Provost’s Learning Innovations Grant for Faculty
Request for Full Proposal
2000-2001

Please send your completed grant proposal (4 pages, plus attachments), one original and eleven copies, to
Linda Banford, 4000 Eastman
by 4:30 p.m.
Monday, March 6, 2000.
No hand written proposals will be accepted.
Notification of awards will be made by Monday, April 17, 2000.

Project Title: Design Charceffes: Solutions For Contemporary Society

Applicant(s):

Name: Robert Lee Bell
Department: Fashion
Telephone: 247-2617
College: CLAS

Name: 
Department: 
Telephone: 
College: 

Name: 
Department: 
Telephone: 
College: 

Name: 
Department: 
Telephone: 
College: 

Name: 
Department: 
Telephone: 
College: 

Date March 2, 2000
From: Tom Lightfoot, Chair
To: Provost’s Productivity Grant Committee
Re: Roberley Bell’s Design Charrette Proposal

The proposal presented by Roberley supports the objectives of the School of Art by addressing real-life problems through an interdisciplinary approach. It would add a new dimension to the possibilities for our students who are often confined by the specialization and compartmentalization of our curriculum. The great success of Roberley’s design charrette with Buster Simpson, cosponsored by the School of Art, suggests that with proper support from this grant she could develop a significant series of such charrettes covering a broad range of topics or concept which would be of interest by our students. Her other courses in the School of Art have been highly successful, so I support this effort with enthusiasm.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Tom Lightfoot
1. Project Title:
Design Charrettes: Solutions for Contemporary Society

Project Summary:
I am requesting funds to support the development of a series of cross disciplinary/cross college design charrettes. A charrette being; an intensive effort made by a design team to resolve a specific design problem. The initial premise for this proposal comes from the success of the three-day charrette I held with Buster Simpson, Gannett lecturer last Spring.

The intensity of the three-day workshop allowed me to see the value of these types of learning experiences, which go beyond the classroom, as extremely valuable educational skills for today's society. The participants included 30 students that represented both graduate and undergraduates from CIAS, Engineering and Environmental Science.

I am interested in implementing innovative ways of teaching beyond the classroom to extend into the “field.” Many design projects today are developed through large design teams involving urban planners, designers, environmentalist, sociologist, etc. Making up the diverse voices of the public realm. My idea for the design team charrette will afford students the opportunity to participate in group learning, engaging with students from across the Institute to resolve real life design problems.

My proposal will afford me the opportunity to investigate the Design charrette component of curriculums at other institutions and the chance to write a design charrette curriculum for RIT.

2. Target Learners
The target learners for this proposal go beyond the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences and beyond our cluster as well. The charrettes will be open to all students at RIT. Each topic area for the charrette may dictate the disciplines that are more interested but truly these charrettes are designed as cross college/disciplinary. While it is initially thought that students from both the undergraduate and graduate curriculums would be involved. Though only 30-40 students will be able to participate in each of the design charrettes the lectures that accompany the projects, with visiting speakers will be open campus wide.
3. Impact on Teaching and Learning

- group participatory learning
- cross curriculum sharing of ideas and previously learned knowledge
- experience with real life design problems
- development of communication skills and team skills
- increase understanding of the sociological, political and cultural environment in which we live.

4. Measure the Impact

The measurable outcomes of this type of project will be in the ability to redefine the boundaries between disciplines. If in fact the Design Charrette proposal is successful it will be able to draw both students and faculty from across the campus. Therefore, the most important measure will be through the review of the demographics of the participants. As with other charrettes that I have held and participated in at other institutions a wide range of variables can be measured. Publicity both on and off campus (see attached support documentation). Realization of actual projects. (Again see support documentation). A third measurable outcome is the way in which shared and newly gained information is disseminated in the classroom.

5. Rationale

A.

Regular college business makes the development of a new course proposal difficult. With a course load of three studio courses, 18 contact hour's pre term it becomes burdensome to develop a new course. The need to be current in the studio topic areas that I presently teach require extensive prep. I am also an advisor to 28 students and serve on an average of four graduate committees as well as three department college committees. Therefore the funds that are made available by the Provost Productivity Grant allow one to step outside of the regular college business and to make time for the preparation and implementation of innovative and challenging new teaching ideas.
B. The desire of both the college and the institute to expand beyond our own brick and mortar borders is extremely relevant to my proposal. These design charrettes truly build on cross disciplinary efforts. The idea of the creative team will extend to the way in which the charrette is offered. Faculty from across the campus will work together not only to develop the topic areas but to run the design charrette.

C. As stated above the relevancy to other faculty both with in and beyond my college is that they would be involved in the projects through topic area development or participation. The transferability is inherit in the educational/learning methodology of the design charrette principle.

D. As a professor of art and design for 15 years I have had the opportunity to teach a wide range of courses. As an artist working in the public domain I have had both the experience of participating and running design teams as well as the opportunity to realize numerous projects (see attached resume).

Other

The question of credit was asked by the committee. This is one of a number of issues that will be investigated as I research my proposal. In the initial stage of conversations with faculty both here at RIT and at other institutions I believe I will approach the design charrette module as a non credit offering, however this is not confirmed. There are pros and cons to each. At the present time I see the Design Charrette truly as means to build community and to experience across disciplinary approach to real life societal concerns. The retention issue here at RIT as lead me to believe that the community building experience will be viable in and of itself and will not need to have credits attached to it. Though as I have stated this proposal is in the beginning stages of research and development of an actual curricular proposal therefore the decision of credit non credit has not been made. The vote is still out.
6. Time Table

Summer 2000
visit Minneapolis College of Art and Design
(see attached information) from my preliminary research their program
seems to address a number of issues and practicability of operation that I
need to address. Therefore, a site visit is essential.

Continue dialogue with other Institutions via e-mail and phone that I have
located that offer the Charrette module as a community building experience.

Fall-spring 2000-01
write proposal for the implementation of the design charrette module on
campus.

March 2001
apply for funding from PPG to implement the first design charrette, please
note that I removed that from this budget request(2,500) realizing that the
development of the proposal needs to happen as a separate phase form the
actual implementation.

Fall 2001
present proposal to the CIAS faculty and Associate Provost. Seek secured
funding to offer one charrette pre year institute wide. One potential source
is the creative art's fund.

Winter 2001
offer first Design Charrette campus wide

please note that I am currently the chair of the CIAS FEAD committee thus
unable to apply for college funding