2 classes—depending on the nature of the cross-listed courses—in order to allow for greater participation by students across the college.

Participating faculty members and their sponsoring departments are also responsible for working with Marietta Frye on any advising-related issues and with Cathleen Carosella on marketing.

**Funding:**
For each proposal selected, one of the two partnering departments will be provided by the College of Arts and Sciences with the funding needed to hire an LTL (at the governing LTL rate) to cover the missing .25 FTE. The other partnering department will not receive such funds, but will have to consider the class to be part of the typical departmental offerings. In other words, the LTL funds are to cover the missing .25 in workload created by the co-teaching arrangement.

Faculty and chairs are responsible for determining in advance which department will receive the funding. These details will have to be clearly explained in the proposal submitted to the review committee.

**Enrollment Expectations:**
In the initial rollout of this new program, total aggregate enrollment in the co-taught section must be in excess of 15 students, or the class will be cancelled and no monies will be transferred. However, course proposals that show promise of generating enrollment in excess of 25 students will be preferred. If the program is popular and successful, the college may increase funding for the program and build in incentive programs for high-enrolling classes.

**Initial Implementation:**
The intent is to collect proposals early in the Fall 2017 semester for running pilot classes in Spring 2018. **The due date for these Spring 2018 pilot proposals will be October 6, 2017—please send them to Karen Burtnette.** Because of the tight timeframe associated with the Spring 2018 pilot classes (priority registration starts on October 16), evaluation of the pilot proposals will be conducted by members of the dean’s staff, including Associate Dean Bruce Kingsbury. All future proposals will be evaluated by the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee, or another committee designated for this purpose by the Arts and Sciences Executive Committee.

Deadline for submission of proposals for the Spring 2018 semester: **October 6, 2017.**
Deadline for submission of proposals for the Fall 2018 semester: **November 8, 2017.**

Send all proposals to Karen Burtnette.
Proposal Format:
Proposals should include the following information:

1. Names and department affiliations of co-instructors.
2. Brief description of course to be offered (one page).
3. Courses in the catalog to be cross-listed.
4. Name of department to receive LTL funding.
5. Brief co-endorsement from the two department chairs.

Illustrative Case Study:

I’ve used this example in conversation with some folks around the college, so I’ll elaborate on it here.

Let’s say that Bruce Kingsbury (biology professor with specializations in environmental issues and lizards) and Eric Carl Link (American literature professor with specializations in literary naturalism and science fiction) decide to team up to co-teach a class called “Trauma, Culture, and Environmental Sustainability.” The idea is to look at how our understanding of the environment can help us understand not only how environmental conditions shape the human experience, but how current conditions might provide a roadmap for understanding issues of environmental crises and sustainability in the future. The interdisciplinary approach of the class will highlight these themes both in literary art and in contemporary scientific discourse.

The first thing Kingsbury and Link need to do is to find two courses that can be cross-listed under this title. For the Department of English and Linguistics, we’ll use ENG L232 Topics in Literature and Culture. For the Department of Biology, we’ll use BIO 586. The respective chairs agree to add these courses to the schedule, assign them to Link and Kingsbury respectively, and count them as on-load in terms of workload. The respective chairs also come to an agreement about which department will receive the LTL funds to replace the surrendered FTE. These decisions are all indicated in the proposal drafted by Kingsbury/Link.

Kingsbury/Link submit their proposal to the relevant review committee.

If it is selected, Kingsbury/Link and their respective chairs work with Marietta Frye and Cathleen Carosella on the related advising and marketing implications. Kingsbury/Link must agree to participate in related marketing endeavors, including interviews, occasional videotaping, social media posting, *Endeavors* stories, etc.

Then, Kingsbury and Link co-teach the class. Both professors are in the classroom together for each session, and they consciously strive to use that unique dynamic to make the learning environment unique and rich for the students.