The Division of Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation (LTSI) provides Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) grants that are designed to foster empirical research on the impact of teaching practices on student learning and that serve to support an interactive community of scholars exploring improvements in teaching and learning. These grants are course- or program-specific.

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About the Grant

Range of Proposals
The adjudication committee will consider proposals which investigates factors that influence student learning, 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 or research designed to enhance student learning within the context of a particular course, type of course (seminar, lecture, laboratory, etc.) or a program; and,
- Cross-cutting initiatives that contribute to the scholarship of teaching by addressing significant themes, such as enhancing student-faculty interaction, supporting diversity, increasing Indigenous and international inclusivity, encouraging success in writing, qualitative and quantitative skills, or engaging students in undergraduate research.

Note: These grants are not for the purpose of transferring a current face-to-face course to an online format.

Eligibility
We encourage 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-related professional staff of the University. In particular, proposals are encouraged from early-career academic professionals or those new to UVic.

Proposals may have a single applicant or a principal applicant with added co-applicants.

In the case of sessional instructors, preference will be given to those with continuing appointments. Be advised that if you are a sessional instructor and the principal applicant, and you are designing/re-designing a course, we may also ask you and your Chair/Director to indicate that you are likely to teach the course again in the future.

In specific circumstances, CDR and SoTL grants may also open to graduate students as the principal applicant. The graduate student must be teaching in a regularly scheduled course and the Chair/Director must provide indication that they are supportive of the grant proposal and that it will contribute to course/curriculum development within the academic unit. Applications will also require the approval of the student’s supervisor and/or Graduate Advisor to ensure feasibility and value of the project for the student’s interests. LTSI grants are prioritized to primarily focus on the enhancement of learning and teaching practices at UVic and therefore student applications must demonstrate ongoing contributions. If you are a graduate student, please consult with the LTSI Director of Teaching Excellence to discuss potential applications.

In the case of student applicants, we seek a commitment from the Chair/Director that the course in question will be included among the course offerings of their unit and will run (subject to the regular course planning process of a unit); and that the academic supervisor or Graduate Advisor will be thoroughly consulted about the feasibility of the project and value for the student’s academic interests.” If you are a graduate student, please consult with the LTSI Director of Teaching Excellence to explore the full range of grant possibilities.

If you are a previous grant recipient for any Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation (LTSI) grant, you can still apply. If your previous grant is still active, but you have not fulfilled the obligations of your grant (see Grant Awardee Commitments), you must complete those obligations prior to consideration for another LTSI grant.
Application Process

Application Requirements

The following are the steps of the application process:

1. Complete the grant application form following these guidelines and respecting the word limit for each item. You can edit the application form at any point before you press the Submit button. Note, however, that information on the form is only saved automatically if you use the same device each time you want to edit the form. To make sure you have a reliable record of your information, we suggest you copy your responses into a separate file (or copy from a separate file into the form).

2. Once you have submitted the application, you cannot edit it. If you have questions or need to make an urgent amendment, please contact the LTSI Program Coordinator.

3. LTSI will send a pdf copy of your application to your Chair/Director (or Dean, if you are a Chair/Director) for approval. You will receive a copy of the message. Please ensure you have communicated your project proposal to them in good time for their review—following departmental/faculty guidelines for the submission of grant proposals to Chair/Director/Dean.

Ethics Approval Requirements

Some projects may involve the collection of data from human participants as well as experiences wherein students collect data from human participants during their coursework or other research activity (e.g., interviews, surveys, participant observation, focus groups). If such work is involved, the UVic Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) must approve the project, and the principal applicant is responsible for ensuring that ethics approval is obtained prior to data collection.

If you are unsure about the need for such approval, we urge you to consult the UVic Human Research Ethics (HRE) website and contact ethics@uvic.ca or ethicsassist@uvic.ca to discuss. You should reach out to them at the time of application; however, the approval itself is not required before the successful adjudication of a grant.

