

CCSU Next Generation Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and Community Engagement

Request for Proposals

December 10, 2021

CCSU's *Strategic Plan 2030 - Changing Lives, Building Communities; Central to Connecticut (SP2030)*, presents a new path forward for the University with its five overarching goals. Building on a foundation of high impact practices and community engagement, SP2030 focuses on educating career-ready graduates who are well-informed, civic-minded citizens prepared to contribute to the needs of our increasingly diverse society. SP2030 also presents a new vision for advancing social mobility and stimulating economic, cultural, and intellectual vitality within the communities CCSU serves. It functions as a dynamic planning strategy to advance student success, diversity, innovation and community engagement as we strive to become an agile institution of higher education, able to adapt to changing trends and emerging opportunities.

CCSU has created the **Next Generation Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and Community Engagement** program to support the strategic vision of SP2030. This funding program will be overseen and administered by the Advisory Board for the Implementation of the Strategic Plan, in consultation with, both the Faculty Senate Diversity Committee and the Faculty Senate Community Engagement Committee. The program encourages faculty to develop and implement innovative projects that will enrich the faculty connection with students, industry, the communities we serve, and the University as a whole. Initiatives will support faculty integration of activities and new pedagogical approaches in a manner that positively impacts CCSU and the greater community. Projects must address one or more of the SP2030 goals, as outlined below.

SP2030 Goals

1. **Enhancing Academic Excellence and Preparing Graduates to Thrive in a Changing Economy:** *Student Success, Innovation, Community Engagement*
 - a. Particular focus and emphasis on career pathways, high impact practices (see **Appendix I**), and community engagement that works with connecting students to industry/nonprofit organizations
 - b. Integrate new pedagogical approaches and technology into the classroom
2. **Increasing Access to Higher Education and Ensuring Student Success:** *Diversity, Student Success, Community Engagement*
 - a. Provide access to higher education and enable social mobility
 - b. Emphasis on Hispanic community especially in New Britain and Hartford
 - c. Increase access and prepare underserved students earn a college degree
 - d. Implement initiatives to address the results from multiple student surveys including the Campus Climate Survey

3. **Fostering an Inclusive and Safe Campus Culture that Values and Encourages Individuals to Participate in a Free and Respectful Exchange of Ideas: *Student Success, Diversity, Community Engagement***
 - a. Help CCSU be known for enriching the cultural and intellectual vitality in the communities we serve
 - b. Develop innovative, inclusive diversity models that engage the campus and larger community with special attention to the priorities identified by the President’s Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion based on the Faculty and Staff Campus Climate Surveys
 - c. Diversify our faculty and implement strategies to support underrepresented faculty throughout their careers
4. **Strengthening Stewardship – Advancing Scholarship, Service Learning, and Community Development for the Public Good: *Community Engagement, Innovation***
 - a. Become an important contributor in closing the Health disparities gap in New Britain
 - b. Strengthen K-12 partnerships to expand CCSU reputation as a transformation partner
 - c. Creating and strengthening innovative partnerships with small and medium size companies
5. **Assuring Sustainability for the Future: *Innovation, Community Engagement***
 - a. Encourage campus ventures that increase revenue and help the institution earn a reputation as an innovation partner and a facilitator of success for small and medium companies
 - b. Engage community partners with an emphasis on recruitment of adult learners

Specifications

Academic departments, other collections of faculty, and/or individual faculty members—full-time or part-time—are invited to apply for funding to implement a project that incorporates student success, diversity, innovation, and/or community engagement. Both one-year and multi-year projects will be considered, and funding will be awarded on an annual basis. On average, up to \$30,000 per year will be awarded to support development and/or implementation of the project, however consideration will be given to initiatives in need of additional funding. The proposed budget can include up to a \$1,000 stipend for travel expenses. For multi-year projects, a progress report will be required at the end of the first year before funding can be released for the continuation of the initiative.

Possible initiatives can include, but are not limited to the following:

1. ***Teaching Excellence Speaker Series*** – Develop a year-long, speaker/panelist series that highlights various innovative instructional design techniques and pedagogical approaches that will have a positive impact on the 21st Century student population. This can include inviting speakers doing important, interesting research to present their projects to CCSU faculty with a goal to enhance the intellectual life of the faculty and engage in influential discussions about the changing landscape of higher education. The series should incorporate one or more of the five SP2030 goals, and emphasis on how teaching excellence impacts Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement is required.
2. ***Innovative Teaching Faculty Cohort*** – Bring a group of faculty together as a learning community to explore innovative approaches to significant teaching and learning questions that impact Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement. Participating faculty spend a semester investigating a new pedagogical or course design approach to be implemented in at least one of the courses they teach. Cohorts should meet regularly to learn from and support each other via virtual and

face-to-face environments, as well as to share ideas and methodologies that incorporate one or more of the SP2030 goals. Participants will produce a deliverable appropriate to the focus of the cohort, such as, a new or revised course component.

