Application Guidelines for Course Design/Redesign (CDR) Grants

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Division of Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation (LTSI) - University of Victoria

Table of Contents

CDR Grant in a Nutshell
- Purpose of the CDR Grant
- Eligibility for a CDR Grant
- Project Funding for CDR Grants
- Ethical Approval Requirements
- CDR Grant Application Date Deadline

CDR Proposal Application Requirements
- Range of Proposals
- General Criteria for CDR Grants
- Application Process
- CDR Budget and Accounting Requirements
- Eligible and Ineligible Expenses
- Proposal Assistance
- CDR Grant Application Guide – Questions and Examples

CDR Proposal Adjudication
- Criteria
- Process

CDR Grant Awardees
- Ethical Approval for the CDR Project
- CDR Grant Awardee Commitments
- CDR Grant Progress Report
- Project Completion and Final Report

Prior to applying for a grant in support of teaching and learning, please review Overview of UVic Grants Supporting Teaching and Learning. The following application guidelines are specific to grant applications seeking support for Course Design/Redesign (CDR).
CDR Grant in a Nutshell

Purpose of the CDR Grant
The Division of Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation (LTSI) provides Course Design/Redesign (CDR) grants to support designing or redesigning and implementing a new or revised course. The CDR grants are course specific and are intended to encourage faculty to substantially update and renew existing courses as well as to develop new innovative course offerings. Applying principles of instructional design, grant recipients are expected to develop course intended learning outcomes, align learning activities and assessments with learning outcomes, incorporate active and/or participatory learning strategies, and adhere to principles of universal instructional design.

Eligibility for the CDR Grant
The LTSI encourages proposals from those who directly support student learning and the student experience at UVic, including research-stream and teaching-stream faculty, sessional lecturers, laboratory instructors, and teaching assistants. The LTSI particularly encourages proposals from early-career academic professionals or those new to UVic.

Project Funding for CDR Grants
The LTSI limits CDR grant funding for any project in a given budget year to a maximum of $5,000. The intent behind this limit is to distribute financial support across meritorious proposals (preferably in a diversity of faculties and divisions) in order to maximize direct benefits to a wide range of student learners.

Ethical Approval Requirements
We expect that some but not all CDR projects may involve the collection of data from human participants. If data collection does involve human participants then UVic Human Research Ethics Board (UVic HREB) must approve the project (see Ethical Approval for the CDR Project below). However, prior ethical approval is not required at the time of application.

CDR Grant Application Date Deadline
The LTSI will consider only complete CDR applications that are received prior to 4:00 PM on April 15th. We will notify all applicants of the adjudication decision by email no later than May 15th.
CDR Grant Application Requirements

Range of Proposals
The adjudication panel for the CDR grants will consider any proposal that aims to improve the course-related student experience at UVic, with preference given to those projects that demonstrate potential for significant large-scale or long-term impact. Examples include (but are not limited to):
- Projects designed to improve, or enhance student learning within the context of a particular course.
- Projects designed to fill a course gap within an academic program curriculum.

General Criteria for CDR Grants
CDR grants support the systematic application of sound pedagogical principles to the design or redesign of a course. We evaluate grant proposals based on the clarity and specificity of pedagogical principles to be applied, and the project’s feasibility within the timeframe and budget presented. The grant adjudication panel will pay close attention to the number of students directly impacted. We expect applicants to be familiar with other scholarly work that pertains to, or informs, their proposed project; such familiarity should be clearly reflected in the proposal.

Application Process
The LTSI will consider only complete CDR Applications that are received prior to 4:00 PM on April 15th. We will notify all applicants of the adjudication decision by email no later than May 15th.

Following are the steps in the application process:
1. Download the CDR grant application form.
2. Complete the CDR grant application form. (Please note the word limit for each item.)
3. Include all requested electronic signatures. (Information is available on using digital signatures in MS Word.) If you use a physical signature, submit the electronic copy without signature, and send a signed e-copy of page 1 of the application form to the LTSI.
4. Rename the completed Word document <Surname_of_Applicant_First_Name_CDRGrant_18.doc> (e.g., Doe_Jane_CDRGrant_18.doc) and send it to the ltc@uvic.ca. We will accept applications only electronically in Word document format. Note that we will not accept applications in .pdf format.

