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## *Integrating Education for Sustainability into Teacher Education Courses*

### **Project Information and Call for Participants**

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#### **Rationale**

The national dialog on education reform is now focusing on the field of teacher preparation. Now as never before, university-based teacher preparation programs must demonstrate that they can produce *effective* teachers: those who can support all students to learn and perform at high levels within a standards-based environment.

The national focus on teacher effectiveness and student achievement provides a strategic opportunity to demonstrate how Education for Sustainability (EfS) can be a lens for improving teaching and learning across all disciplines.

#### **Project Overview**

Creative Change has been awarded a national grant to integrate EfS into university-based teacher education programs. The 20-month project (January 2012-August 2013) will support ten teacher education professors in multiple states to integrate EfS content and methods into a range of courses. Participants in this project will create and pilot a sustainability-focused course “makeover” that embeds EfS and Creative Change’s Curriculum and Resource Center (CRC) materials into assignments and course activities. The project is funded by a grant from the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation.

#### **Project Goals**

- Demonstrate that EfS is a strategy for supporting effective teacher preparation across disciplines, in ways that:
  - 1) Increase teachers’ ability to contextualize Common Core standards within interdisciplinary, sustainability content.
  - 2) Support teachers’ use of effective teaching practices, including differentiation and culturally-responsive instruction.
- Develop a rubric that defines the elements of effective integration of EfS in teacher education courses, drawing from current literature and educational policies.
- Disseminate project outputs, including syllabi examples, curriculum exemplars, and white papers.
- Build a network of early adopters who are prepared for deepened integration of EfS beyond the grant period.

## Seeking Participants

Creative Change is seeking teacher education professors from a broad spectrum of disciplines and levels (graduate/undergraduate) to participate in the project. Professors will receive instructional materials and support from Creative Change to create a sustainability-based “makeover” of an existing course.

Redesigned courses must be part of a for-credit teacher education program (undergraduate or graduate), and can be any education course, including Educational Psychology, Social Foundations, Curriculum, Assessment, Special Education, or Methods courses in any discipline. Project orientation and the syllabus revision process will occur Jan-Aug., with course delivery in the fall of 2012. Compilation and dissemination of results will occur in 2013.

To guide project evaluation, Creative Change will develop a rubric that defines the elements of effective integration of sustainability into teacher education courses. The rubric will include criteria for content, pedagogy, alignment with standards, and other policy issues affecting teacher education. While not all rubric areas will be applicable to all participants and courses, the rubric will serve as a framework that outlines how sustainability can be a venue for preparing “effective” teachers—an issue at the heart of current policy discussions.

## Curriculum and Resource Center

Professors and their students will receive full access to Creative Change’s [Curriculum and Resource Center](#) (CRC). The CRC is an extensive library of interdisciplinary resources on topics ranging from food systems to intercultural competency. The CRC includes individual lessons and assessment tools, fully developed course modules, a complete suite of instructional design tools, and curriculum integration frameworks. Instructors and students in this project will utilize the CRC to support the integration of EfS into courses and assignments.

Starting in the spring of 2012, the CRC will also include a database of Common Core Standards and other learning outcomes. New features will allow users to easily search and align resources by standards. This alignment will support the project by demonstrating that EfS is not a separate topic limited to science, but rather a rich context for meeting standards in multiple disciplines.

## Role of Participants (summary)

*Participants will:*

- Complete initial (non-binding) application and attend an informational webinar **Thursday Feb. 2, 2012** at 1pm EST or **Thursday Feb. 16 at 1pm**. (If you are unable to attend either webinar, please contact Creative Change and arrange a time to review the project.) Registration links:
  - **Link to application:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D3C5KGX>
  - **Webinar registration link for Thurs. Feb. 2** (paste entire link into browser or use link in email):  
<https://creativechange.webex.com/creativechange/j.php?ED=168290252&RG=1&UID=0&RT=MIMxMQ%3D%3D>
  - **Webinar registration for Thursday, Feb. 16:** <https://creativechange.webex.com/creativechange/j.php?ED=169228102&RG=1&UID=0&RT=MIMxMQ%3D%3D>

