

## Curriculum Resource Center

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### SOTL Fellowship Program



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### Call for proposals

The Central European University's (CEU) Curriculum Resource Center (CRC) funded by the Open Society Institute's (OSI) Higher Education Support Program (HESP), is launching a call for applications for one-year research and collaboration grant program described below. All applications fitting the general requirements and eligibility criteria of this call are warmly welcome.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE** 20th June 2009

**APPLICATION FORMAT:** electronic application through email to [sotl@ceu.hu](mailto:sotl@ceu.hu) is requested.

#### **The program**

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Fellowship (SOTL Fellowship) CRC invites applications from scholars (university faculty) from the region, teaching social sciences and humanities, to design and implement research projects concerned with the intersection between teaching practices and student learning within their courses. The selected projects for CRC SOTL Fellowship Program receive financial and methodological support for the duration of one year (usually September to September). Fellows will be able to work from home institutions whilst teaching their courses and to receive ongoing support from each other, the CRC and an external advisor of the program. The fellows will be able to join the international community of scholars of teaching and learning at the end of their year of research and writing. The financial aid includes a stipend for 10 months, book allowance and other methodological resources, two intensive one-week collaborative writing residencies at the CRC office in Budapest (in September 2009 and 2010), and help with dissemination of final products (research papers produced in English). The writing residencies allow for a sustained peer support in writing and rewriting the research project designs and final papers. The dissemination venues for any produced papers are likely to include a working paper for the CRC online collection, a submission to a peer reviewed interdisciplinary scholarship of teaching and learning journal or appropriate disciplinary journals. The Writing Residency for this year is planned for the third or fourth week of September.

**Eligibility**

Application is restricted to resident university teachers of social sciences and humanities in Eastern- and South-Eastern Europe, the Former Soviet Union, Mongolia. Palestinian faculty in the above disciplines are also eligible. Citizens of new EU member countries (including Bulgaria and Romania) are not eligible to apply for this program. The call is meant for individual research projects only. All teachers of social sciences and humanities may apply but CRC usually does not fund projects in applied field such as English language teaching or business and administration.

The nature of the fellowship is to support innovative and high quality university courses and academics who are excellent teachers with a critical perspective on teaching and learning in their fields and disciplines, and with a willingness to turn their attention to issues of student learning. Therefore a Ph.D. or its equivalent, three years teaching experience and a full time university position is usually required. Documented exposure to CRC or other faculty development programs, and strong and documented interest in teaching and learning is an advantage. Advanced proficiency in English language and an ability to write in academic English is a vital pre-requisite for the purpose of successful writing and collaboration with colleagues in an international environment.

**Fellowship aims**

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as applied by the CRC began as a tool to facilitate professors' self-reflexivity in the classroom but has evolved to an academic/research approach to the question of innovation in teaching practice and in particular, to questions surrounding student learning in university contexts. The purpose of the program is to help develop the selected higher education practitioners' own engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning, moving from reflection on teaching to analysis and research of their own courses, classrooms, and teaching contexts. The main aim of the program is to foster these academics' capacity to become scholars of teaching through project development and writing over one year, through financial resources and methodological support, and by creating a collaborative community of scholars able to influence the discussion on teaching and learning in their contexts (institutions and disciplinary networks). The scholars will then be able to impact the discussions, change agendas and trends on teaching and learning, student assessment and quality of classroom experience in their own institutions and disciplines, in national and international contexts.

**Fellowship structure**

The grant consists of 10 months stipend, support with necessary teaching, research or evaluation resources and ongoing collaborative support. Two Writing Residencies in Budapest are planned to facilitate project design, proposal and paper writing and peer evaluation, at the beginning and end of the program. For most of the year the participants will teach and reside in their home institutions where they will implement their projects. The first residency for the new cohort of grantees is planned in September 2009.

### **Research outcomes and areas for investigation**

A typical SOTL fellowship project application will include some research questions or at the very least, specific preliminary research interests relevant to the teaching and learning issues to be studied, preliminary selection of methods or sources of evidence of student learning to be considered, some initial identified literature that the project can build on. Evidence of student learning generated through coursework, evaluation and research tools usually serves as the most important data for any SOTL project so preliminary attention to potential sources of such evidence is a strong point of good proposals. The aim of the program is to create knowledge on teaching and learning in the disciplines and contexts of our region in order to help change the teaching and learning paradigm and to improve university education and a tangible outcome will be an academic research paper of publishable quality, written in English.

The projects can be based on research of one existing course developed and taught by the applicant, or a cross-analysis of several courses taught. Curriculum research or research into wider issues of university education, not related to the applicants own teaching are not a subject of this program. Areas for investigation include, but are not limited to:

- the connection between the course content and a specific method of teaching or assessment
- the link between teaching and research in research-based courses
- the development of graduate level student skills (MA or doctoral level)
- the development of research, writing, or other appropriate generic or transferable skills at undergraduate level
- the development of discipline-specific ways of thinking using a particular teaching and learning approach
- the result on students' learning of using a specific methodological innovation or new teaching approach
- the impact of a specific aspect of current university context on student learning as documented in the teacher's own classroom
- the effectiveness of a specific methodology in terms of student learning
- any problem or issue or type of student learning observed and investigated further to generate knowledge on how students learn in specific higher education contexts
- the development of interdisciplinary models of teaching and learning in social sciences and humanities investigated in a particular course or set of courses

### **Selection process**

Research proposals and background documents will be reviewed by a selection committee consisting of CRC SOTL team, and at least one external SOTL expert. Short-listed applicants might be asked to provide additional materials to their applications, and may also be telephone interviewed if it is deemed necessary to complete the application process.

### **Application procedure**

All applicants need to:

- Fill out a SOTL Fellowship application form which can be downloaded from this website: [www.ceu.hu/crc/crc\\_sotlfel.html](http://www.ceu.hu/crc/crc_sotlfel.html)
- Attach one signed reference letter from a senior academic administrator of the institution where the project is to be implemented.
- Attach a curriculum vitae, which should include a list of academic qualifications, list of publications, conference papers and any relevant faculty development experience.
- Enclose a detailed research proposal of up to five pages which identifies preliminary research questions and ideas on basic ideas research implementation to be developed during the fellowship.
- Enclose any background documents relevant to the project, such as syllabi or course descriptions and earlier pieces of work on teaching and learning, if available.