



TO: Ernesto Mendez, Professor, Department of Plant and Soil Science
Karen Nordstrom, Lecturer, Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences
Joshua Faulkner, Farming and Climate Change Coordinator, Center for Sustainable Agriculture,
UVM Extension
Vic Izzo, Lecturer and ALC Education Coordinator, Department of Plant and Soil Science
Martha Caswell, MPP, ALC Research and Outreach Coordinator, Dept. of Plant & Soil Science

FROM: Brian Reed, Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning

RE: Engaged Practices Innovation (EPI) grant proposal: *Engaging Co-Learning Through Participatory Action Research*

DATE: November 8, 2017

CC: David Rosowsky, Provost and Senior Vice President
Thomas Vogelmann, Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Deborah Neher, Chair, Department of Plant and Soil Science

On behalf of the Engaged Practices Innovation (EPI) Grant Selection Committee, I am delighted to inform you that your proposal was selected for funding. Your proposal will be funded in the requested amount of \$14,702.63. Congratulations! Please respond by November 15, 2017 to acknowledge your acceptance of the award.

The proposal is to redesign and expand PSS/ENVS 212, a service-learning course, to incorporate participatory action research (PAR) into an established, successful collaboration with area farms. PAR will be facilitated by four student interns (Farmer Team Captains) who will work with the Ag and Livelihood Collaborative, four farm partners, and student peers. The redesigned course will shift benefit from students only to the farmers as well, by virtue of ongoing research that will progress with successive iterations of the course to address an identified problem. The initial problem will be to map soil health indicators.

The Selection Committee's assessment was that this proposal epitomizes the scholarship of engagement. The proposal is well conceived, well grounded in the literature and feasible. There is a good framework for assessment, although some details are still to be worked out. The budget request is reasonable and there is a good cost share arrangement with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The budget narrative states that CALS/PSS/ENVS will provide base support to sustain the program in the future. The project's impact on student retention will be moderate since the enrolled students will be upper level, high performers, not at-risk. Nonetheless, providing a challenging, engaged experience is important in all cases, and the course will certainly do this for both the student interns and the other enrolled students. The scope of the proposed course is somewhat narrow, but it is interdisciplinary in nature and there will be deep learning. The Committee noted the learning outcomes are well defined in the proposal but not the course syllabus; we trust the outcomes will be translated to the syllabus during the redesign of the course. Finally, the Committee appreciated the relevance of the proposed course with regard to the University's land grant/outreach mission as well as its agenda to provide locally sourced foods on campus.

As specified in the Request for Proposals, the budget for your grant will be administered through the PI's administrative unit, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences/Department of Plant and Soil Science. The funds will be transferred on or before December 1, 2017. All funds must be spent within twelve months of that date (December 1, 2018). Please have your budget manager send the appropriate chartstring number to Kerry Castano Kerry.castano@uvm.edu.



The University of Vermont

Office of the Provost
and Senior Vice President

A full report on the outcomes of your project will be due no later than June 1, 2019. The report may be no longer than 1,500 words (12 point font, double spaced), excluding cover page, and appended materials.

The report must include:

- A review of the goals of the project
- A description of the outcomes
- An assessment of the impact of the project
- The current status of the project and future plans

Again, thank you for your high quality proposal and congratulations on the award. We are excited about the potential impact of your project on students, faculty and the community.