

## KCEL Departmental and Interdisciplinary Program Mini-Grant Application

<b>Submission Date</b>	2015-01-09 13:01:44
<b>Full Name</b>	Marta Podemska-Mikluch
<b>E-mail</b>	mpodemsk@gustavus.edu
<b>Department</b>	Economics and Management
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Jane Chouanard
<b>Grant Title</b>	Economics and Management Department Curriculum Retreat
<b>What are the basic pedagogical ideas, problems, or questions you will examine during the grant period?</b>	<p>As with any curriculum conversation, the driving question is: how do we best serve the students? There are many aspects of our work that make us proud (alumni success stories, diversity of faculty perspectives, focus on liberal arts throughout the curriculum, multitude of experiential learning opportunities, multitude of paths for students to complete their major, numerous writing courses, close relationship between faculty and students, close relationship with alumni etc). However, it's always worthwhile to think how we can do even better. At the retreat, we will focus on two key questions: (1) what are the key strengths of the department curriculum and what areas need improvement? (2) what can we do to remedy the weaknesses while maintaining the strengths?</p>
<b>Please describe what course(s) you will focus on during the mini-grant period and how you anticipate incorporating the mini-grant project into that course or those courses.</b>	<p>The department prepares students in three distinct disciplines: economics, management, and accounting. While related, each discipline focuses on different skills, involves different knowledge, and sets students on different career paths. As a result, we frequently face a trade-off between breadth and depth: how do we ensure that our majors gain all the necessary knowledge and skills by the time of graduation while also allowing them a degree of flexibility in course selection? To address this question, we will explore the possibility of decreasing the number of required introductory courses, while adding upper level prerequisites. Specifically, we will look into the possibility of reducing the sequence of principles of microeconomics and principles of macroeconomics into one course: principles of economics. For economics majors, this change would be combined with a requirement of taking intermediate microeconomics before being allowed into upper level electives. For management majors, this change would be combined with a requirement of taking managerial economics before being allowed into upper level electives. Last but not least, we will look into allowing for more flexibility on the management side by turning some of the required courses into electives (i.e. managerial accounting, business law).</p>
<b>What work will be accomplished during the grant period? Supply a brief plan of work.</b>	<p>9:00 – 10:15 Joint Opening Session</p> <p>Session goal: Identify the strengths and weakness of the department curriculum.</p> <p>Motivating questions: What do we do well? What areas need</p>

improvement?

Before the retreat, everyone will be asked to prepare a list of three aspects of the curriculum they believe are conducive to learning and to prepare a list of three aspects that need improvement and have to be changed

10:30 - 11:45 Breakout Session (by discipline)

Motivating question: How can we incorporate insights from the first session into the discipline's curriculum?

Session goal: produce a draft of the refreshed curriculum for each respective discipline

Economics faculty preps the draft of the economics curriculum, management faculty works on the management curriculum, accounting faculty works on the accounting curriculum.

11:45 – 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30 - 1:45 Breakout Session (mixed groups)

Motivating question: How can we incorporate what we learned in the first and second sessions across the department curriculum?

Session goal: generate ideas/strategies for coordinating the changes between the three disciplines.

We work in three teams, each discipline represented by at least one faculty member in each team.

2:00 – 3:15 Joint Closing Session

Motivating question: have we addressed the points raised in the morning session?

Session goal: produce a proposal for a refreshed department curriculum, produce a plan for implementation of changes, produce a plan for measuring success.

**How will you measure the outcomes and impact on teaching and learning of your work during this grant period? Please be specific about methodology, assessment techniques, and evaluation of student learning.**

In the Spring of 2014 the department has begun conducting the annual Senior Assessment Survey. Comparing the results of the survey from before and after the curriculum change will allow us to assess the impact of our work on teaching and learning.

Also, currently majority of our students prefer career-oriented tracts as opposed to tracts embedded in social sciences. At this moment, we have 137 students in management, 67 in accounting, and 76 in economics. Out of the 76 students pursuing economics major, more than sixty select financial economics tract, and only a few choose to major in economic analysis. We believe that one reason for why so few students choose economic analysis is because that path is not well differentiated from financial economics. We will seek to differentiate the two majors. On this margin, the measurement is easy. The success would be indicated by an increased share of economic analysis tracts among economics majors.

**Anticipated project completion**

02/03/2015

date?