2009 Guidelines
Active & Collaborative Learning Grants

Theme: Using Rubrics to Evaluate Student Learning and Student Development

As part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaffirmation process and The University of Alabama’s commitment to undergraduate education, the University is engaged in its fourth year of a Quality Enhancement Plan to increase the use of active and collaborative learning methods as part of the First Year Experience. For the past three years the focus of the Active and Collaborative Grant Program has been on providing support for faculty who wished to redesign an existing lower-division course in ways that actively engage students in the learning process. This year the focus of the grant program will be expanded to support both full-time faculty and staff who wish to develop and incorporate rubrics as an evaluation tool in assessing the impact of active and collaborative experiences provided in their classrooms or through student development experiences/co-curricular learning opportunities.

Grant awards this year will vary from $500 to $1000. Rather than receiving a cash award, the grant recipient will receive a $500 credit or voucher that can be used to purchase materials or equipment, employ a student assistant, travel to a professional meeting, or a similar support expenditure.

To receive a $500 Active and Collaborative Learning Grant, the faculty or staff member will:

1) attend the 2nd Annual Active and Collaborative Learning Conference to be held February 6th at the Bryant Conference Center that will focus on the development and use of rubrics to evaluate student learning or co-curricular opportunities (attendance encouraged but not required)
2) develop and submit a rubric that will be used during the Spring 2009 semester to evaluate a course assignment/activity or a student development/co-curricular experience (due February 16th)
3) provide a 100 to 150 word description of the assignment/activity or student development/co-curricular experience that will be evaluated with the use of the rubric (due February 16th)
4) grant permission for the rubric to be posted on the UA Institutional Effectiveness website with dozens of other rubrics (due February 16th)
5) commit to sharing two examples illustrating how the rubric was used: the first example should be a product that is marginally acceptable and the second should be an excellent product receiving a superior rating from the application of the rubric (due April 25th)
6) commit to sharing a 300 word reflection of the value of having used the rubric in the course, and/or its strengths as a tool to evaluate student learning or student performance, and/or its shortcomings and how it can be improved, etc. (due April 25th)
7) send copy of the rubric, activity/assignment description, permission and commitments to bob.smallwood@ua.edu by February 16th.

To receive a $750 Active and Collaborative Learning Grant, the faculty or staff member will complete the seven steps above for an assignment or activity that requires a group of students to work collaboratively. The associated rubric will be used to evaluate the results of a group collaborative endeavor.

The $500 and $750 grant vouchers will be awarded on February 17th

To receive a $1000 Active & Collaborative Learning Grant, the faculty or staff member will report the use and impact of the rubric at a state, regional or national professional meeting held during the 2009-10 academic year. The $1000 grant voucher will be awarded upon acceptance of the presentation by the professional organization.