| Faculty Learning Community Application **2019-20** | |
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| Applicant Information | |
| Name: | Status:  \_\_\_ Tenure-track faculty \_\_\_ Lecturer/Sr. Lecturer  \_\_\_ Part-time faculty/Adjunct \_\_\_ Staff |
| Office Phone: |
| Department: | Course(s) that you teach: |
| Email Address: | Number of years teaching/working at UMBC: \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| WHICH FLC(s) ARE YOU APPLYING FOR?Although you may only participate in one FLC, you may choose more than one to apply to, ranking them 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., below to indicate your order of preference. We will try to accommodate your first choice. Descriptions of all the proposed FLCs are at the end of this application form. | |
| \_\_\_\_ **Contemplative Pedagogies: Mindfulness in the Classroom** (Proposed by Janet Gross, English)  \_\_\_\_ **Creating Authentic, Meaningful Course Projects** (Proposed by Suzanne Lea, Sociology, Anthropology, and Health Administration and Policy)  \_\_\_\_ **Less “Me,” More “We”: Supporting Students to Work and Learn in Teams** (Proposed by Simon Stacey, Honors College)  \_\_\_\_ **Radical Vulnerability in the Classroom: Creating Brave Spaces to Engage and Deepen Learning** (Proposed by Lauren Hamilton Edwards, School of Public Policy)  \_\_\_\_ **Seeing White: The Influence of Structural and Institutional Racism on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education** (Proposed by M. Nicole Belfiore, Social Work) | |
| Background & interest Please respond to the following questions in reference to your **first choice** of FLCs. | |
| 1. Why would you like to participate in this faculty learning community? | |
| 1. Do you have some experience or information relevant to this topic? If so, please describe briefly. | |
| 3. What changes in your teaching practice might you be interested in making through participating in the FLC? | |

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| **FALL 2019 SCHEDULE**  Please mark the times during which you will ***not*** be regularly available during the fall semester. | | | | | | |
|  | Monday | tuesday | wednesday | thursday | | friday |
| 8:00-8:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 9:00-9:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 10:00-10:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 11:00-11:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 12:00-12:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 1:00-1:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 2:00-2:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 3:00-3:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 4:00-4:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| 5:00-5:50 |  |  |  |  | |  |
| Signatures | | | | | | |
| **APPLICANT:** If I am selected as a participant in the Faculty Learning Community, I agree to participate fully in the community’s activities. I will attend all meetings and participate in the activities, readings, projects and reports associated with this learning community. I will share things I learn with other faculty members. | | | | | | |
| Signature of applicant: | | | | | Date: | |
| **DEPARTMENT CHAIR/SUPERVISOR:** I endorse the above applicant’s participation in the Faculty Learning Community and will value the curricular and pedagogical work completed by acknowledging the time commitment required by the FLC. | | | | | | |
| Signature of Chair/Supervisor: | | | | | Date: | |

Please submit your application by email to [fdc@umbc.edu](mailto:fdc@umbc.edu) **by Friday, May 24, 2019**. Applicants will be notified by June 28, 2019 of their acceptance to an FLC.

**DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPOSED FLCs**

**2019-20**

1. **Contemplative Pedagogies: Mindfulness in the Classroom** (Proposed by Janet Gross, English)

Research confirms that contemplative classroom practices such as journaling, singing or listening to music, making or appreciating art, reading and writing poetry, and practicing guided meditation can offset the constant distractions of our multi-tasked, media-saturated culture. Contemplative pedagogies can help students to concentrate more effectively, deepen their awareness of the subject matter, and develop insights into inter-connections between themselves, their learning, and their relationships with others. Participants in this FLC will explore, practice, and ultimately share with students a variety of contemplative pedagogies.

​During the fall semester, ​participants will read about the topic and try out various contemplative practices in the group. In the spring, group members will experiment with the use of contemplative teaching techniques in their own classes. They ​will ​also ​plan ways to assess and evaluate how adding contemplative pedagogies impacts students’ learning.

1. **Creating Authentic, Meaningful Course Projects** (Proposed by Suzanne Lea, Sociology, Anthropology, and Health Administration and Policy)

In many classes, we use data to help students better understand key course concepts or topics and/or to teach methodological skills. Especially in the case of methods courses, data is often “canned,” that is, packaged and prepared by a textbook publisher. But what if we engaged students in the collection, coding, and analysis of data that connects to their communities and that is meaningful to them?

