Students First Framework
Graduation and Retention Taskforce (GART)
UNC's Quality Initiative

Improvement Project Grants 2022-2023 Call for Proposals

	Description	Amount
Improvement Project Grants	Small grants to pilot strategies for improving student outcomes in the first two years	$25,000

The Graduation and Retention Taskforce (GART) invites applications for improvement project grants. These grants are available for faculty and staff to support projects that promote undergraduate retention and persistence, with a specific focus on students' academic experiences in their programs and colleges. Individual awards of up to $5000 with a minimum of five grant awards are available.

Purpose

The Students First Framework supports the vision articulated in Rowing, Not Drifting 2030. As a taskforce of the Students First Framework, GART is leveraging UNC's HLC Quality Initiative plan to further its strategic goals and priorities. The HLC QI provides funding for projects that examine and improve students' academic experience, including identifying and addressing barriers to academic success, increasing students' sense of connection to their major/college, and expanding inclusive and high impact pedagogy across the university.

The purpose of the improvement grants is to help UNC identify promising practices that have the potential for scalable adoption and future investment toward improved student outcomes. Students' academic experience in the classroom and connection to their major is vital to achieving UNC's retention and graduation goals. These improvement project grants are intended to recognize the important role of faculty and staff in promoting UNC's Students First vision. Projects that propose duplication of existing student support services are not eligible for funding; however, proposals seeking to enhance existing efforts through new or innovative approaches will be considered. For example, a proposal to establish a stand-alone tutoring program in a single department or college would not be eligible. In contrast, a proposal to partner with Tutorial Services to improve or increase tutoring support in a specific area would be suitable.

Proposals should be submitted for priority review by Friday, May 20, 2022. Proposals submitted after that date will be considered until all the funds have been awarded.

Eligibility Requirements

- Faculty on contract during FY 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023).
- Individuals or teams may apply. College staff and students may participate as team members; however, a faculty member from PVA, MCB, NHS, HSS, or EBS must actively serve as the PI for the project. Staff from areas outside the listed colleges may also serve as team members.
- Individuals may serve as the PI on one project application. There are no restrictions on the number of applications an individual may be listed as a team member.
- Projects involving the extraction of data by BIDE or OIRE staff must be reviewed and acknowledged by BIDE/OIRE to align data security with institutional data governance efforts and confirm the feasibility of the project.
- Projects seeking bonus points for incorporating the University Libraries in a meaningful way should contact Brianne Markowski before submitting the application.

Award Requirements

Successful applicants are required to complete the following activities after the project:

- Submit a brief (no more than eight pages) report describing the project, its outcomes, and how the results were or will be used. Due to GART by June 1, 2023. (Submissions should be emailed to Katie Mason, kathryn.mason@unco.edu).
- Present the project proposal at the fall 2022 Retention Summit.
- Give a presentation about the project results at the fall 2023 Retention Summit.

- Provide an electronic copy of the presentation materials to GART for the Students First Framework website or other UNC publications.

Allowable Costs

The project grants may fund any expenses allowable under UNC's fiscal policy. Please note that costs associated with official functions, personal service agreements, student incentives, and travel must meet current UNC policies for these expenses. Examples of allowable expenses to consider include the following:

- Refreshments for student-faculty events
- Branded materials for community-building among students
- Hourly employment for students serving as course-based peer learning assistants
- Hourly employment for students to assist with project evaluation activities
- Travel for training or an onsite visit to another institution to learn about a specific student success strategy
- Student participation incentives (federal compliance requirement: must work through financial aid for approval)

Proposal Process and Deadlines

There is a character limit noted for each section. Different point amounts weight each section. The total amount of points possible is 105.

Cover Page: Project Lead/Membership & Signatures
- Applicant or team leader's name, title, and contact information
- Applicant's department or program
- Name, title, and department or program of other team members, if applicable
- Project title
- Signatures: Applicant/team leader, Chair or Director, and College Student Success Committee chair/co-chair

Application Narrative: The narrative should include the following:

1. **Purpose and Goals.** Include a rationale for why the project is needed and how, if successful, it would improve students' success <u>and</u> explicitly describe how the project addresses one or more of the priority areas (i.e., identifying and addressing barriers to academic success, increasing students' sense of connection to their major/college, and expanding inclusive and high impact pedagogy across). *3000 Character Limit,* **20 points**

1. **Project Description**. Describe what will be done (tasks that will be completed), by whom, and when (timeline). *5250 Character Limit,* **35 points**

2. **Project Impact.** Briefly describe the plan for assessing and evaluating the success of the project. Describe how the results of the project will do one of the following: serve as a model for long-term adoption or has the potential to be scalable (to program, other courses, college, etc.- be specific). *5250 Character Limit,* **35 points**

3. **Budget Narrative.** Explain why the expenses described in the budget are necessary and appropriate for completing the project. Describe any additional funds that will support the project if applicable. (See Sample Budget.) *1500 Character Limit,* **10 points**

4. **Optional Bonus Points**. Projects that incorporate working with University Libraries in a meaningful way (e.g., including information literacy session(s), designing an assignment with a librarian, etc.). *750 Character Limit,* **5 points**

Deadline: Proposals should be submitted for priority review by **Friday, May 20, 2022**. Proposals submitted after that date will be considered until all the funds have been awarded. Proposals should be submitted electronically to kathryn.mason@unco.edu.