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1 Individuals interested in affecting changes across a broader curricular domain should consider the Curricular Renewal (CR) grant. Similarly, individuals interested in researching the impact of an innovation on student learning outcomes should consider the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) grant.
CDR Budget and Accounting Requirements

The application form requires that the applicant’s immediate supervisor indicate support for the project by a signature on the application. If the proposal is approved, the LTSI will ask the administrative officer of the applicant’s home unit to assign to the principal investigator a distinct account to be used solely for approved budget items related to the grant. The LTSI will have viewing privileges on the account to monitor expenditures.

CDR grants normally expire on March 31st the second year after the grant is approved. For example, a grant approved in May 2018 would expire on March 31, 2020. On the expiry date of the grant or when the funds have been expended, the LTSI will notify the applicant’s unit to freeze the account so that no more spending can be incurred. On expiry, the remaining funds will be returned to the LTSI for redistribution in future competitions. Any deficits are the responsibility of the awardee and their unit. If a project should require more time, it would be necessary to contact the LTSI Executive Director to request approval of an extension.

Funds used for items other than those listed in the approved application budget must be preapproved by the LTSI.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Applicants may propose using CDR grant funds to pay students or other research assistants but must adhere to all university policies and procedures, including those pertaining to wage rates, vacation pay, and appropriate benefits. Please consult the Human Resources guidelines. Note that vacation pay of 4% is computed on the wage rate and that benefits pay of 8% is computed on the wage rate + vacation pay.² Please confirm pay rates with Human Resources to assure that you have current values.

Applicants and co-applicants may not use CDR grant funds for the following:

X To be reimbursed for work related to the grant or to cover course release funding. (There might be rare exceptions, however. In approved exceptional cases the grant will fund up to a maximum of $3,000 for teaching release time.) Individuals who hope to be hired on the grant as, for example, a research assistant, should not be listed as the applicant or a co-applicant.
X To purchase equipment or supplies normally supplied by the university.
X To use commercial services. If the proposal involves using an outside consultant, the copyright to any “product” remains the property of UVic. Contact the LTSI if you have further questions on this issue.
X To cover costs of academic work, such as journal subscriptions.
X To cover costs of registration for, or travel to, academic conferences.

² For example, a graduate student serving as a senior assistant (CUPE 4163) after September 1, 2017 and before July 1, 2018 would have a wage rate of $25.15. The 4% vacation pay would increase the wage cost to $26.16 (1.01 * $25.15), and the 8% benefits would increase the wage cost to $28.25 (2.09 * $26.16).
Proposal Assistance
We recommend that you receive consultation on your proposal well in advance of the proposal deadline. The LTSI will be conducting workshops ahead of the submission deadline to assist you and to answer general questions. Individual consultations are also available. Depending on the nature of the project, the LTSI may recommend consultation with other campus partners, such as the Library, Student Affairs, Technology Integrated Learning, or Computing Services.

CDR Grant Application Guide – Questions and Examples
Please use the most recent CDR grant application form that is available on the website.

Questions to consider for CDR grant proposals
While formulating your proposal, consider the following questions:

1. **What are your project goals and motivations?** Why is the course design/redesign important? What desired results will the course design/redesign facilitate? What is the context for your goals? The LTSI adjudication panel recommends that your goals be **specific,** rather than **general.** (See Too General and Specific examples below.)

   **Course Design/Redesign Goal Examples**
   
   **Too General:** The new Research Methods course will increase students’ important critical thinking skills. This course fills a gap.
   
   **Specific:** The new Research Methods course will provide students with direct instruction, practice and formative feedback on the formulation of empirical research questions, research strategies, and data analysis and interpretation. These anticipated learning outcomes fill a need for program majors.

   **Too General:** The redesigned course will assist the learning of students with a disability.
   
   **Specific:** The redesigned course will enable flexible assignment alternatives for students to demonstrate mastery of all course learning outcomes. The alternatives will be constructed using the principles of Universal Instructional Design.