Questions to Consider

While formulating your proposal, keep in mind the following questions. Note that these are considerations and do not necessarily coincide with the wording of the questions of the application form. Please try to integrate these considerations into your application:

- How would you describe your project and what is your motivating inquiry question? What is it that you want to learn about the student experience or student learning in your course or program? What is the context of your question? What desired results will this project facilitate? We recommend that your inquiry question be specific, rather than general, and that the specific question is clearly linked with the proposed intervention. Pay particular attention to how your project plan aligns with the stated question, and include a timeframe.
**Inquiry Question Examples**

Too General: How can I help students to better understand the concepts of “gendered space” and “public/private space” in my first-year geography course?  
Specific: Will a group project assignment involving direct observation in the field facilitate students’ application of the concepts of “gendered space” and “public/private space” to novel contexts?

Too General: How can I increase the quality of student class presentations?  
Specific: What effect will the completing of a self-help module on the use of presentation software have on the engagement/discussion of the class during student class presentations?

Too General: How can I encourage my students to come to class better prepared?  
Specific: Will daily, start-of-class “1-minute papers” and brief peer-to-peer discussions increase students’ class preparation, attendance, and classroom engagement?

Too General: How can I motivate my Engineering students to work through end-of-chapter problems?  
Specific: Would increases to the proportion of class marks assigned to weekly homework problem sets change the likelihood that Engineering students would work on end-of-chapter problems? And, what impact would this marking change have on examination performance?

Note that the more specific inquiry questions refer directly to student intended learning outcomes and specific factors that may impact these outcomes.

- **What are your intended learning outcomes (ILOs)?** List the ILOs for your course or program or relevant section(s) of your course/program. If your project is approved and funded, what changes might result in the learning of your students? Which intended learning outcomes might be possible or facilitated by the successful implementation of your project? Be clear and specific in communicating the value of your project.

**Intended Learning Outcome Examples**

Too General: Following instruction, students will be able to give high quality presentations.  
Specific: After completing the new self-help module on using presentation software, students will engage in more frequent and higher quality discussions during student in-class presentations.

Too General: After participating in a group project, students will be able to better understand and use concepts of space.  
Specific: After participating in a group project assignment involving direct field observations, students will be more likely to recognize and apply space concepts within novel contexts.

- **How do you propose to find out the answer(s) to your question?** Provide a brief description of your proposed research design and methods. Will you implement an idea from elsewhere or from an innovation that you have developed? How will you analyze your data?

**Example of Method (for Geography example proposal)**

Students will have two group projects, one involving direct observation field work, and the other comprised solely of library research. For the first project (topic: “gendered space”), one half of the students will be asked to do library research in small groups and collaborate on writing a report. The other half of the students will do library research and additionally engage in direct observation in the field, and then collaborate on writing up their empirical findings. For the second group project (topic: “public/private space”) the students will swap
methods. Those who did the literature-only research for the first project will now do literature research and a field observation, and those who earlier did the field observation will be asked to do a literature research. The final examination for the course will include two questions that involve applying the concepts of “gendered space” and “public/private space” in novel contexts. Performance on these essay items will be compared to see if the method of instruction (library research or experiential + library research) impacted the generality of the concepts to a novel problem.

- How will the project improve the active learning and engagement of students targeted by the proposed project? How will you measure the impact on student engagement, learning, or success? Will you be using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed measures? Describe briefly your reasoning on how the planned intervention will result in improved active learning and engagement.

**Example of Active Learning and Engagement (from Geography example proposal)**
Our reasoning is that having students engage in direct observation and engagement in the field will necessarily increase active learning over the traditional lecture format.

**Example of Alignment of Learning Outcomes and Engagement (from Geography example proposal)**
The course ILOs specify that the student will apply learned concepts to novel problems and situations. We reason that providing students with an opportunity to collect data in the field will broaden the scope of their experience beyond that achievable with textual and lecture information alone. The intervention will improve the alignment of the learning outcomes and the course activities, and if successful, suggest ways to improve the alignment of assessments with learning outcomes, a possible follow-up SoTL investigation.

- UVic has a commitment to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We therefore encourage you to include such principles actively in your project in a manner appropriate to the individual proposal. How will you integrate such principles in your proposed work?

- What do we already know (either in your discipline or from other disciplines) that might help inform your inquiry question? It is important to survey the relevant literature before beginning a project. What does the literature say about how others have dealt with your question, your intended learning outcomes, or related issues? Does the literature suggest validated methods or strategies? You will need to provide a brief literature review of scholarly and, if applicable, other works (e.g., creative research) that are relevant to the project you are proposing.

