



Interdisciplinary Small Grants Program

2020-2021

Many of our most pressing social problems require interdisciplinary research teams, but the structure of the modern university can impede such research. At UC Merced, interdisciplinarity is a pillar of graduate education and a signature element of multiple research projects. To further expand such opportunities, the Graduate Division's Interdisciplinary Small Grants Program will provide resources for faculty, postdoctoral researchers, and graduate students to come together in contexts designed to facilitate interdisciplinary conversations and collaborations leading to grant proposals, special issues of journals or edited volumes, and related outcomes. It is anticipated that some, though not necessarily all, of these small grants will align with the campus Strategic Focus Areas.

While the format is flexible, in most cases, these initiatives will begin as faculty and student-led seminars. The proposal should specify the meeting schedule, format, and initial readings selected by the facilitators.

Awards have an upper limit of \$3,000. Anticipated start date is Fall 2020 with planning beginning in late spring or summer. A one-page final report must be submitted by June 30, 2021. The final report should include a summary of the funded activities and outcomes; next steps for the group; and the involvement of graduate students in the project, including student comments to gauge their assessment of the project's contributions to enriching interdisciplinarity at UC Merced.

Application Process:

Proposals should be submitted by faculty as the principal facilitator, but may include graduate students as co-facilitators. Proposals should be no more than two pages (single-spaced) in length and submitted to Vice Provost and Graduate Dean Marjorie Zatz at graddean@ucmerced.edu.

Proposals should include:

- A brief statement of the focus of the group and its intellectual significance;
- A description of the proposed activities of the group, including meeting plan, schedule, and initial readings or other means of convening the group;
- Explicit attention to how the intended focus is interdisciplinary, including the number of graduate groups participating;
- Statement of proposed research/scholarship outcomes;
- Qualifications of the facilitator or co-facilitators to lead the forum.

Please append:

- A list of likely seminar participants with the identification of (a) whether they are faculty, postdoctoral researchers or graduate students, and (b) their graduate group affiliation(s) should be attached to the proposal; and
- An itemized budget with appropriate justification. Budget items may include lunch/refreshments, books, travel costs for speakers, and other related costs.

Selection Criteria:

The selection committee will make awards based upon the following criteria: a) the project's potential to advance new insights or lines of inquiry for interdisciplinary research and scholarship; b) the likelihood of meeting research objectives including a grant proposal, special issue of a journal, etc.; c) identification of a sufficient number of campus scholars interested in the topic across at minimum two graduate groups; and d) evident engagement of graduate students in the project.

Timeline:

The application deadline is Friday, May 29, 2020. Awards will be announced by June 30, 2020. Final funding terms will be negotiated between the Graduate Division and the awardee.

Budget Guidelines:

Budget items may include books or reference material; consultants or speaker costs; lunch or other refreshments during meetings, or other miscellaneous costs associated with meetings and consistent with UC Merced policies. See attached budget template. Contact Lorena Magana-Aguilar (lmagana-aguilar@ucmerced.edu) for more specific budget guidelines as needed, and Marjorie Zatz (graddean@ucmerced.edu) with any other questions.