In this FLC, we will explore best practices for designing such course projects. We will also review existing models/examples and other resources for developing authentic assignments in which instructors and students collaborate with community partners or address problems that are relevant and meaningful to students and their communities. Potential questions the group might explore include: What constitutes authenticity for course projects? What makes a topic or project meaningful, both to students and to the communities involved? What are best practices in cultivating relationships with potential partners in the community? And how can we design projects for which the outcomes will benefit both students and their communities?

1. **Less “Me,” More “We”: Supporting Students to Work and Learn in Teams** (Proposed by Simon Stacey, Honors College)

This FLC will explore how instructors can understand and support students (undergraduate as well as graduate) working and learning in teams. Effective teamwork and team membership skills are crucial for learning in a range of academic disciplines and are just as important for success in post-graduation life. However, even with the advent of tools like CATME and a growing literature about what makes teams effective, many faculty and staff are largely on their own as they set up teams, develop assignments for them, try to monitor team dynamics, provide guidance and (re)direction to teams, and evaluate the performance of teams/team members. This FLC will provide an opportunity for UMBC faculty and staff doing this kind of work to:

* Review work—by academics as well as others—about effective teamwork and how to support it;
* Learn about and reflect on the experiences of peers whose work involves teams and teamwork;
* Get feedback and insights from peers about our own classes, challenges we anticipate or have faced related to implementing teamwork, and adaptations or innovations we are considering.

As outcomes of their work in this group, members of this FLC might develop data-supported solutions to a variety of challenges of teaching with teamwork. Themes to be addressed might include: how to prepare teams for success by composing and charging them effectively; how to stay abreast of what’s happening inside teams; how to diagnose and help teams remedy difficulties; and how to assess teams’ and team members’ developing skills and competences.

1. **Radical Vulnerability in the Classroom: Creating Brave Spaces to Engage and Deepen Learning** (Proposed by Lauren Hamilton Edwards, School of Public Policy)

Brené Brown (Ph.D., Social Work) put the language of shame and vulnerability into societal discourse with her very popular [TED Talk in 2014](https://brenebrown.com/videos/ted-talk-the-power-of-vulnerability/). Her numerous books and media appearances make it clear that what she says about these topics resonates widely. Brown’s work is based on years of research on the role of shame in our lives and the impact of that shame on families, relationships, and organizations. Showing vulnerability, she argues, is crucial to moving beyond shame and fear in order to unlock creativity, innovation, a sense of connection, and joy. Her findings extend to the academy, where fear and shame seem to be prevalent in the student-instructor relationship. The idea that this FLC will explore is whether and how radical vulnerability in the classroom could build a better environment for students to learn and build confidence for their future lives.

Through reading various works like *The Spark of Learning: Energizing the College Classroom with the Science of Emotion* and guided discussions, this group will investigate how to create brave spaces in our classrooms and relationships with students. The group should be of broad interest to instructors who teach in a range of environments, from those who teach large introductory undergraduate courses to those whose primary teaching responsibilities are as dissertation/thesis chairs.

1. **Seeing White: The Influence of Structural and Institutional Racism on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education** (Proposed by M. Nicole Belfiore, Social Work)

Race issues are important to faculty and staff in institutions of higher education in general and at UMBC in particular. Structural and institutional racism interact with our subject matter, our students’ experiences, and the entire enterprise of higher education.

This faculty learning community will be based primarily on the podcast [“Seeing White,”](http://www.sceneonradio.org/) a 14-episode, Peabody-nominated series produced by the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. The podcast explores institutional and structural racism in America, focusing on the historical development of the concept of whiteness to challenge the widely held belief that race and racial hierarchies are a natural aspect of being human. Podcast commentators John Biewen and Chenjerai Kumanyika consider the implications of contemporary thinking about race and responses to racism in America to stimulate reflection and discourse among listeners.

Using the podcast as a backdrop, the learning community will explore the influence of race and structural racism in our work in academia. Questions might include: How can we integrate learning content about the institutional and structural racism intrinsic into our disciplines? How do racist institutions affect our students’ lives and learning experiences at UMBC? What is our obligation to develop awareness of those effects? How does UMBC, as a societal institution, perpetuate or mitigate race-based oppression or discrimination? What is our obligation to work toward racial justice within and beyond our institution? Deliverables might include plans for course projects or a series of classroom activities to address institutional and structural race issues.