**Sample Literature Questions**
What does the literature tell us about experiential learning and application of knowledge?
What properties of presentations influence student engagement and discussion?
What does the literature tell us about start-of-class exercises?

- How will you share your findings with colleagues or others both within and outside the university? We use ‘findings’ here to include any aspect of the process, knowledge gained, goals, outcomes or conceptual framing of your project. This communication can occur at any stage of the development of the project or after its completion.

We ask that successful applicants share the results of their projects at the annual Let’s Talk About Teaching event, which occurs in August and is coordinated by LTSI. Feel free to include this activity if you
would like to share your findings in that way. Nevertheless, we also ask that you include additional ways of making your work known for the benefit of the academic and wider community.

Here are some examples of how you could share your project work. You will: share the results of the study with departmental colleagues at your annual teaching retreat; submit significant findings for presentation at discipline-specific professional conferences; share your findings with departmental colleagues at your monthly research seminar series; request that we assist you in offering a workshop through LTSI.

Most disciplines have journals devoted to, or open to, articles on teaching and learning. Similarly, disciplinary conferences often support presentations related to teaching and learning. In addition, there are organizations devoted to the sharing of topics related to teaching and learning (e.g., Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education).

- What additional supports might be helpful for your project, from LTSI or other campus partners? Often the expertise you are looking for is available at UVic. LTSI is a useful starting place to go for assistance, advice and referral.

- Is there any other information that you would like to share with members of the adjudication committee that would help them to fully appreciate your proposal?

Project Funding for Grants

Grant funding for any project in a given budget year is a maximum of $7,500. The intent behind this limit is to distribute financial support across meritorious proposals (preferably in a diversity of Faculties, Departments and Schools) in order to maximize direct benefits to a wide range of student learners.

Budget and Accounting Requirements

Consider how the project budget will be spent and describe exactly how much will be spent doing what; provide a justification for each item. The sustainability of the project is an important criterion. Continuation of the project in post-grant years should not be dependent on continued grant funding. Think of whether a project is independent, has or requires funding from additional sources, or whether it is the first in a series of planned projects which may require funding from other sources after the completion of the currently proposed project. Please indicate clearly.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- paying undergraduate, graduate or other research assistants (RAs). Individuals who hope to be hired on the grant as RAs should not be listed as the applicant or a co-applicant;
- teaching release time (see details under Application Approval);
- engaging outside consultants that are essential to the successful completion of the grant. If you are requesting such a budget item, please explain the value of this work for the grant. Note that copyright for “products” of work undertaken on behalf of the project is subject to the Copyright Compliance and Administration Policy (IM7310);
- travel that is necessary for completion of essential components of the project; and,
- fees to participate in relevant training and workshops to support project goals.
Research Assistant Salaries
If the grant application is successful, you must adhere to all university policies and procedures, including those pertaining to wage rates, vacation pay, and appropriate benefits. Please consult the Human Resources CUPE 4163 salary schedule (Component 1 & 2) TA Appendix – Academic & Scientific Assistants, for current rates.

Note that vacation pay of 4% is to be computed on the wage rate; and that benefits pay of 11.85% is computed on the wage rate + vacation pay. Please indicate the hourly salary, vacation pay and benefits, the number of hours requested and the type of activity to be carried out. You may contact the LTSI Program Coordinator if you have further questions.

Budget Examples (examples are general to LTSI grants and not specific to CDR)
- One graduate student will be hired at $32.17 per hour for 40 hours to help survey the introductory chapters of five existing textbooks. Total pay will include 4% vacation pay and compounded 11.85% benefits ($32.17 x 40 = $1,287).
- A graduate RA 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 $0.51/km ($0.51/km x 1000 km = $510.00).
- The RA is needed for the initial design of course modules and monitoring of students’ reaction to the redesigned course elements. These RA activities will not be needed in subsequent offerings of the redesigned course. The redesigned course will be sustainable without additional outside support.

Sample Budget
Here is a complete sample budget:
A RA will be hired to assist with the information-gathering process and the design of the learning modules.