   **Too General:** The redesigned course will switch to a Flipped-Classroom format.
   
   **Specific:** The redesigned course will use the Flipped-Classroom format once per week. On flipped days the students will be expected to preview instructional materials prior to class, and then during the class time to engage in individual and groups problem solving, practice and formative feedback. The increase in active peer-to-peer learning is expected to promote greater student learning of collaborative skills, an important student learning outcome of the program.

   Note that the more specific goals refer directly to student learning outcomes and the learning principles being applied in the course design/redesign.

2. **What are your intended student learning outcomes?** List the student learning outcomes for your course or relevant section(s) of your course. If your CDR project is approved and funded, what changes would result in the learning of your students? Which learning
outcomes would be possible or facilitated by the successful implementation of your CDR project? The more clearly and specifically you describe these enhanced learning outcomes, the more likely the adjudication committee will be able to appreciate the value of your project. (See General and Specific examples below.)

**Learning Outcome Examples**

*Too General:* The revised course will increase students’ critical thinking.

*Specific:* When presented with a journal article germane to the course content, the student will be able to analyze the study and identify strengths and weaknesses in methodology, interpretation, and scholarly reference to the current literature.

*Too General:* Following instruction, students will be able to give high quality presentations.

*Specific:* After completing the self-help module on using presentation software, students will engage in more discussion during student in-class presentations.

3. **What do we already know (either in your own discipline or from other disciplines) that might help with your CDR project?** It is important to survey the field before beginning a CDR project. What does the literature say about how others have achieved goals similar to those of your CDR project? Please cite your reference(s).

4. **What principles of learning will your course design/redesign apply to achieve your project goals?** Describe the learning principles underlying the course design/redesign. How do the learning principles support the desired project goals?

**Principles Example**

The redesigned course will focus on the achievement of explicitly defined student learning outcomes related to course concepts and their applications. Additionally, the redesigned course will include new student learning outcomes related to collaboration skills. The redesign of the course into a flipped-classroom format is based upon the principle of active learning. Briefly, we learn what we practice, so increasing the amount of practice and feedback should improve student learning of course concepts and their application to new situations. Another finding in the flipped classroom research literature is that cooperative learning enhances the achievement of desired learning outcomes. Since the flipped classroom model involves in-class peer instruction, greater achievement of desired learning outcomes are expected. Additionally, opportunities for collaborative peer instruction will support the achievement of collaborative skills.

5. **How will the project improve the active learning and engagement of students targeted by the proposed project?** Describe briefly your reasoning on how the planned course changes will result in improved active learning and engagement.

**Active Learning and Engagement Example**

As stated in #4, the project involves the application of the learning principle of active learning. Additionally, the use of the flipped classroom method that involves peer collaboration will, hopefully, increase student engagement.
6. **How will the project improve the alignment of student learning outcomes, course activities, assignments and assessments of student learning?** Describe briefly your reasoning on how the planned intervention will improve alignment among expected student learning outcomes, course activities such as assignments, and the assessments of student learning.

7. **How will the project budget be spent?** Describe exactly how much will be spent doing what?

**Budget Examples:**
- One graduate student will be hired at $25.15 per hour for 40 hours to help analyze the data from the focus groups. Total pay will include 4% vacation pay and **compounded** 8% benefits ($28.25 x 40 = $1,130.00).
- A graduate research assistant will travel to the field teaching site (250 km round trip) four times. Travel will be reimbursed at the standard UVic rate for use of personal vehicle of $0.48/km ($0.48 x 1000 = $480).

8. **What, if any, additional help with your project might you like from the LTSI or other campus partners?** Often the expertise you are looking for is available at UVic, and the LTSI (as a clearinghouse for ideas) is a useful place to go for assistance, advice and referral.

**Help Examples**
- How can I define student learning outcomes that help both the student and the instructor?
- How do I conduct a focus group?
- What are the principles of Universal Instructional Design?
- Where can I learn more about the writing of intended student learning outcomes?

So that we may allocate appropriate consultative resources, please consult with the LTSI prior to submitting your application if your project will entail requesting LTSI assistance.

