



Faculty Learning Communities Grant Information

For the 2011-12 academic year,
we have committed funding for 15 Faculty Learning Communities.

Additional FLC grants will be contingent upon funding.
Additional funding will not be confirmed until June, 2011.

Applications process opens: April 18, 2011

Application deadline: **Friday, May 20, 2011**

Application forms: Applications will be accepted through the SBCTC Online Grant Management System (OGMS). Please contact your [campus OGMS security administrator](#) for a login and password. [Click here to log in to OGMS.](#)

OVERVIEW

What is a Faculty Learning Community?

A Faculty Learning Community is a group of people who are committed to learning together and seeking to improve assessment, teaching and learning in higher education. Each member contributes their own knowledge, skills and networks to the FLC. Each community has a convener who facilitates an inclusive process of collaborative learning. All members have responsibility for leading in a true community spirit where participant voices and talents are valued equally. The model for the SBCTC grant-funded FLCs includes a commitment from FLC members to actively participate in their FLCs for one full academic year.

Faculty Learning Communities provide a flexible professional development structure for continual learning and updating of instructional knowledge and skills; stimulate innovations in creating experiential, collaborative learning environments; and increase collaboration, to make best use of limited funding.

The SBCTC Assessment, Teaching and Learning staff administer this grant program, and provide learning opportunities and ongoing support for grant recipients and others in the state by offering events, professional development, web-based resources, and consultations. The SBCTC staff and FLC participants identify existing services and programs, highlight promising practices, and encourage continuous knowledge sharing statewide.

Goals: Washington State Faculty Learning Community Initiative

1. Provide a framework for the ongoing development of faculty and others in higher education and of networked communities throughout the state. FLCs encourage

collaboration, communalize discoveries among and across institutions and disciplines, reduce redundancies, and improve economic efficiencies.

2. Develop shared learning resources that are portable, scalable, and connected to student learning goals. These resources will be shared system-wide.
3. Continue to build upon ideas and projects developed in previous years. Creatively address challenges in ways that will provide positive momentum for future Faculty Learning Communities and the Washington State higher education system.
4. Provide a catalyst and support a framework for the ongoing development of innovative, technologically-enhanced, inclusive, and pedagogically sound collegiate programs, courses, modules, and learning objects.
5. Build a diverse and networked cohort of learning community members who will eagerly:
 - a. Work with and support each other as they address current issues of teaching, learning, assessment, and advanced technologies,
 - b. Share and disseminate information and knowledge through virtual and face-to-face local, state and national venues, and
 - c. Support the Washington State Community and Technical College system and the Faculty Learning Communities Initiative in the future years by planning, facilitating, presenting and participating in statewide events such as webinars, retreats, train-the-trainer workshops, and the annual Assessment, Teaching and Learning Conference.

How Does This Initiative Align with Higher Education Vision and Mission?

The work of a learning community supports other campus-wide and system-wide work - building greater momentum toward achievement of system goals. FLCs support the achievement of the following:

- **HECB strategic master plan goal** of "...providing training and professional development for ... higher education faculty and staff to ensure strong, culturally competent educators.
- **SBCTC system direction goal** of using "...technology, collaboration and innovation to meet the demands of the economy and improve student success."
- **Technology Task Force goal** of creating "...a system of lifelong learning and change management for faculty, staff and college leadership."
- **SBCTC Board commitment** to increasing the cultural competence of all employees who work within the CTC system.

TIMELINE

- **Application process opens:** April 18, 2011
- **FLC informational meetings:**
 - Friday, April 22, 2:00pm – 3:00pm
 - Thursday, May 5, noon –1:00pm
- **Proposal submission deadline** – **Friday, May 20, 2011**
- **Grant awards announced** – early June

- **Facilitators' Training** – Friday, June 10, 1:00pm-3:00pm
- **Facilitators' Training** – Friday, September 16, 1:00pm-3:00pm
(repeat of June training)

Information sessions and facilitators' trainings will be held online (in Elluminate), recorded, and available for later viewing.

ACADEMIC YEAR-LONG MODEL

Faculty Learning Communities grants are intended to support academic-year-long (September – May) FLCs. A recommended model for FLC s includes:

- Fall face-to-face meeting
- Semi-monthly online meetings (Elluminate)
- Winter face-to-face meeting
- Semi-monthly online meetings (Elluminate)
- Spring face to face meeting and dissemination of information at the annual Assessment, Teaching and Learning Conference
- Semi-monthly online meetings through May

The use of Elluminate for semi-monthly meetings is encouraged to support participation by FLC members from across the state. A system-wide license through the SBCTC office makes Elluminate available to all faculty and staff in the CTC system – at no cost to individuals or their colleges.

It is highly recommended that all FLC members complete two free, online trainings:

- Getting Started with Elluminate Live! for Moderators (one hour), and
- Next Steps with Elluminate Live! for Moderators (one hour).

[Register online](#) for these trainings. SBCTC staff will provide coaching, if needed.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR FLCs

Communities of colleagues are invited to select a topic related to assessment, teaching and learning which will, through study, reflection, and dissemination of findings, support the development of learning environments and experiences which increase student retention and student achievement.

For the 2011-12 academic year, funding is available for at least 15, and possibly more, learning communities. As in past years, there will be funding for inquiry into topics relating to eLearning; including, eLearning and Instructional Technology, Information Literacy and Library Services, and Open Educational Resources and Practices. Possible topics might include piloting mobile connections to learning, web 2.0 tools and participatory learning, strategies for employing open resources and promoting 21st century literacy. Funding for other topics will not be confirmed until June.