May-Aug 2021 (Note the change in current rates)
- 14 hrs: Create survey to gather information from external stakeholders; analyze data
- 6 hrs: Meet with Elders to learn how Indigenous peoples perceive health and physical activity. Provide honorarium and gifts.
- 10 hrs: Conduct 2 focus group interviews (on Zoom) with interested stakeholders
- 21 hrs: Complete transcription and data analysis to identify key learning themes
Total: 51 hrs at $31.52/hr = $1,607.52

Sept-Dec 2021
- 7 hrs: Finalize ILOs for learning modules
- 28 hrs: Develop learning strategies and assessment tools that align with ILOs and abide by principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
Total: 35 hrs at $32.17/hr = $1,125.95

Jan-May 2022
- Implement learning modules in course
- 7 hrs: Survey students’ perspectives on the course materials; analyze data
- 14 hrs: Adjust module content as necessary
Total: 21 hrs at $32.17/hr = $675.57

Total Budget Request: $3,409.04
Ineligible Expenses
Applicants and co-applicants **may not** use grant funds for the following:

- To be reimbursed for work related to the grant;
- To employ Teaching Assistants for timetabled courses (Teaching Assistantships are part of the academic planning of faculties). Students can only be employed as RAs for research towards and development or implementation of an awarded project;
- To purchase equipment or supplies normally supplied by the University;
- To use commercial services (other than those stated in the list of eligible expenses);
- To cover costs of academic work, such as journal subscriptions; and,
- To cover costs of registration for, or travel to, academic conferences for attendance or the dissemination of project work as these may be covered through Professional Development or other UVic funds.

**Note that:**

- Where work with Indigenous Elders is involved, there are specific UVic protocols of acknowledgment and reimbursement. You need to consider these when you formulate your proposal. While it is possible for a grant to cover part of that reimbursement under eligible expenses (see above), you may not be able to rely solely on the grant, and funds must be sought from other sources;
- Funds used for items other than those listed in the approved application budget must be pre-approved by the LTSI Executive Director (contact the LTSI Program Coordinator); and,
- Once a grant is approved, a budget can only be modified through written approval by LTSI. A new budget will have to be submitted based on eligible expenses and to the limit of the approved amount, explaining the modifications, i.e., the initially approved amount cannot change.

Application Approval
The Chair/Director/Dean’s support for the project indicates three things:

1. Confirmation of departmental/unit support for this application, including a commitment to project completion. Note that, where teaching release is requested, the maximum amount from a grant that can be used for that purpose is $5,000, and that the principal applicant’s home unit is responsible for supplementing any remaining funds towards course release.

2. Understanding that, if the grant is approved, the principal applicant’s home unit will be contacted by LTSI and will be asked to assign a distinct account to the principal applicant to be used solely for approved budget items related to the grant, and LTSI will have viewing privileges on the account to monitor expenditures. If the project requires ethics approval (see Ethics Approval Requirements), we will transfer funding to the grant account only after we receive an e-copy of the ethics approval from the HREB.

3. Commitment, along with the recipient, to assume responsibility for any deficits accrued in the recipient’s grant account.

Where there are multiple proposals from the same unit, we may ask the Dean, Chair or Director to prioritize these proposals within the context of the strategic directions of the faculty, department or school.
Assistance for Completing Your Proposal

We highly recommend that you arrange for at least one consultation on your proposal well in advance of the proposal deadline. This can be done in two ways: a. LTSI organizes a series of workshops to support applications for its grants. Dates of the workshops for the grants will be announced on the LTSI newsletter; b. for individual consultations, contact the LTSI Program Coordinator to schedule an appointment.

Depending on the nature of the project, LTSI may recommend consultation with other campus partners, such as Equity and Human Rights (EQHR), the Library, Student Affairs, University Systems, or LTSI’s Technology Integrated Learning (TIL) unit.

Note that LTSI can assist with, among other things: how to define and write ILOs; how to conduct a focus group; examples of learning principles; and principles of UDL.
Post-Application Process

Proposal Adjudication
After the proposal deadline, all applications will be screened to ensure that the proposals are complete and appropriate to the grant. If we conclude that a proposal is a better fit for one of the other learning and teaching grants, the principal applicant will be contacted prior to final adjudication.

