



MUS TEACHING SCHOLARS

MUS Teaching Scholars

Each year, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education recognizes a select group of faculty 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 facilitate 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.

2025-2026 Annual Theme: Teaching Practices & Pedagogies for All Learners

Higher education's scope and purposes are expanding to be more inclusive of all types of learners. To prepare learners for futures very different from the present, and to connect with learners at multiple points in their educational and career paths, the strategies for effective and high quality pedagogies and teaching practices need to expand. This year's MUS Teaching Scholars program will select faculty across the MUS who are developing innovative strategies to meet the demands of these new dimensions of education and diverse learning needs.

This year's teaching scholars program will support faculty who are leaders in pedagogies and teaching practices including but not limited to those that:

- are designed to address students with diverse learning needs;
- promote equitable access to educational resources and technology (Ex. ADA Title II)
- promote inclusive design;
- demonstrate use of best practices for digital content and platforms;
- support wellbeing in the classroom;
- take innovative approaches to designing curriculum, pedagogies, and program structure to meet the needs of non-traditional or professional learners;

Program Goals and Expectations

The MUS Teaching Scholars program seeks to build communities of practice around strategies, practices, pedagogies, and scholarship that advance and elevate teaching and learning as it relates to the annual theme. As MUS Teaching Scholars, faculty commit to building and sustaining communities of practice by:

- Designing and facilitating a faculty learning community (FLC) of 6-10 faculty at your institution working to advance strategies, practices, or scholarship on teaching and learning related to this year's theme;
- Participating in MUS Teaching Scholars program events;
- Submitting a white paper to the 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.
- Participate in a system-wide teaching and learning symposium to share scholarship, strategies, and best practices on topics related to the annual theme and learnings from the Teaching Scholar's faculty learning community.

Award & Recognition

MUS Teaching Scholars will be awarded and recognized for exemplary approaches to teaching, exceptional commitment to bettering outcomes for all students, and narrowing equity gaps through teaching excellence. 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 directly 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. Faculty who have previously been awarded an MUS teaching scholar grant may apply, however, preference will be given to first time awardees.

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Complete Applications must be submitted by Thursday February 13. To apply, please:

1. complete a brief [online application form](#);
2. submit a letter of application that includes a proposal for a faculty learning community (submitted through the online form); and
3. submit a letter of recommendation from the applicant's department chair, dean, or provost. Referees should submit letters directly to Crystine Miller: cmiller@montana.edu.

Application letters may be up to two pages and should address how your teaching demonstrates excellence and positive student impact around this year's theme as well as a proposal for leading a faculty learning community (to be conducted in Fall 2025). Strong proposals describe a particular challenge, opportunity, strategy, or research question related to the theme; proposed learning

outcomes for the FLC; and how the work of the FLC will advance high quality teaching and learning across the system.

Requirements for Participation

- Must attend MUS Teaching Scholars orientation (date TBA).
- Must compile roster of 6-10 faculty for learning community before the beginning of Fall 2025 term.
- Must have plan for conducting learning community including learning outcomes and proposal for how FLC will contribute to enhanced teaching and learning in the MUS.
- Must participate in Fall 2025 teaching and learning community.
- Must contribute a white paper that includes focus areas; tested strategies; learnings or best practices emerging from the FLC; and considerations for implementation. Faculty may produce white papers consistent with their fields' genre standards.
- Must complete all expense reporting and reimbursement by deadlines to receive stipend.

Selection Criteria

Selection for this year's Teaching Scholars will be based on:

- Demonstrated commitment to addressing teaching, pedagogy, and learning related to this year theme including the areas identified in but not limited to the annual theme description;
- 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 teaching practices and pedagogies;
- 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 learnings from FLC to the larger MUS faculty community through participation in learning commons and teaching and learning symposium.