

**Center for Teaching Excellence
Reflective Practice Teaching Circle
Mini-Grant Application 2017-2018**

Cover Sheet

DUE NO LATER THAN 4:30 p.m. on October 6, 2017

Contact Person(s): Anne Kondo

Department: Chemistry

University Address: 143 Weyandt Hall

University Telephone: 72361 **E-mail Address:** akondo@iup.edu

Project Title: Sustaining Teamwork:

Teaching Circle Members: Justin Fair, Anne Kondo, Elaine Little, William Chadwick, Pao Ying, Joyce Shanty, Hao Tang, Michael Kosicek, Karen Rose Cercone, Dan Widzowski, Melanie Hildebrandt, Katie Farnsworth, Michael Schwartz, Stephanie Taylor-Davis, Rita Johnson

Amount Requested: \$243.60

Brief Project Abstract (attach longer proposal of 1-2 pages; 500 word maximum):

Sustaining interest in any project requires a personal commitment and sense of fulfillment from participation, and this teaching circle will explore strategies to accomplish this goal as related to teamwork projects. The new Teamwork and Communication minor asks faculty across campus to develop on-going interdisciplinary research projects for students to work on in their courses. Experience shows such projects can fade away after an initial burst of enthusiasm. This teaching circle is looking at ways that the original enthusiasm and commitment can be maintained, especially when these projects are often supplemental to all other aspects of a busy faculty member's life. Sustaining teamwork is critical for the students in this minor. This circle will explore how to develop and maintain a culture where constant renewal of interdisciplinary projects is the norm. We request funds to purchase a common reader, "The Progress Principle", by Teresa Amabile, to guide our discussions.

Deadline for submission is October 6, 2017 at 4:30 pm. Submit an electronic copy in Word format to Heide Witthöft (heide@iup.edu).

1. Background

14 faculty are interested in deliberately improving interpersonal and communication skills for students in their classes. Whether students are formally part of the Teamwork and Communication minor or not, all benefit when these skills are encouraged and polished in the classroom and the laboratory. Sustaining interest in any project requires a personal commitment and sense of fulfilment from participation, and this teaching circle will explore strategies to accomplish this goal.

2. Impact of Project on Student Learning:

Faculty will discuss the common reader, “The Progress Principle”, by Teresa Amabile, to learn what we can do to maintain and promote interdisciplinary teamwork skills and projects that can be incorporated into coursework. Both faculty and students will benefit from this project. Students learn interprofessional skills when performing interdisciplinary projects, and will be exposed to research in the classroom or laboratory. Faculty, who must develop the opportunities for students to practice these skills, will learn how to actively cultivate a strategy of continuous renewal.

3. Impact of Project on Faculty Learning:

New projects often start with a burst of enthusiasm that is difficult to maintain, especially as life gets busy. This teaching circle will use common readings and discussions to help faculty learn how to maintain that initial spark of enthusiasm, both in themselves and in their colleagues and students. Although intended to help various teamwork projects, what faculty learn will be applicable all aspects of professional life. Like interpersonal skills themselves, sustaining enthusiasm is nurtured through discussion and self-reflection.

4. Feasibility of Project:

The high number of interested faculty is encouraging. We are seeking proactive ways to sustain interest in interpersonal skills. Given the number of participants, likely two circles will be needed, to find a common meeting time.

5. Budget Rationale:

We wish to purchase 14 copies of the “The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work” by Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer. From Dr. Amabile’s on-line biography, Teresa Amabile is the Edsel Bryant Ford Professor of Business Administration and a Director of Research at Harvard Business School. Originally educated as a chemist, Teresa received her doctorate in psychology from Stanford University. She studies how everyday life inside organizations can influence people and their performance. Teresa’s research encompasses creativity, productivity, innovation, and inner work life - the confluence of emotions, perceptions, and motivation that people experience as they react to events at work.” The books retail on Amazon for \$17.40 each. 14 copies, one per member of the teaching circle, would cost \$243.60, including tax. This book was highly recommended at last year’s Teamwork Workshop by Chuck McVinney and Charles Leiserson.