

Connect faculty and student course work with projects happening around campus to offer high impact learning opportunities to students and gain fresh and innovative ideas to improve Fresno State.

CURRENT CHALLENGE:

It has been difficult to find students with specific skills, such as graphic design/marketing or experience teaching fitness classes, and have the ability to offer them a job with enough hours to make it meaningful to them. We may only need a student to teach a fitness class twice per week, which is maybe 4 hours, or a graphic design student to design one or two things per month. Most students are not interested in working less than 10 hours per week, which leaves us scrambling to find someone when we have a need to fill. This is most common with graphic design work. We have two amazing graphic artists on campus, but it is not practical or reasonable to send everything to them. With all of the efforts going into branding and cohesive messaging, there are still many staff with no marketing or graphic design background who are asked to create fliers and mailers and campus messaging that adequately reflects the Fresno State brand.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

Develop an easy way for departments and/or offices to communicate their needs and draft MOU's with departments and faculty so students can get credit for practical experience (and offices don't have to increase their budgets to hire them as student assistants).

More specifically, I think it would be beneficial to develop a similar system for connecting faculty and student course-work with projects happening on campus. For example, Dr. Lisa Herzig designed the "Winning With A Healthy Lifestyle" program to provide nutrition consulting to employees, but uses it as part of her lab class with her senior dietetics students. There are so many projects happening on campus and students learning about the most current strategies and interventions, this would allow fresh perspectives on ideas, hands on learning for students, and engaging projects for faculty to incorporate into their classes.

BENEFITS TO FRESNO STATE:

This provides benefits for everyone – faculty are able to provide hands-on, practical experiences for their students, students have experiential learning as part of their classes, and university departments benefit from the services provided. There are numerous projects happening on campus – from technology and infrastructure updates, to construction projects, to streamlining processes, to branding and developing cohesive messaging. Students could be great resources for helping accomplish these objectives, and providing course credit for these experiences would make it meaningful to students without significantly increasing any departmental budgets.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: