



# REED COLLEGE

OFFICE OF  
THE PRESIDENT

3203 Southeast

Woodstock Boulevard

Portland, Oregon

97202-8199

telephone

503/777-7500

fax

503/777-7701

March 28, 2011

Eugene M. Tobin  
Program Officer  
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
140 East 62<sup>nd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10065

Dear Gene,

On behalf of Reed College, I am pleased to submit this proposal to the Liberal Arts Colleges Program. We are seeking \$100,000 over one year from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a planning grant to explore how a teaching and learning center could strengthen and support faculty members' commitment to excellence in teaching.

Since its founding, Reed has been synonymous with outstanding teaching. The college continues to attract faculty members who believe in the benefits of liberal arts education and are drawn to the opportunity to exclusively teach undergraduates. At the same time, the college faces some challenges in helping faculty members continue to be excellent teachers throughout their careers. Our faculty has grown in number, so that half of them are recent additions; meeting the needs of this new faculty is stretching our resources. At the same time, more experienced faculty members are expressing interest in new strategies to sustain their teaching and research. This planning grant will allow us to take several steps towards establishing a full teaching and learning center. Our Dean of the Faculty, Ellen Keck Stauder, and Reed faculty members will visit successful teaching and learning centers at other institutions to identify possible models for Reed. In addition, we will test programs that could be run by the teaching and learning center, such as learning research seminars; pedagogy workshops; seed grants for developing the pedagogical dimension of existing and new courses and evaluate our existing faculty mentoring program. The grant will provide support for about a third of the faculty to participate in these programs and offer feedback on them, so that we can determine interest in implementing a permanent teaching and learning center at Reed.

Thank you so much for your feedback as we have developed this proposal. We understand that it will be considered by the Mellon Foundation trustees at their June 2011 meeting. If you have any questions about the proposal, you may contact Diane Gumz, Director of Corporate and Foundation Support at (503) 777-7560.

Best wishes,

Colin S. Diver  
President

CSD:dbg  
Enclosure



**Reed College  
Proposal to the Mellon Foundation  
for a Planning Grant for a Teaching and Learning Center  
March 28, 2011**

**Executive Summary**

Reed College proposes to explore how a teaching and learning center could contribute to strengthening and supporting Reed faculty members' central commitment to teaching excellence, including the development of pedagogical theories, strategies and skills that would enrich both student and faculty learning. During the year of this planning grant, for which we are asking \$100,000, Reed would undertake the following actions, in preparation for developing a full-scale proposal:

- Visit successful teaching and learning centers at other colleges and universities in order to create a model that is appropriate to Reed's academic culture.
- Introduce faculty members to the latest research on learning from a variety of disciplines through a year-long seminar group, that would include readings, discussion and external speakers.
- Provide opportunities for faculty members at all stages of their careers to improve their teaching through small, pedagogically-oriented seminar groups, that would include peer visitation of one another's classrooms as well as the hosting of external speakers to foster awareness of different approaches to pedagogy.
- Spur innovation through small seed grants for developing the pedagogical dimension of both existing and new courses and programs.
- Improve our mentoring program for new faculty by assessing the effectiveness of our current program and seeking to improve its quality and consistency.

**The Need for a Teaching and Learning Center**

Reed College has historically had a reputation for stellar teaching. Loren Pope, former education editor for the *New York Times* described the distinctive character of the college in *Colleges that Change Lives*: "If you're a genuine intellectual, live the life of the mind, and want to learn for the sake of learning, the place most likely to best empower you is . . . the most intellectual college in the country—Reed in Portland, Oregon . . . Reed is a precious asset of American democracy. It develops people with intellectual openness and honesty, clear thinkers who are not afraid of new or unpopular ideas, men and women who have the character and the ability to make the increasingly tough decisions in an increasingly complex and troubled society" (Penguin, 2006). The cultivation of genuinely intellectual students comes, above all, from a faculty dedicated first and foremost to excellent teaching as well as scholarship that keeps them at the forefront of developments in their field. The strength and persistence of the college's teaching reputation is all the more unusual considering the extraordinary demands that it places on its faculty members and the fact that it has always relied on informal means to convey its teaching ethos and practices.

At Reed, faculty members teach a 3/2 load, as well as advising thesis projects, the number of which can range widely, depending upon student interest (the average is 2.5). Effectiveness of teaching remains the most important of our three criteria for evaluation (the others being scholarship and service). We evaluate all faculty members every two years for the entire duration of a faculty member's career. Our high expectations for faculty members have borne fruit in the form of a faculty that is deeply committed to helping undergraduates develop rigor and independence in their habits of thought, inquiry and expression.