3. *Pedagogical Innovation Fellows Program* – Develop a program providing advanced pedagogical and professional development for faculty in an interdisciplinary community that emphasizes professional and personal support, leadership, influence, and collaboration. Fellows should work in the University community to enhance the educational experience, promote and lead cross-departmental and cross-institutional partnerships and collaborate with others to incorporate creativity, innovation, diversity, community, and entrepreneurship into the classroom. The initiative must include an element of faculty-to-faculty mentorship, as well as encourage exploration of teaching approaches that will positively impact Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement based on one or more of the SP2030 goals. Fellows will serve as advocates for lasting institutional change and advancement of strategic initiatives.
4. *Faculty Industry Fellowship Program* – Identify an industry, business, nonprofit, or other organization relevant to the faculty member’s field of study, in which faculty can pursue areas of intellectual and/or commercial opportunities of mutual interest to both the organization and the University. Participants of this program will spend time throughout the year immersed in the industry environment to gain a better understanding of the practical application of their teaching discipline. The goal is to influence the content of courses as well as faculty teaching practices in ways that will better prepare tomorrow's graduates for careers in a global economy. Program participants will apply this increased knowledge and understanding within their courses and disciplines and will influence broader curriculum changes in a holistic way that address industry needs, focus on career readiness, and encourage entrepreneurship in the classroom.
5. *Faculty Community Outreach Projects* – Develop a faculty-driven initiative to address a community-based need such as health disparities, poverty, academic achievement gaps, homelessness, or food insecurity through a community-university partnership. This can include collaboration between CCSU faculty and a foundation that works to improve the quality of life in the diverse communities we serve, or developing a program that addresses a critical community need. Project goals include raising awareness and providing support to community partners, as well as creating, enhancing or sustaining community-engaged learning opportunities for our students. Faculty must incorporate one or more of the five SP2030 goals, and emphasis on how the initiative impacts Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement is expected.
6. *Other Initiatives* – Develop an initiative that supports the strategic vision of SP2030 and impacts **at least two** of the following categories: student success, diversity, innovation or community engagement. Projects should support CCSU’s ability to adapt to changing trends and emerging opportunities in higher education, and initiatives that utilize CCSU’s unique value proposition to enhance the institution’s strengths are preferred.

In the beginning of the Spring semester, a pre-proposal forum will be held for faculty members interested in submitting a proposal. Recipients will be expected to develop cohorts and participate with others working on

similar goals in an early planning workshop, a mid-program workshop, and an end of the year symposium. Awardees submit written reports summarizing the learning outcomes of their specific initiative and will present their findings at the end of year symposium.

An award ceremony will be held at the end of year symposium. President's Achievement Awards for Advancing Student Success in the following areas will be awarded:

- **Diversity:** recognizes individuals, partnerships, or groups for their exemplary contributions to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion at the university or community.
- **Innovation:** recognizes individuals, partnerships, or groups for their exemplary contributions to advancing innovative approaches to teaching and learning.
- **Community and Business Engagement:** recognizes individuals, partnerships, or groups for their exemplary contributions to advancing university partnerships, enhancing student engagement in the community, or establishing a program that meets a critical community need.

Submission Guidelines

In order to be considered, please make your proposal consistent with the guidelines below.

Letter of Intent:

A letter of intent must be submitted to the Grants Office no later than **5:00 pm on Friday, February 11, 2022**. The letter should describe in no more than 500 words a description of the project and how the initiative is expected to impact student success, diversity, innovation, and/or community engagement.

Proposals:

Proposals should be in the form of a single MS Word or PDF document including:

- Cover sheet
- Narrative
- Budget
- Supporting documentation (if any)

Cover Sheet: The cover sheet will include the date of submission, descriptive title of proposal, and the name(s) and department(s) of applicant(s).

Narrative: The narrative shall be **no more than five single-spaced pages** and include the following:

- **Description** of proposed project, including how it addresses the purpose of the initiative as described above, and a timeline demonstrating completion of project.
- **Goals** of the proposed project clearly stated.
- **Significance** of project to students, department(s), the university, the community, or other relevant entities, including how the project addresses Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement and which SP2030 goal(s) will be impacted.
- **Methodology** of proposed activity and tasks to be completed.

