Application to Create a Community of Practice (CoP)
Applying the Research Skill Development Framework
Nakatani Teaching and Learning Center
2014-15

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Complete if you are applying to propose and/or facilitate a NTLC CoP:

Statement of Intent: The goal of this faculty CoP is to characterize the research and skill profile of programs across campus using John Willison’s Research Skill Development Framework (RSD). Members learn about the framework and adapt it to the needs of 2-3 programs in their college. Then, members will use the RSD to create profiles about undergraduate research within these programs. Assistance for data collection, analysis and assessment will be provided. Members will be asked to reflect critically on both their results and the process of applying the RSD, and will share this information with the University community.

Goal: The primary goal of our CoP is to characterize the research and skill profile within the curriculum of 16-24 programs across 4 different colleges using John Willison’s Research Skill Development Framework (RSD) and the accompanying resources at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/rsd/.

Member Selection: We intend to select 2 representatives from each college to participate in the CoP based on the following criteria:
1. Participants will represent different program areas within their respective college.
2. Participants should be engaged with or interested in undergraduate research.
3. Participants should be well-connected within their respective colleges.
4. Participants should be tenured.
5. Participants should be willing to commit to the time needed to develop the RSD profile of selected programs.
6. Additionally, it would be helpful (though not required) for participants to have served in program development in some capacity (e.g., membership on a program advisory board; reviewed a program or similar experience).

Member Activities:
July 1-3: John Willison on-campus visit. We are currently open to suggestions for who should be engaged in the visit (e.g., inviting potential participants, deans, program directors, etc.)
August: We will host an introductory meeting with deans and program directors to explain the CoP and solicit nominations during the opening week sessions. Participants for the CoP will be chosen following the meeting.
September: During this month, participants will be introduced to the RSD Framework, how it can be applied to programs, and its benefits. Other campus models will be reviewed to inform participants’ efforts and ensure alignment with existing initiatives. In consultation with their deans, participants each will select 2-3 programs to develop the RSD profiles for within their college. Additionally, they will begin to research
how the RSD framework applies to selected programs and identify areas of fit and/or modification for the framework.

**October:** We will invite Byron Anderson and Desiree Budd to meet with participants and describe how they have implemented the RSD profile within their programs and courses. Participants will continue to conduct research on the areas of fit and/or modification for the framework by seeking feedback from program directors.

**November:** Participants will consult with program directors to complete the RSD framework. We intend to invite Desiree Budd and Byron Anderson (or to consult with John Willison) to meet again with participants to discuss consistency/uniformity across the assessments.

**December and January:** Participants will report on the data collection process and feedback from program directors. This will be an opportunity to discuss issues emerging during data collection and address how to handle them.

**February:** Participants will begin data analysis. Additionally, they will provide a preliminary report on their data to Assistant Chancellor Meredith Drzakowski and Associate Vice Chancellor Glendali Rodriguez. The goal of this meeting is to receive feedback on further strategies for data collection and alignment with other campus initiatives.

**March:** Participants will continue to work on data analysis. They will also hold a meeting with program directors to suggest next steps for framework development.

**April:** Participants will finalize data analysis. They will present the results to PDs, Deans, Chairs, and other interested individuals during an open house and/or poster session.

**May:** Participants will present to the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee, possibly in collaboration with John Willison. Final RSD profiles will be released via website, email, and potentially during a May Day presentation. Participants will debrief and discuss next steps/continuation.

**Fall:** Participants will present their findings to campus, perhaps at opening sessions.

**Desired Outcomes:** By the end of the CoP, participants will:
1) Begin a campus dialogue for understanding how RSDF skills are embedded in degree programs.
2) Refine the RSD framework for 2-3 selected programs in their college.
3) Collect baseline data to inform the campus of how the RSD profile aligns with the selected programs, college and University missions.

**Participants will be expected to produce:**
1) A refined RSD framework that meet the needs of their selected programs.
2) Reflections on how programs align with program outcomes and the campus mission.
3) A report on the process to program directors, Deans’ Council, Assistant Chancellor, Associate Vice Chancellor, and the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee.

**Method of Evaluation:** We anticipate soliciting help from the Applied Research Center to determine:
1) How well do program directors feel the RSD profile and revised framework accurately reflects the RSD embedded in their program?
2) How well do individual instructors feel the RSD profile and revised framework accurately reflects the RSD embedded in their program?

