

2022-2023 Improvement Grants

Project Title: BeKiND: Student Success in the New School of Kinesiology, Nutrition, and Dietetics

Project Lead: David Hydock, Professor and Chair, School of Kinesiology, Nutrition, and Dietetics

This project seeks to increase students' sense of belonging in the School of Kinesiology, Nutrition, and Dietetics (KiND) and increase undergraduate student research engagement. Project activities will be open to all KiND students; however, a special focus will be placed on first- and second-year undergraduates. Faculty will host social activities throughout the year to create a sense of community. The first event will feature faculty presentations on their research interests and opportunities for students to select one or more areas of interest. KiND faculty will reach out to students to observe and participate in various research activities, with a portion of the grant funds allocated to undergraduate participation in faculty-led research. If successful, project activities will continue in the years to follow.

Project Title: Developing a Cohort-Based Pathways Program into Anthropology, Geoscience, and Environmental Sustainability (AGES) to Test Impacts on Sense of Belonging and Science Capital

Project Lead: Sharon Bywater-Reyes, Assistant Professor of Environmental Geoscience

Project Team:

Chelsie Romulo, Associate Professor of Geography, GIS, and Sustainability

Andrew Creekmore, Professor and Chair of Anthropology

This project seeks to increase retention and sense of belonging and reduce equity gaps among undergraduate students enrolled in Anthropology, Geoscience, and Environmental Sustainability (AGES) majors. The project supports the Freshman AGES Learning Cohort by providing community engaged learning activities and field experiences, peer leaders, and student support services. Unique features include an interdisciplinary focus; structured activities for building community among students, faculty, peers, and the public; curriculum that addresses real-world issues; and approaches known to increase students' self-efficacy. The project is designed to be scalable to other programs or colleges seeking to increase the enrollment and success of students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Project Title: Embedding Career Readiness Competencies & Alumni Relations Data into HSS Courses to Improve Retention & Career Readiness

Project Lead: Dawit Senbet, Chair and Professor of Economics

Project Team:

Chris Marston, Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Paige Johnsen, Director, HSS Student Success Center

Kaley Oplt, HSS Student Success Coach

Lucas McCamon, HSS Student and Faculty Support Specialist

Jasmine Mitchell, HSS Student Success Coach

Shelby Scrivner, HSS Student & Faculty Support Specialist and Event Planner

Brianne Markowski, University Libraries Assistant Professor/Head of Teaching and Outreach

Lyndsey Crum, Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations

Crystal Smith, Interim Director, Center for Career Readiness

This project is designed to enhance students' understanding of the connection between their experiences at UNC and career competency development. By providing students with a common

language to discuss career readiness, and by ensuring that students have access to career development experiences, the project seeks to increase opportunities for career goal achievement and social mobility. In academic year 2022-23, faculty participants will develop career readiness assignments to be piloted in undergraduate courses during 2023. In addition to benefitting students enrolled in the pilot courses, the project hopes to serve as a model for scaling future curriculum development focused on career readiness across the university. The project is a collaborative effort between the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Alumni Relations, University Libraries, and the Center for Career Readiness.

Project Title: Increasing Connection, Retention, and Student Success in PEPAL

Project Lead: Jennifer Krause, Associate Professor of Physical Education Teaching and Physical Activity Leadership

Project Team: Brian Dauenhauer, Associate Professor of Physical Education Teaching and Physical Activity Leadership

This project seeks to increase retention rates and feelings of connectedness among students in the Physical Education (PE) K12 Teaching B.S. program through experiences that connect students to program faculty earlier in their program. Connections with other students and the faculty typically don't develop until students enroll in methods courses during their junior year. Through various program-wide events, the project seeks to begin these relationships earlier during the first year in the program. Major activities include fall and spring kickoff events hosted by faculty and increased involvement by faculty in the student PE Club. Evaluation data will be used to assess the efficacy of the project, which could be sustained in subsequent years.

Project Title: Music Theory Core Curriculum Re-organization

Project Lead: Reiner Kramer, Associate Professor of Music

Project Team:

Carissa Reddick, Associate Professor and Director, School of Music

Katie Runkel, PVA Director of Advising

This project's primary goal is to re-organize the curriculum of the core music theory courses to reduce DFW rates. Its main objectives include: (1) incorporating musical practices and theories by traditionally marginalized groups; (2) de-emphasizing grades in lieu of course and musical outcomes; and (3) providing succinct, multiple, and repeat opportunities to achieve successful outcomes. Major activities include a workshop with an external expert, a curriculum and syllabus review, and implementation of the re-organized syllabi and curricula across all MUS 113/4 and MUS 213/4 courses during Spring 2023. In addition to increasing student success in these courses, the project may also serve as a model for other courses in music and across the arts and humanities.

Project Title: PVA Student Mentor-Mentee Proposal

Project Lead: Leo Welch, Professor of Music

Project Team:

Rachel Dineen, Assistant Professor, Teaching and Outreach, University Libraries

Andrew Liccardo, Associate Professor of Art and Design

Katie Runkel, PVA Director of Advising

This project intends to assist in raising fall-to-fall retention rates for first-year students in performing and visual arts education, liberal arts, and select pre-professional programs. Specific goals include: (1)

increasing students' sense of connection to their major; (2) creating networking opportunities between first-year students and professional relationships with junior and senior fine arts majors; and (3) offering discipline-specific mentoring from students in personal, non-threatening settings. Major activities include training and ongoing support for peer mentors, peer to peer meal mentoring sessions, and group events. Evaluation data will be used to identify aspects of the model that could be expanded to additional PVA students and possibly adapted for select cohorts across the university.

Project Title: Teaching Academy for Instructors of Gateway Courses

Project Lead: Fall semester – Ginger Fisher, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences; Spring Semester: Melissa Weinrich, Associate Professor of Chemistry

The Gateway Course Teaching Academy (GCTA) will provide professional development for instructors of high DFW gateway courses in the College of Natural and Health Sciences. Participants will meet once per month with initial meetings focused on building community and identifying common challenges. Faculty with expertise in areas identified by participants will be invited to lead discussions in subsequent sessions on topics such as student motivation, student attendance/participation, equity gaps, and the use of high stakes exams. In addition to providing professional development and community building, the project seeks to identify potential solutions and resources for addressing common challenges. The faculty development curriculum could also serve as the basis for future iterations of the Academy within NHS or expanded to other colleges.