The Design and Develop Awards support the development of courses and programs offered in various formats including asynchronous and synchronous online, hybrid (combining on-site and online), room-to-room connected classrooms, and flexible, multi-modal approaches. The awards promote high-quality, technology-enhanced teaching and learning experiences in new or existing governance-approved courses offered for the first time or revised for a new delivery mode.

**Background**

These awards are funded through the Provost’s Office and managed by the Learning Experience Design (LED) group within Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies (TLOS), a unit of the Division of Information Technology. The mission of TLOS is to improve student learning by fostering faculty digital fluency, partnering with faculty to design and develop successful digital learning experiences, and creating technology-enhanced learning environments for traditional, distance, and hybrid courses. In each of these endeavors, TLOS provides essential support, strives for inclusivity, and actively pursues opportunities for innovation. To fulfill this mission, we provide outcome-based, project-driven professional development and instructional design guidance to facilitate and assist with the development course elements, learning objects, activities, media and assessment.

Instructional designers will provide guidance, assistance, and managed support to faculty to ensure developed courses meet the needs of students and programs, aligned with the priorities of the provost and the university, and maintain the focus determined for each RFP.

Course development funded through Design and Develop Awards must have appropriate and equivalent rigor, content, and assessment as would be expected by the approval through governance. Funds awarded are intended to provide faculty the means to dedicate the time and effort necessary to develop high-quality courses that foster academic success and enrollment growth.

**Funding Amounts and Process**

Funding from Design and Develop awards is provided for new or existing governance-approved courses.

**Award for existing courses undergoing revision is $8000 per course.**

**Award for new governance-approved courses to be developed is $10,000 per course.**

Funding from Design and Develop Awards is provided to the department to allow for reassignment of one course in a faculty member’s course load or other means of support to allow for dedication of sufficient time for the course development in Fall and Spring semesters. While course release is the desired and preferred means to accomplish this, there is a realization that this may not always be possible. Proposals submitted must describe how the department will use the funds provided to meet this need.
For courses revised or developed in Summer I/II sessions (combined), funding is also provided directly to the Department so as to support faculty in this endeavor but can be used to compensate faculty developers directly in semesters outside their contract year. This compensation can be provided as long as it does not exceed restrictions on the amount of additional compensation allowed. Faculty compensation must also include fringe benefits.

The funding will be released to departments in two increments:

**The first 50%** of funds will be released to the department when the following benchmarks have been met:

- Revised syllabus for the appropriate delivery mode
- Completed course outline (topical schedule)
- Assessment plan
- Plan for introductory activities (Welcome, Getting Started, etc.)
- Lesson plan for at least one lesson
- Consistent participation in professional development activities as required during the course development process
- Consistent participation in the peer review process required for course quality assurance and faculty credentialing
- Consistent participation in consultations with assigned instructional designer

**The remaining 50%** will be released to the department when the following conditions have been met:

- Faculty developer maintained participation as required by professional development structuring the course development process
- Faculty developer participated in all scheduled meetings with assigned instructional designer (no more than two excused meetings)
- Faculty developer participated as peer reviewer in all assigned reviews for the course quality assurance process
- Course elements were submitted and course passed the final quality assurance review
- Course was presented to Department Head for approval, preferably through participation in the culminating Faculty Showcase
- Indication of agreement to participate in future research on the effectiveness of the design elements of the completed course or courses

In addition to funds provided to departments to ensure faculty have sufficient time to dedicate to course development, some additional funds **may be** available to cover funded course development project expenses. Faculty can submit expense requests for additional funding to support course development expenses after notification of the award. Additional funds available vary in each RFP period with no guarantee expenses will be funded. All expense requests submitted for consideration for course development projects must be accompanied by justification of need and can be supported only during the period dedicated to course development.

This portion of the funding will be managed through TLOS/LED for direct acquisition of approved purchases that are then transferred to the faculty developer. Ownership, renewal,
maintenance, or replacement of all purchases made with funds provided through the Design and Develop awards become the responsibility of the faculty and/or department after purchase.

**Criteria for Funding**

Criteria for investment and selection of proposals to be funded are developed in coordination with the Provost’s Office. These criteria include the identified focus areas for each RFP as well as the extent to which the proposed course development:

1. Supports the strategic goals of the university
2. Aligns with current academic initiatives and priorities, and is coordinated with efforts across the college, discipline, or program
3. Is understandable and manageable
4. Enables and incentivizes enrollment growth within an approved enrollment plan
5. Supplements rather than competes with other programs or course offerings
6. Complies with any/all state regulations and accreditation requirements
7. Has a strong financial outlook (competitiveness, defined market, adequate size) that can contribute back to the overall academic strength of the program
8. Has already been approved through the governance process
9. Has not been funded through other programs of the university

**Categories for Funding**

Proposals can be submitted for individual course development projects or as full graduate program (degree or certification) development projects spanning several semesters. Information on these categories can be found below and on the web at https://tlos.vt.edu/grants/designanddevelop.

**Individual Course Development**

These projects include:

1. New governance-approved courses at undergraduate or graduate level being developed for online, hybrid, room-to-room connected classroom, or multi-modal delivery for which the delivery mode has been approved.
2. Existing governance-approved undergraduate or graduate courses in degree or certificate programs currently taught in one delivery mode and being revised for another, for multi-modal delivery or for improvement that would meet the funding criteria.