Historically, Reed's small size made it relatively easy for faculty members to learn what constituted good teaching from peers. During the past ten years, however, our faculty has undergone significant change. It has grown in size and added more tenure-track positions. In 2000-01, Reed had 126 faculty members; this year (2010-11), it has 139 faculty members. Two particularly salient statistics stand out in the faculty demographic data. First, though the growth in the total number of faculty has only risen by 13 over this eleven-year period, the total number of tenure track faculty we have hired in this period is 70, i.e., half of the current size of our faculty. While some of these faculty members have become tenured during this time or have left the college, it is nonetheless staggering to realize that approximately half of the faculty is new to the college within the last eleven years. Second, despite adding so many tenure track faculty, which might lead one to expect a significant increase in the youngest cohort of faculty, the age group that has grown by the greatest percentage is the cohort aged 55 and older, up 50% from 26 in 2000-2001 to 39 in 2010-11. This group is still the smallest at the college but it has made the largest and most steady growth. In 2010-11, there are 53 faculty aged 25-39; 47 aged 40-54, and 39 aged 55 and above.

With a larger faculty, half of whom are relatively recent additions to the faculty, it is becoming more challenging to promote and sustain a culture of teaching excellence. The human and financial resources needed to sustain and develop Reed's distinctive teaching ethos are spread very thin within this new environment. In addition, the increasing numbers of experienced faculty, aged 55 and older, express more and more interest in finding new ways to sustain themselves both in their teaching and in their research. In short, we are finding that both newer and older members of the faculty express greater interest in resources to improve their teaching throughout the full range of their careers.

### **Plans for the Pilot Project**

The pilot project will include:

- **Best Practices for Teaching and Learning at Peer Institutions**

The first step in the pilot program will be to investigate models for teaching and learning centers at other institutions in order to create one that builds on successful knowledge and practice elsewhere but is also suited to the Reed context. Dean Stauder and a team of 2 faculty

members will learn more about how to create a successful teaching and learning center by visiting five well-developed centers at colleges and universities during the summer of 2011. The Reed team will talk with the centers' directors and other faculty members about how the center works, faculty members' perception and use of it, staffing, and costs. On the east coast, they will visit Bryn Mawr College and the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard College. In the midwest, they will visit the centers at Carleton College and Macalester College. Finally, on the west coast, they will travel to the University of California at Berkeley and visit its Office of Educational Development. Bryn Mawr, Carleton, and Macalester are all of interest because they offer models for creating a teaching and learning center at a small undergraduate liberal arts college. While the Bok Center at Harvard and the Office of Educational Development at the University of California at Berkeley operate on a much larger scale, they are in the forefront of the teaching and learning field, and can provide long-term connections to new developments and expertise, such as future speakers for faculty seminars on teaching and learning at Reed.

In addition to investigating best practices elsewhere, we will offer versions of some of the seminars and activities that, at this point, we would envision as part of our future teaching and learning center. These include a Learning Seminar, Pedagogy Workshops, and seed grants for Pedagogical Initiatives. Each of these programs is described in some detail below. The planning grant period will allow us to evaluate and fine tune these programs as possible constituent elements of our longer term proposal.

- **Learning Seminar**

We will offer a year-long seminar on learning research for approximately twelve faculty members. Interested faculty will apply to the seminar and will be chosen by the Dean in order to achieve a balance of disciplines, ages, and genders. Preference will be given to tenure-track and tenured faculty but if there is room, visiting faculty will also be included. The seminar series will include four meetings, at least two of which will feature an expert on this subject. Each faculty member will receive a stipend for participating. The grant will also fund materials for this group. We will recruit a faculty member to serve as the organizer of this seminar series; the organizer will receive a stipend for this role. At the conclusion of the seminar, the seminar leader will, with the help of the participants, draft a report to the faculty as a whole on the outcomes of the seminar, including a bibliography of their materials, an evaluation of the materials that have been most effective in stimulating thinking and dialogue, and a recommendation about whether it would be useful to continue such a seminar in future years, and if so, in what form. In addition, we envision members of the Learning Seminar making at least one presentation to the Pedagogy Workshop members about their findings.

A possible organizational principle for the Learning Seminar would be to ask the question: What will the conference method of teaching look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in light of current discoveries about how we learn? The conference style method of teaching that has prevailed at Reed since its foundation consists of small gatherings of students and faculty members who engage in intense, Socratic-like dialogue around fundamental questions of the discipline or area

of inquiry. Even faculty in larger lecture- or laboratory-based classes strive to create opportunities for conference-like interaction within their particular setting. In examining contemporary learning theory, especially as drawn from neuroscience, cognitive science, and psychology, a learning seminar is intended to help faculty understand, in light of current research, how students best learn and what adjustments, if any, they want to make to their teaching practices. Some rethinking of teaching is already in motion on campus, but not in any systematic or widely shared fashion. The Learning Seminar would give faculty an opportunity to ask these questions both within and across disciplines.