- **Outcomes Measurement** in no more than 300 words describing how the success of the initiative will be evaluated, including the process(es) that will be applied to identify baseline measures for success as well as project outcomes.
- **Contributions and Anticipated Impact** that will cultivate long-term understanding and quantify how the project will impact Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement at CCSU.
- **Explanation of Initiative’s Sustainability** beyond the initial funding period, as well as any plans to seek external funding.
- **Timeline** of significant project tasks and milestones.

Budget: A clear and complete budget itemizing expenses, justifying each item, and documenting each item’s cost when possible.

Supporting Documentation: Proposals should be accompanied by any supporting documentation necessary for consideration of the project.

Applicants are encouraged to address all of the required elements above, as they will be the basis of the rubric upon which applications are scored.

Proposal Deadline

Applications should be sent as a single MS Word or PDF document by **5:00 p.m.** on **Friday, March 25, 2022** to the Grants Office (email). *No late proposals will be accepted.*

Scoring and Selection Process

Applicants will be scored based on their adherence to the above proposal requirements, as well as their ability to address the elements of Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement and support the strategic vision of SP2030. The sustainability of the proposed programs as well the potential for external funding will also be considered as part of the proposal evaluation process.

Proposals will be reviewed by the Advisory Board. Members of the Advisory Board who are connected to any of the proposed projects will recuse themselves from the review and recommendation process. The Advisory Board will forward its recommendations regarding awards to CCSU President who will consult with the provost and deans prior to making final decisions. Final decisions will be made by Wednesday, May 4, 2022.

Full Project Timeline

REQUIREMENT	DEADLINE
Pre-Proposal Forum	Wednesday, January 26, 2022
Letter of Intent Submission Deadline	Friday, February 11, 2022
Deadline for interested parties to create cohorts or partnerships	Friday, February 25, 2022
Final Proposal Deadline	Friday, March 25, 2022
Proposal Selection Deadline	Wednesday, May 4, 2022
Early Planning Workshop	Wednesday, September 7, 2022
Mid-Program Workshop	Wednesday, January 25, 2023
End Of Year Symposium	Friday, May 5, 2023
Final Written Report (or Progress Report for Multi-Year Projects) Deadline	Friday, May 12, 2023

High-Impact Educational Practices

A Brief Overview

High-Impact Educational Practices: A Brief Overview

The following teaching and learning practices have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. These practices take many different forms, depending on learner characteristics and on institutional priorities and contexts.

On many campuses, assessment of student involvement in active learning practices such as these has made it possible to assess the practices' contribution to students' cumulative learning. However, on almost all campuses, utilization of active learning practices is unsystematic, to the detriment of student learning. Presented below are brief descriptions of high-impact practices that educational research suggests increase rates of student retention and student engagement.

First-Year Seminars and Experiences

Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

Common Intellectual Experiences

The older idea of a "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community. These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

Learning Communities

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses

These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice "across the curriculum" has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

Undergraduate Research

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address US diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

ePortfolios

ePortfolios are the latest addition to AAC&U's list of high-impact educational practices, and higher education has developed a range of ways to implement them for teaching and learning, programmatic assessment, and career development. ePortfolios enable students to electronically collect their work over time, reflect upon their personal and academic growth, and then share selected items with others, such as professors, advisors, and potential employers. Because collection over time is a key element of the ePortfolio process, employing ePortfolios in collaboration with other high-impact practices provides opportunities for students to make connections between various educational experiences.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Internships

Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects

Whether they're called "senior capstones" or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

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Table 1

Relationships between Selected High-Impact Activities, Deep Learning, and Self-Reported Gains

	Deep Learning	Gains: General	Gains: Personal	Gains: Practical
First-Year				
Learning Communities	+++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	+++
Senior				
Study Abroad	++	+	+	++
Student–Faculty Research	+++	++	++	++
Internships	++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	+++
Senior Culminating Experience	+++	++	++	++

+ p<0.001, ++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.10, +++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.30

Table 2

Relationships between Selected High-Impact Activities and Clusters of Effective Educational Practices

	Level of Academic Challenge	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student–Faculty Interaction	Supportive Campus Environment
First-Year				
Learning Communities	+++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	+++	+++	+++	+++
Senior				
Study Abroad	++	++	++	++
Student–Faculty Research	+++	+++	+++	++
Internships	++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	+++	+++	+++	+++
Senior Culminating Experience	++	+++	+++	++

+ p<0.001, ++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.10, +++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.30

Source: *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale* by George D. Kuh and Ken O'Donnell, with Case Studies by Sally Reed. (Washington, DC: AAC&U, 2013). For information and more resources and research from LEAP, see www.aacu.org/leap.