Need Some Examples?

[Browse these topics](#) studied by the 2009-10 and 2010-11 Faculty Learning Communities.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRANT PROGRAM?

The grant application may be submitted by an FLC facilitator, or co-facilitator, who is employed by any of the 34 Washington State Community and Technical Colleges. The person submitting the application will be considered the contact person, and the grant funds will be released to the contact person's institution. Multiple grants may be awarded to an individual institution, to support multiple FLCs.

We encourage partnerships to advance learning community work. Participants within a learning community may include faculty and staff from community colleges, 4-year institutions, and high schools; business or industry advisory committee members, research centers, not-for-profit agencies, and others as deemed necessary to achieve the necessary mix of perspectives in the FLC. FLCs which encourage participation from multiple colleges are strongly encouraged, in order to strengthen our system as a whole.

Who can be a Member of an FLC?

The basic criteria for membership include a willingness and ability to share skills, knowledge and networks, and to contribute willingly to the success for the FLC in learning about a specific education-related topic.

Consider the perspectives and expertise that representatives of these groups would bring to your FLC:

- FT faculty
- PT faculty
- Workforce
- Adult Basic Education
- Precollege (Developmental Education)
- Academic Transfer
- eLearning
- Corrections Educators

Have you invited your librarians, counselors, information technology staff, and others who teach, tutor, or serve students?

Are there others on your campus, in your business community, or at other public agencies, who could be helpful to your exploration of the FLC topic?

Obviously, some FLCs will have topics that appeal to a narrower group of participants than others. In any case, we encourage you to recruit as broad a membership in your FLC as needed for exploration of your topic.

WHAT IS APPROPRIATE USE OF GRANT FUNDS?

Faculty Learning Community grants are part of the SBCTC's ongoing commitment to practitioners' professional development and learning. Therefore, grant funds should be used to further members' professional development, as determined by the FLC members. Deciding how the grant funding is utilized is a collaborative decision.

Examples of possible use of funds include: professional association memberships, subscriptions to publications, books, food for face-to-face meetings, or stipends for subject matter experts to speak to, or consult with, the FLC.

FLC grant funds are not to be used for individual stipends to FLC members, nor is it to be used for the purchase of anything that is ultimately unrelated to learning what's needed to best serve Washington's students.

The FLCs will submit purchase requests or receipts for expenses to the college business office for travel, food, speakers, professional memberships, resources, or other expenses necessary for the success of the FLC. The college business office will purchase the requested items or services, or provide reimbursements, from the grant funds. The grant funds will be released to the college of the FLC facilitator.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES?

FLC members are expected to work collaboratively, to seek new perspectives on teaching and learning, to share new learning, and to serve as resources to the state-wide higher education community. We expect a commitment from individual members to actively engage in the FLC for the full academic year.

FLCs will share what they've learned, and contribute digital resources as resources to other educators. Each FLC creates mid-year and end-of-year reports, which are titled "Portraits of Practice", and are posted on the [Faculty Learning Communities](#) web page.

Other digital resources might include websites; project planning strategies, videos, insight papers that led to your community's effectiveness, problem-solving capacity, and successes; audio and podcasts; learning objects of all kinds; policy documents; partnership agreements; modules; rubrics; student assessments; surveys; data analysis; and online courses or programs. In the spirit of collaboration and sharing of resources, **all works created through SBCTC grant-funded FLCs will carry Creative Commons CCBY licenses.**

IS ATTENDANCE AT ANY EVENTS REQUIRED?

Yes, each Faculty Learning Community will be expected to and share their experiences and outcomes during the FLC Showcase/poster session at the annual SBCTC Assessment, Teaching and Learning Conference. If other commitments preclude the attendance of all FLC members, the group may choose to send a smaller number of members to represent the full group.

Participation in system-wide events allows FLC members to fulfill their commitment to share their learning and serve as resources to others. Also, participants reap the benefits of meeting new colleagues, communicating with other learning communities, sharing resources, and learning about solutions to similar challenges that other FLCs and institutions have faced.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Support of learning communities by the members' colleges is critical to the success of this initiative. Institutions are expected to provide a supportive environment for the collaborative work of each learning community. This support can come in many forms.

Examples of institutional support may include, but are not limited to:

1. use of technology and software, IT staff support, peripherals that support FLC work and professional development of members, instructional design services
2. release time to attend Fall and Winter quarter meetings, and Spring conference
3. meeting space, if needed
4. assistance with travel, registration and lodging costs for members to attend the annual SBCTC Assessment, Teaching and Learning Conference and other relevant learning and sharing opportunities
5. marketing and public relations assistance, invitations to present across to college and system groups, and to stakeholders external to the institution

HELPFUL HINTS FOR USE OF THE ONLINE GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

OGMS Users' Manual

Please access [the user-friendly OGMS manual](#) with screen shots and explanations of everything in the online grant management system.

How to Compose Your Draft Application

Here's a link to guidance on how to [use WORD to compose your draft](#) application.

Questions?

About accessing the Online Grant Management System (OGMS)?

Ask [your campus OGMS security administrator](#)

About using the OGMS? (technical questions)

Ask Lynette Anderson, Administrative Assistant, Student Services, SBCTC, landerson@sbctc.edu or 360-704-4315

About the grant application questions, budget, or process?

Ask Noreen Light, Faculty Development Coordinator, SBCTC, nlight@sbctc.edu

For further resources,
please see the SBCTC **Faculty Learning Communities** [home page](#)