**Dissemination Plan:** See April through May above.

*Answer the following questions with one to two paragraphs; please limit your answers to two pages.*
1. Explain why you want to lead this group and your previous experience in directing other groups.

Collectively, we view this CoP as an opportunity to understand how to advance undergraduate research in alignment with the campus’ long-range goals. The CoP formalizes work that is currently being undertaken by the Creative Original Research Experiences Committee (CORE). The CoP would provide faculty with a voice in identifying key points of strength and growth areas, and setting an agenda for the future of undergraduate research skill development.

Sylvia has been the co-chair of CORE since Fall 2008 and served on the state-wide WisCUR initiatives since their inception in 2011. Both of these organizations promote undergraduate research at UW-Stout.

As the outgoing director of the SSI and PSM in Conservation Biology, Kitrina is aware of the importance of undergraduate research to student learning outcomes that address the current demands of industry and provide students the critical thinking skills to solve urgent problems facing our society. She is particularly interested in understanding the specific aspects of undergraduate research that lead to improved student learning outcomes and addressing issues of scale and quality in undergraduate student research. Working as part of this CoP will help to establish a baseline for further inquiry into these types of questions about undergraduate student research experiences.

As a newer faculty member, Anne is interested in this project because she is currently mentoring undergraduate research projects and learning more about how to connect research experiences to curriculum. Helping to facilitate the CoP will enable her to gain leadership experience and identify opportunities for collaborations with like-minded scholars.

2. In what ways do you think that this experience will benefit you as a teacher, other colleagues, and even students? How will it support faculty development on our campus?

The CoP will primarily support faculty development related to the teaching of undergraduate research skills. Students will also benefit from the enhancement of research experiences within the curriculum.

Specifically, we intend for the CoP to initiate a dialogue about undergraduate research. The experience will also guide the development of consistent measurement tools and collection of baseline data about the current state of research on campus. Lessons from the experience will help the campus community move towards its goal of becoming an emerging research institution.

3. If this CoP is course-focused, indicate a course(s) and topic you would like to try it out Applying the Research Skills Development Framework in and describe what you want your faculty participants to take away from the discussion/research experience.
The CoP will not focus on specific courses. However, participants will be evaluating 2-3 programs within their college. We intend to enlist Byron Anderson who has applied the RSD at the course and program level to assist participants.

4. Since some participants struggle with effectively assessing student learning and project outcomes, provide a brief overview of your experience with Applying the Research Skills Development Framework assessment (it is okay to note if you are not familiar with Applying the Research Skills Development Framework assessment measures).

We are new to assessing the RSD. However, we plan to engage the Applied Research Center to assist us in formulating the assessment for the CoP. Our preliminary plans include obtaining feedback from program directors and faculty in selected programs to determine whether they found the modified RSD framework to be reflective of their program. Additionally, we will discuss assessment plans with John Willison during his visit in July 2014 to determine other forms of data to be collected. Finally, we intend to create a wiki to engage participants during their CoP experience. The wiki not only allows for the sharing of information among participants, but it will help us example the overall implementation process for its effectiveness.

5. Describe your comfort, enthusiasm and plans regarding encouraging other colleagues to engage in Applying the Research Skills Development Framework.

We are very enthusiastic about this endeavor. It aligns with CORE’s goals and has the active support of the committee’s members. Additionally, we anticipate having support from the Chancellor’s office which charged CORE with establishing a CoP by Fall 2014. As the facilitators, we have agreed to collaborate on the project and met in a timely fashion to establish the plan for the CoP.

Moreover, we are optimistic faculty will want to engage in the CoP. Sylvia reported the faculty who have seen the framework are positive about it. Because the RSD is a research-based framework developed independently from UW-Stout, it should appeal to a wide range of faculty.

Sylvia has already been in contact with some faculty. For instance, she has coordinated for John Willison to visit campus in July. Additionally she has been in contact with two faculty, Desiree Budd and Byron Anderson, who are already using the RSD independently of CORE’s initiatives. Anderson has expressed interest in participating in the Willison campus as well. The framework has also been shared with the Graduate College, who may be using it for reference with graduate-level research as well.

Once this application is completed, please send it in an electronic format to Renee Howarton. Thank you for completing this form.