



MUS TEACHING SCHOLARS

MUS Teaching Scholars

Each year, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education recognizes a select group of faculty at all stages of their careers who have made exemplary contributions to high-quality teaching and learning and who demonstrate commitment to making the transformative experiences of higher education accessible and achievable for a diverse student body.

The goals of the MUS Teaching Scholars program are to elevate excellent teaching and learning as the signature feature of an MUS education *and* to continuously advance the profound impact of high-quality teaching on individuals as they apply their talents and knowledge locally and globally.

As part of the MUS Teaching Scholars program, awarded faculty will design and lead faculty learning communities (FLC) around the annual MUS Teaching Scholars theme, contribute scholarship and reflections on teaching and learning, and participate in system-wide MUS Teaching Scholars activities such as a speaker series and a system-wide symposium on teaching and learning.

2021-2022 Theme: Innovation in Teaching & Learning

Perhaps no buzzword is more ubiquitous in the higher education sphere in 2021 than “innovation,” and with good reason. Throughout the past year and a half, faculty members have completely rethought how course delivery impacts learning, discovered new ways to replicate or reimagine the embodied experience of learning, redesigned content and assignments for remote teaching, transformed how students engage with one another to learn, and implemented universal design practices as faculty and learners alike have operated in multiple modalities. At the same time, university faculty across the country have responded in force to a national reckoning with systemic racial and social inequities and injustices. Last year’s cohort of MUS Teaching Scholars were recognized for their exemplary commitment to addressing those inequities in the classroom through strategies like diversifying curriculum, centering marginalized students’ experiential knowledge, and implementing other equity-minded pedagogical practices. Even before the pandemic, faculty members across the MUS were advancing bold, new teaching practices such as high impact practices or transparent education, among many others.

What these transformational practices have in common is innovation—rethinking, imagining anew, creating, implementing, iterating, and assessing transformational solutions to the most pressing challenges in teaching and learning. This year, the MUS Teaching Scholars program invites applications from faculty who are actively engaged in innovation in teaching and learning in the service of bettering student outcomes and achieving equitable outcomes for all students.

The MUS Teaching Scholars program seeks to award faculty members who are committed to building communities of practice around pedagogical innovations and whose innovations in teaching and learning share three principles:

- explicit focus on specific pedagogical or curricular strategies in response to an identified challenge;
- data-informed development, implementation, and assessment of strategies to drive iteration and adaptation; and
- pedagogical strategies or practices that drive positive and equitable student achievement outcomes.

Program Goals & Expectations

The MUS Teaching Scholars program seeks to build communities of practice around those strategies, practices, pedagogies, and scholarship that advance and elevate teaching and learning across our public university system. As MUS Teaching Scholars, faculty commit to building and sustaining communities of practice by:

- Participating in MUS Teaching Scholars program events including a November 2021 orientation, speaker events, and a system-wide teaching and learning symposium (public health allowing);
- Designing and facilitating a faculty learning community (FLC) of 6-10 faculty at your institution working to advance pedagogical innovations;
- Submitting a critical reflection essay to the inaugural MUS Teaching and Learning Commons, a digital community of practice where teaching scholars and FLC participants can bring scholarship, lessons learned, pedagogical strategies and more to a wide community of faculty across the system.

Award & Recognition

MUS Teaching Scholars will be awarded and recognized for excellence in teaching and exemplary commitment to bettering outcomes for all students and narrowing equity gaps. Selected MUS Teaching Scholars will be announced in late October. In addition to recognition, scholars will also receive a \$1,500 award and up to \$500 to support activities of their faculty learning community.

Application Guidelines & Eligibility

MUS faculty and instructors of all ranks and at any stage of their career are invited to submit a proposal to be recognized as an MUS Teaching Scholar. Faculty may submit a joint proposal, with the award and FLC stipend to be split evenly among team members.

Applications include three parts: an online form, a letter of application and FLC proposal, and a letter of recommendation from the applicant's department chair, dean, or provost. Application letters should be up to two pages and should address faculty member's commitment to and examples of innovation in teaching and learning that shares the principles identified in theme *and* a proposal for the faculty learning community (FLC) to be conducted in Spring 2022. Strong proposals describe a particular challenge that the FLC will address, learning outcomes for the FLC, and how the work of the FLC advances innovation in the service of equitable student outcomes.

To apply, submit an [online application](#) and PDF of the letter of application. Referees should submit letters of recommendation directly to Crystine Miller cmiller@montana.edu. **The deadline for complete applications is Monday October 25, 2021.**

Selection Criteria

Selections will be based on:

- Demonstrated commitment to innovation in teaching and learning that shares the three principles described above: ;
- Clear proposal for a well-designed FLC including clear learning outcomes and description of how FLC will support participating faculty in developing, adopting, and assessing potential innovations;
- Demonstrated commitment to teaching practices that foster equitable learning and academic achievement for all students;
- Potential impact of FLC on participating faculty and their own teaching and/or scholarship of teaching and learning;
- Commitment to contributing critical reflection to MUS Teaching & Learning Commons

Please direct questions about the MUS Teaching Scholars program to Crystine Miller, Director of Student Affairs & Student Engagement | cmiller@montana.edu. Learn more about the MUS Teaching Scholars program on our [website](#).