Faculty members have shown interest in a variety of questions related both to what we teach and how we teach. For example: In what ways, if any, does students' immersion in social media change the way that they interact with one another and with the faculty? Have there been changes in the way today's students pay attention, engage in sustained reading, argumentation, and laboratory work? If there are changes, how do we respond and adapt to them? How does technology enhance learning? What does learning theory tell us about how technology would best serve students and faculty members both in and out of the classroom? If the knowledge economy of the future will require greater demonstrated capacity for team work, listening, working across disciplines, organizational theory, etc., how are we preparing our students to enter this world?

- **Pedagogy Workshops**

The pedagogy workshops will bring together sixteen members, mixing untenured and tenured faculty across the disciplines. The participants will be divided into smaller groups of three to four faculty who will regularly visit one another's classrooms for observations and to give feedback. The group as a whole will also meet several times per year, over lunch or dinner, in order to trade knowledge, experience, and to make suggestions for future presentations, invited speakers, and areas of discussion. Presentations to this group of faculty may include one or more from members of the Learning Seminar. Some of the presentations may target particular segments of the faculty, e.g., immediately post-tenure, mid-career or late career, and these will all be open to any interested faculty members. This combination of small working groups and a larger discussion forum is meant to foster ongoing attention to teaching as part of the essential fabric of faculty life. These workshops are intended to operate outside of the formal evaluation process and to provide sustained feedback based on direct observation. Participants in the pedagogy workshops may also be members of the Learning Seminar but need not be. As with the learning research seminars, we will recruit a faculty member to serve as the organizer of these workshops; the organizer will receive a stipend for this role. The participating faculty members will receive a stipend for participating. The grant will also fund materials for this group.

- **Seed Grants for Pedagogical Initiatives**

We will give several seed grants of up to \$10,000 for individual faculty or groups of faculty members for developing the pedagogical dimension of current courses as well as developing programs. Applications will be evaluated by the Dean in consultation with the Committee on

Academic Policy and Planning. Seed grants could propose innovations in pedagogy both for classes already being taught and for classes or programs being explored or planned. Two examples will make what we are imagining more palpable. 1) A number of faculty this year began using clickers in their classrooms; an initiative grant might have been given to the initial group of faculty to explore this technology or, in the future, to a group of faculty who would like to know what the experience of others has been and how it might be adapted into other disciplinary as well as classroom contexts (e.g., in a conference rather than in a lecture setting). 2) Several faculty members have indicated an interest in exploring the possibility of creating an interdisciplinary program around issues of race, ethnicity, and globalization. Such a group might use Pedagogical Initiative seed money to meet over the summer and then in the following academic year to begin to define the purpose and shape of such a program, the ways it would work with our existing curriculum, the availability of a core of faculty to teach in it, student interest, and the kind of pedagogical practices that such a program might require or invite. In this case, curricular development would be conceived hand in hand with pedagogical development.

- **Faculty Mentorship Evaluation and Training**

For the last several years, we have paired each new tenure track faculty member with a more senior colleague, from a different department, in order to offer informal guidance to new faculty in their first year. Many new faculty have found having a mentor to be invaluable and there have been quite a number of requests for a mentor from visiting faculty as well. However, some of these mentoring relationships have not been as successful as they might have been and a number of faculty have expressed interest in learning how to be a more effective mentor. During the pilot year of the program, we propose to concentrate primarily on evaluating our current practice and on seeking suggestions for how to improve it. The information will come primarily from contacting both past mentors and past mentees about their experience and having discussions with faculty participating in the mentorship seminar. The college's longtime Director of Institutional Research, Jon Rivenburg, has agreed to work on this project on a contract basis. He will be retiring as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. He will collect data for our evaluation. On the basis of this evaluation, we propose to hold a series of lectures and workshops on mentorship, using external speakers as well as our own faculty, in order to cultivate good mentoring skills. The hope is not only to improve the quality of mentoring but also to increase the number of faculty interested in acting as mentors. Faculty members will receive a stipend for participating in this seminar. In the pilot year, the seminar will be limited to five people. In future years, we imagine having a larger number of faculty involved, probably around twelve. We will recruit a faculty member to serve as the organizer of this evaluation and training process; the organizer will receive a stipend for this role.