Proposals for individual course development projects are submitted by faculty as subject matter experts with approval of their department head, chair (if applicable) and dean or assistant/associate dean. Project proposals must include a plan for allowing faculty course developers to invest the required time for the project either through hiring of personnel to offset course load, reduction of course load, or other means described. In addition, the department head must commit to offering the course at least three times after development is completed.
Proposal agreements also include commitment by the faculty developer to:

- participate in a semester-long (12 week) professional development opportunity as part of a cohort of peers or working group within a program or discipline,
- work with an instructional designer and team for guidance and assistance,
- submit developed course for quality assurance review, and
- serve as peer reviewer for submissions by others during the development period.

Upon completion of the course development project, the faculty developer must commit to the review and approval by their department head prior to teaching the course for the first time. The faculty developer is also invited to present the completed course in a Faculty Showcase event.

All proposals must include the original governance-approved and current syllabus for the course. This may be the same syllabus for new courses and, if so, only one syllabus is required with that notation. As we are mindful of the requirements of external accreditation and internal governance, significant variances between the original syllabus and the current syllabus will be discussed with the department head to determine the syllabus to be used for the development project if funded.

Proposals must include an indication of all required commitments in a signed letter of agreement.

As enrollment growth is a priority for funding, an indication of the current enrollment for the course (if any) and the estimated number of students expected to enroll in the course after funded development is required on the online submission form.

Links to the letter of agreement, online proposal form (with downloadable document containing information requested), narrative worksheet, etc. are provided on the website at: https://tlos.vt.edu/grants/designanddevelop/

To summarize, a completed proposal packet includes:

- Completed online proposal form
- Copies of current and originally approved syllabi for the course (obtainable from Nicole Akers at snakers@vt.edu)
- One-page narrative (500 words or less) indicating purpose for submission and addressing the focus of the RFP
- Letter of Agreement signed by faculty developer, department head, chair (if applicable), dean or assistant/associate dean

Required documents can be scanned and attached to online proposal form. They can also be emailed to ledcontact@vt.edu.

The original signed Letter of Agreement must be mailed to Design and Develop Awards c/o Lujean Baab, 3120 Torgersen Hall (0445), 620 Drillfield Drive, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.
Full Graduate Degree or Professional Certificate Development Projects

For full Graduate degree or certificate program development projects, it is recommended that you contact Dr. Lujean Baab at 540-231-5004 or lbaab@vt.edu for discussion prior to submission.

Proposals to be considered in this category are submitted by department heads, chairs (if applicable), deans or assistant/associate deans. The proposal must include commitment by named faculty subject matter experts who will serve as course developers for the courses named in the proposal. Proposal must also include a plan for allowing faculty developers to invest the required time for the development project. Full graduate degree or certification program development projects must include a project plan for completion of development over one to three academic years.

If funded as a program, funds required for individual course development projects within the time frame of one to three academic years will be encumbered, dedicated, and deducted from funding available for other development projects during that time frame.

Proposal agreements must include commitment by faculty developers as indicated in the information for individual course proposal submissions.

Department heads, chairs (if applicable) and deans or assistant/associate deans are asked to commit to the review and approval of the courses developed as components of the graduate degree or professional certificate program, the alignment of course outcomes and degree or certificate outcomes, and to confirm both the quality of the program courses and the contribution to the intended program outcomes.

All proposals must include the original governance-approved syllabus and current syllabus for all courses to be developed. For new courses, only one syllabus is required with that notation. As we are mindful of the requirements of external accreditation and internal governance, significant variances between the original syllabus and the current syllabus will be discussed with the Department Head to determine the syllabus to be used for the development project if funded. Original, governance-approved syllabi can be obtained from Nicole Akers at snakers@vt.edu.

Proposals must include an indication of all required commitments as well as the current enrollment in courses (if any), the estimated number of students who would be expected to enroll in the individual courses after development, and all other information requested in the proposal form.

Timeline for RFP and Semesters for Development
As funds allow, there will be two requests for proposals (RFP) periods for each academic year.
• The RFP in Fall semester will be for course development to take place during following Spring or Summer I/II semesters. NOTE: Summer I and Summer II sessions are combined for one development period.

• The RFP in Spring semester will be for course development to take place in the following Fall or Summer I/II semesters.

Course Development Process

Learning Experience Design in TLOS works with faculty developers who participate as a cohort (interdisciplinary) or a faculty working group (discipline or program-specific) in a semester-long professional development opportunity structuring the course development process. We begin with a day-long session that establishes the learning community and then continue with online weekly lessons structuring the course revision and development process. Online lessons are supplemented by weekly meetings with an assigned instructional designer that can be conducted on-site or online. In addition, faculty will be assisted in content development through the support of LED specialists in educational media, graphic design, and web-based learning objects.

Learning Experience Design works with Networked Learning Institute (NLI) to provide highly interactive professional development that models best practices and utilizes peer interaction to guide the design and development of course elements. Throughout the semester of development, faculty developers work and learn with each other and will earn 12 NLI credits upon successful completion.

In the professional development course, information and activities are assigned each week that result in developed course elements. These course elements undergo initial peer review as part of the course quality assurance process. Faculty developers are assisted with the identification of evidence and examples that meet the standards criteria of the quality assurance review process required of funded course development.

This successful approach utilizes and extends the larger faculty learning community and provides an opportunity for faculty to share ideas, see what others have done and contribute to the group knowledge.