- By mid-February, complete a needs assessment of current practices and desired goals for participation in this project.
- As desired, provide input on the development of the rubric described above. The rubric will help guide the course re-design process and serve as an evaluation tool.
- By May/June, complete a brief Instructional Change Plan to outline goals and strategies for integrating EfS into an existing course. The course should include students' use of the CRC.
- During the summer, work with Creative Change to revise your syllabus using the rubric and Instructional Change Plan as guiding tools.
- In the fall, deliver the revised course.
- By February 2013, complete an evaluation survey and submit additional documents (i.e. syllabi excerpts, samples of student work, narratives, etc.) as applicable.
- Receive a \$400 stipend when the evaluation component is completed.

*We are also asking participants to support promotion of the project via (as permissible) a link on participating institutions' websites, blurbs in newsletters and listservs, etc.*

### **Role of Creative Change (summary)**

#### ***Creative Change will:***

- Host an informational webinar for interested participants to clarify the project.
- Develop a rubric that defines effective integration of EfS into teacher education courses. Rubric will emphasize content and effective instructional practices and be developed with feedback from participants.
- Support participants to develop an Instructional Change Plan that outlines EfS integration strategies.
- Provide one-on-one support as participants revise their course accordingly.
- Offer ongoing support during fall 2012 semester via phone, email, and/or Webex.
- Provide six-month CRC subscriptions for professors and up to 30 of their students in one section of a course. Subscriptions will provide complete access to our library of lessons, course modules, and instructional design tools. (This is a \$75 value per student.)
- Compile evaluation data and documents, and disseminate them to a national audience of teacher educators through EfS networks.
- Provide a \$400 stipend to participants who complete the project and evaluation components.

### **Project Timeline**

***January-April 2012:*** *Creative Change recruits ten faculty participants, prioritizing individuals and teams from institutions already involved in EfS.*

- Creative Change will circulate information about the project (prioritizing colleagues already involved in EfS), hold an informational webinar for interested participants, and accept applications.
- Selected participants will complete a needs assessment to identify current practices and goals for integrating sustainability into their existing course.
- Creative Change will begin the development of a rubric for effective EfS integration into teacher education courses. Criteria will reflect current literature, policy, and best practices on content

knowledge, pedagogy, meeting standards, and other areas that define teacher effectiveness. Creative Change will solicit feedback from participants via a webinar and electronic communication.

**May-August 2012:** *Creative Change will work with participants to integrate EfS into their course through webinars, on-site support (where possible), and one-on-one consultation.*

- Participants will complete a brief Instructional Change Plan to define specific goals and a strategy for revising their course to meet elements of EfS. The rubric will serve as a guiding tool.
- Creative Change will provide one-on-one support to participants to revise the course syllabus based on goals and strategies in the Instructional Change Plan. Support includes helping participants identify CRC resources that can enhance instruction and assignments.

**Between September and December 2012:** *Participants will implement their courses.*

- Participants will finalize and implement their course in the fall 2012 semester.
- Creative Change will provide support through phone/e-mail/WebEx, including CRC orientation webinars for the participants' students.
- Creative Change and participants will generate and collect critical evaluation, including surveys and syllabi examples.

**Jan-August 2013:** *Creative Change will compile evaluation data and project outputs, and disseminate them to a national audience of teacher educators through EfS networks.*

- Creative Change will create a "whitepaper" on EfS in teacher education.
- Creative Change will disseminate evaluation data and project outputs to national audience of teacher educators.

## **Who should apply?**

Creative Change invites applications from individuals who are already involved in EfS. We welcome teams from institutions where EfS is taking hold in order to strengthen those programs.

## **Funding**

- The project is made possible through funding from the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, working to "protect and improve the quality of life through support of programs in the environment, human health, education and the arts."
- Grant funds will cover Creative Change's expenses to
  - Coordinate the project.
  - Provide one-on-one support to participants.
  - Provide access and technical support for the Curriculum and Resource Center.
  - Develop and disseminate project outcomes.
- Grant funds will NOT cover participants' teaching time. Participants who provide complete the project and evaluation will receive a stipend of up to \$400.

*Questions? Contact Susan Santone ([santone@creativechange.net](mailto:santone@creativechange.net)).*