To help keep the planning grant moving forward, the college will hire a staff member to provide administrative support for the pilot project as a whole. We expect that this will require about 240 hours of work at \$25/hour, including benefits, for an administrative assistant at grade 6.

## Budget

### Administrative Support

Mid range grade 6 salary	\$38,316	in 2011-12
Hourly Rate	\$20	
Benefits	1.281	
Hourly Rate plus benefits	\$25	

	Number	Cost per Item	Total
<b>1. Teaching and Learning Center</b>			
Explore Other Models (3 trips)			
East Coast: Reed to Bryn Mawr & Harvard, \$1,300 roundtrip 2 nights (\$800 airfare for Portland to Philadelphia, then Boston to Portland, 2 nights lodging x \$150, \$50/day meals, \$150 Philadelphia to Boston train)	3	\$1,300	\$3,900
Midwest: Reed to Macalester and Carleton \$1,150 roundtrip 2 nights (\$400 airfare for Portland to San Francisco, 1 night lodging x \$150, 50/day meals, \$80 car rental)	3	\$1,150	\$3,450
West Coast: Reed to UC Berkeley \$600 roundtrip 1 night (\$400 airfare for Portland to San Francisco, 1 nights lodging x \$150, 50/day meals, \$60 car rental)	3	\$660	\$1,980
<b>2. Seminars on Learning Research</b>			
Stipend for Faculty Member to serve as the Organizer of the Learning Research Seminars	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
Outside Expert/Speaker (2 speakers per year; \$3,000 honorarium, travel and lodging \$1,000 )	2	\$4,000	\$8,000
Faculty Stipends for participating in yearlong learning research seminars (12 faculty x \$1,000)	12	\$1,000	\$12,000
Lunch Meetings (2 with speaker, 2 others during the year, 4 x 12 faculty x \$25 per year)	48	\$25	\$1,200
Materials (12 faculty x \$45 per year)	12	\$45	\$540
<b>3. Pedagogy Workshops</b>			
Stipend for Faculty Member to serve as the Organizer of the Pedagogy Workshops	1	\$2,000	\$2,000

Faculty Stipends for participating in yearlong pedagogy workshops (16 faculty x \$1,000)	16	\$1,000	\$16,000
Outside Expert/Speaker (2 speakers: \$3,000 honorarium, travel and lodging \$1,000)	2	\$4,000	\$8,000
Dinner Meetings (1 with speaker, 2 others during the year, 3 x 16 faculty x \$30 per year)	48	\$30	\$1,440
Materials (16 faculty x \$50 per year)	16	\$45	\$720
<b>4. Seed Grants for Innovation</b>			
Grants of up to \$10,000 for groups of faculty members to explore and develop new curricula and pedagogy, including interdisciplinary projects. Size and number will vary depending on requests.			\$20,000
<b>5. Mentoring</b>			
Faculty Stipends for Participating in the Mentor Committee. The committee will bring in an external speaker and assist with the evaluation of mentoring	5	\$300	\$1,500
Outside Expert/Speaker (1 speaker: \$3,000 honorarium, travel and lodging \$1,000)	1	\$4,000	\$4,000
Dinner Meeting (1 with speaker, 1 x 5 faculty x \$30 per year)	5	\$150	\$750
Mentoring Evaluation (Contract) including question development, in-depth interviews, analysis and summarization of results			\$5,312
Mentoring Evaluation (Secretarial/Clerical Support)		\$1,208	\$1,208
<b>Administrative Support</b>			
240 hours x \$25/hour	240	\$25	\$6,000
<b>Total</b>			\$100,000

## Project Timeline

We plan to use the months of March through May 2011, when this proposal is under review at the Mellon Foundation, to initiate some tasks, like recruiting faculty members for different roles. This will ensure that we are able to move forward in June, when the Foundation makes its decision on the proposal.

March-April 2011	Select Reed faculty members to organize the learning research seminar and pedagogy workshops;
------------------	---



	invite speakers; organize reading materials
	Select two faculty members to help with visits to peer institutions over the summer
April-May 2011	Recruit faculty for the learning research seminar, pedagogy workshops and mentoring committee
June 2011	Receive award from the Mellon Foundation
	Hire administrative support person
	Announce seed grant funding opportunity
June-August 2011	Reed team visits teaching and learning centers
August 2011	Announce fall schedule for learning research seminar and pedagogy workshops
	Announce seed grant awards
November 2011	Applications for a possible second round of seed grants due with outcomes announced in December for spring 2012
December 2012	Announce spring schedule for learning seminar
June 2012	Report to the Mellon Foundation on the planning grant outcomes