9. **What else, if anything, should the adjudication committee understand concerning this proposal?** Are there other issues, problems or knowledge that you would like to share with the adjudication committee that would help them to fully appreciate your proposal?

**CDR Proposal Adjudication**

After the proposal deadline of 4:00 PM on April 15th, the LTSI screens all complete applications to ensure that the proposals are most appropriate for the CDR grant. If the LTSI concludes that a proposal is a better fit for one of the other teaching and learning grants, the principal investigator will be contacted prior to final adjudication.

The LTSI adjudication panel competitively evaluates proposals for a CDR grant on the basis of the quality of the project goals, the proposed application of learning principles, the feasibility of the plan, and the potential impact on the learning of UVic students.
Successful CDR proposals will have a:

- set of clear goals;
- set of clear student learning outcomes;
- brief, targeted review of the literature that supports the planned design;
- plan to align intended student learning outcomes with student activities, assignments, and assessments;
- plan to consider universal instructional design in the course design/redesign;
- description of the significance of the project in terms of contributions to teaching and student learning; and
- budget with justification for each item.

An adjudication panel, composed of volunteer faculty and staff of the university, reviews the proposals prior to the adjudication meeting and rates each proposal on the aforementioned criteria. Adjudicators also make qualitative comments on exceptional or problematic features of proposals. The proposals are discussed and ranked. Proposed budgets are sometimes modified.

Prior to May 15th, the LTSI will notify the principal applicant of the panel’s decision and any recommendations for modification.

**CDR Grant Awardee Responsibilities**

**Ethical Approval for the CDR Project**

Since most CDR projects involve application of “known” principles of learning rather than exploring the impact of an innovation through SoTL research, ethical approval may not be necessary. To help you determine if an ethical review of your project is required, we urge you to go to the UVic Human Research Ethics website and carefully consider the information. In particular, see the “Who should apply?” and the “FAQ” information on the page. Note, however, that prior ethical approval is not required at the time of application.

Suggestion: If you have questions about your need to obtain ethical approval of your CDR project, we recommend that you consult directly with Human Research Ethics before submitting your proposal to the LTSI. They will help you to determine whether there might be any challenge to the implementation of your project from an ethical perspective.

**CDR Grant Awardee Commitments**

A primary goal of CDR grants is to create an expanding community experienced in the application of learning principles to course design and redesign. We hope to build on the successes and lessons learned in this ongoing initiative to inform the broader teaching and learning community at UVic. Accordingly, we ask successful CDR applicants to commit to do the following:
• attend an afternoon welcome with other recipients of Learning and Teaching Development Grants;
• participate in a 1/2-day intensive workshop with other successful CDR grant applicants (dates and times to be determined); and
• attend a two-hour collaborative workshop with other CDR grant recipients to share goals, principles, and achievements in each of the fall and spring terms (dates and times to be determined).

CDR Grant Progress Report
Successful grant recipients will complete a brief Progress Report by March 31st of the year following receipt of the grant, regardless of whether or not the project has been completed. For example, if a grant were awarded in May 2018, a Progress Report would be due March 31, 2019. Failure to submit the Progress Report by the due date will result in freezing of the grant account. When submitting a Progress Report, applicants must include their detailed budget showing all expenditures in Canadian funds.

Project Completion and Final Report
Grant recipients will normally complete their projects by March 31st of the second year from the time of their grant approval. For example, a proposal approved in May 2018 would have funding until March 31, 2020 or project completion, whichever occurs first. The Final Report provides grant awardees an opportunity to share their experiences with colleagues. The Final Report should include your project goals, the student learning outcomes, the learning principles applied, and a brief presentation and discussion of your experience. You must also include a separate budget sheet describing expenditure details.

The LTSI may ask successful applicants to take part in a local (virtual or in-person) event to disseminate their findings (such as a showcase, conference, panel, speaker series, or workshop). The LTSI expects successful applicants to share their project results with their departmental colleagues. If the grant recipient’s department were not to provide opportunities for sharing research, the LTSI would be happy to assist in organizing an event in their department or at the LTSI.