Sample Budget

Description	Amount
Five copies of the book *The Impact of a Sense of Belonging in College* (5 @ $37.00/copy)	$185
The hourly wage for a graduate student for assistance with program evaluation ($15 x 50 hrs.)	$750
Faculty summer retreat (Official function – 20 people @ $15 per person for food + facilitator honorarium)	$1325
Half-day event: bridge program for new students/majors	$1,120
The hourly wage for peer leaders to attend three course sections 1x week for 15 weeks.	$1,620
Total	$5,000

Examples of potential projects (this is not a comprehensive list)

- Launch a college-wide initiative for onboarding students and promoting their sense of belonging and connection to faculty, staff, and peers in their first semester.
- Pilot the best practice, nationally recognized learning assistance program model in select high DFW courses and/or courses with high equity gaps. https://www.learningassistantalliance.org/ Example: https://www.colorado.edu/program/learningassistant/
- Pilot course embedded research in a 100 or 200 level course.
- Develop an academy for instructors focused on improving DFW rates in100 and 200 level courses or a summer training program for graduate teaching assistants.
- Partner with the Division of Student Affairs to develop learning cohorts with course-embedded co-curricular opportunities.
- Pilot adoption of the recommendations from *33 Simple Strategies for Faculty* (Nunn, 2019) or *How Learning Works* (Ambrose, et al., 2010).
- Pilot a problem based-learning module.

UNC Resources that may be helpful

- Data Request. If you anticipate needing data as part of our grant project, those requests require approval before submitting the grant proposal. Requests for data can be submitted through the TSC ticket portal (support.unco.edu). Once logged in, type *OIRE* as a keyword in the blue "What are you looking for?" box at the top of the page and press enter to view options related to submitting a service request. Under the service request options, select *New Data or Report Request*. Most GART requests should be submitted with *Decision Support/Research/Analysis* selected as the purpose of the request. https://www.unco.edu/information-management-technology/ (select "Submit Ticket button")
- Data Resources https://www.unco.edu/data/ specific dashboards that may be of interest include
  - The Graduation and Equity for Action Dashboards
  - NSSE and other survey data
  - Power BI dashboards
- Center for Teaching & Learning (CETL) for generating ideas for potential projects
  - Under the Resources tab: CETL Webinar Library
  - Under the Learning Communities tab: How Learning Works
  - Toolkits

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works*. John Wiley & Sons

Nun, L., (2019). *33 simple strategies for faculty: A week-by-week resource for teaching and first-generation students.* Ringgold Inc. https://doi.org/10.36019/9780813599519

Scoring Rubric for GART/HLC Improvement Projects Grants

Purpose & Goals. Include a rationale for why the project is needed and how, if successful, it would improve students' success, The proposal should address one or more of the priority areas (i.e., identifying and addressing barriers to academic success, increasing students' sense of connection to their major/college, and expanding inclusive and high impact pedagogy across).	The proposal does not provide a clear description of the project's purpose and its goals.	The proposal describes the project but lacks details.	The proposal provides a detailed description of the project.
	The proposal does not address one or more of the priority areas.	The proposed project may contribute to one of the priority areas, but the improvement is not the primary purpose.	The proposed project's primary purpose and goals address one or more priority areas.
Project Description. Describe what will be done (tasks that will be completed) and by whom. **Timeline**	The proposal does not provide an adequate description of tasks/activities.	The proposal describes tasks/activities but has some gaps.	The tasks/activities are well-aligned to the stated purpose and goals of the project.
	The proposal didn't include a timeline or the timeline provided will not ensure the completion of the project within the funding period.	The timeline is likely to be completed within the funding period, but there are some gaps.	The timeline is well-designed to ensure the project is completed within the funding period.
Project Impact. Briefly describe the plan for assessing and evaluating the success of the project. Describe how the results of the project will do one of the following: Serve as a model for long-term adoption; Have the potential to be scalable (to program, other courses, college, etc.- be specific)	The proposal does not adequately describe their plan for assessing and evaluating the project's success.	The proposal provides a description of their plan for assessing and evaluating the project's success, but it is unrealistic or does not align with the proposed purpose and goals of the project.	The assessment and evaluation plan is well-designed and aligned with the proposed project's primary purpose and goals.
	The proposal does not address one of the following: serve as a model for long-term adoption or potential for scaling.	The proposal addresses one of the following: serve as a model for long-term adoption or potential for scaling, but it is not specific or realistic.	The plan for how the project results will serve as a model for long-term adoption or have the potential to be scalable is reasonable and specific.
Budget Narrative. Explain why the expenses described in the budget are necessary and appropriate for completing the project. Describe any additional funds that will support the project if applicable.	The budget request is not appropriate to the project's purpose and goals.	The budget request is adequately aligned with the project's purpose and goals.	The budget request is well-aligned with the project purpose and goals.
OPTIONAL Bonus Points. Projects that incorporate working with University Libraries in a meaningful way (e.g., including information literacy session(s), designing an assignment with a librarian, etc.).	The proposal did not describe how their project would work with the University's Libraries.	The proposal references the University Libraries but does not explicitly describe how the project would work with them in a meaningful way.	The proposal explicitly incorporated a plan for working with the University Libraries in a meaningful way.