All applicants will be notified of the adjudication decision by email.

If a grant is successful, the adjudication panel may, on occasion, propose modifications to the budget. The principal applicant will be notified of any recommendations for modification along with the panel’s decision. Also note that grant recipients do not always receive the entirety of requested funds.

Where available funds allow, adjudication committees reserve the right for conditional approval of a grant if the project aligns with the adjudication criteria in all but the budget or a specific component of the grant. In this case, the provisional grantee will be contacted with recommendations for modifications; final approval will be granted once the committee’s recommendations have been addressed.

Grant Criteria
General criteria for LTSI Learning and Teaching grants include: clarity and specificity of pedagogical principles to be applied to the planned materials towards courses, programs, curricula, or learning resources; the extent to which the Learning and Teaching grant goals are meaningfully reflected into the proposed project; the potential impact of the project on the student learning experience; the location of the project in current scholarly and creative work, and post-secondary educational trends; and the project’s feasibility and sustainability within the timeframe and budget presented.

SoTL grants support empirical research on the impact of pedagogical innovations on achieved student leaning outcomes. Grant proposals are evaluated on the basis of the clarity and specificity of the research question, the methodology, the potential contribution of the research to the improvement of pedagogy, and the project’s feasibility and sustainability 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. The following is a list of criteria that apply to the SoTL grants:

Accountability and Sustainability
- a comprehensive budget (detailing requested funds and how funds will be used); and,
- whether the proposed project is feasible within the timeframe and budget presented.

Impact
- goals are clear and articulated in terms of intended learning outcomes;
- research question and methodology are clear and specific;
- purpose states how the project potentially contributes to student learning and the improvement of pedagogy;
- method of assessment of the project’s impact on student learning is included; and,
- estimate of number of students directly impacted and potential for long-term impact.
Relevance

- how the project relates to pedagogical literature, discipline, or other initiatives or units at UVic; and,
- plan for disseminating the findings to appropriate audiences is clear.

Successful SoTL proposals will have a:

- well-considered, specific inquiry question or questions that focus on the student experience and conditions for enhancing learning;
- set of clear goals articulated in terms of intended student learning outcomes;
- brief, targeted review of the relevant literature;
- plan for gathering data that will shed new light on the inquiry question;
- well-articulated plan describing how the project’s impact on student success will be assessed;
- description of the significance of the project in terms of contributions to teaching and student learning;
- clear plan for disseminating the findings to appropriate audiences; and,
- sustainable budget with justification for each item.

Adjudication Committee

Adjudication committees for Learning and Teaching grants may include faculty members, sessional instructors, librarians, previous grantees, student representatives and LTSI staff at the level of Director from the area most relevant to each grant.

Grant Awardee Commitments

Join a Peer Group of Grant Recipients

A primary goal of SoTL grants is to create an expanding community of multi-disciplinary researchers engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning and sharing their experiences to inspire others through their SoTL leadership. 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 that successful applicants show their commitment by participating in occasional update meetings with other awardees. Email invitations will be sent once dates and duration are finalized.

Progress Report

Successful grant recipients will complete a brief Progress Report by March 31 of the calendar year following receipt of the grant, regardless of whether or not the project has been completed. When submitting a Progress Report, grant recipients must include their detailed budget showing all to-date expenditures in Canadian funds. They should also summarize the progress, challenges and successes of the project to-date.

Project Completion and Final Report

Grant recipients will normally complete their projects by March 31 of the second year from the time of their grant approval. For example, a proposal approved in spring 2022 would have funding until March 31, 2024 or project completion, whichever occurs first. At the completion of the project, grant recipients will present their work to the peer group of grant recipients, as well as submit a short final report. This gives awardees an opportunity to share their experiences with colleagues. The Final Report should include the project goals, outcomes, and a brief discussion of how the grant helped the awardee achieve what they set out to do. A separate budget sheet should describe expenditure details. We expect successful applicants to share their project results with their departmental colleagues and more broadly as relevant.
If a project should require more time, it would be necessary to request approval of an extension from the LTSI Director of Teaching Excellence. On expiry of the grant, any remaining funds will be returned to LTSI for redistribution in future competitions.