



- Before proceeding, please read all criteria and application instructions at <http://tlef.ubc.ca>
- Applications should be written in language understandable to a non-specialist.
- You must submit this proposal online using the TLEF application system: <http://apply.tlef.ubc.ca> and this proposal form.
- Your Department Head must sign off on the proposal within the online application system before it is forwarded to the internal Faculty TLEF review committee.
- **All proposals must be submitted by 5PM on November 14th, 2014.**

Project Title: Cultivating citizenship skills through teaching and learning in the humanities

Principal Applicant's Name: Michael Griffin

Email Address: michael.griffin@ubc.ca

For administrative purposes, the Principal Applicant should be member of UBC's faculty or staff. However, students may apply if at least one of the co-applicants listed below is a full-time faculty member. Please note: There should be one Principal Applicant only.

Name of Faculty or VP Office:

Arts

Department/School:

CNERS and Philosophy

Names of Other Applicants, their affiliation and email:

Marlise Hofer, MA Candidate, Psychology (marlisehofer@gmail.com)

Name of Department Head and email address:

You will need to have the support of your Department Head in order to submit your application. If your proposal spans multiple departments, include the names and email addresses of each of the Department Heads who will need to support the proposal.

After completing the proposal form, you will also need to complete an additional task to send a request to each Department Head to sign-off on the proposal. Your Department Head(s) will need to sign-in and indicate their support for the proposal before you can submit it.

You will need to complete this step before November 14, 2014, the deadline for submission.

Name: Dietmar Neufeld, CNERS

Email: dietmar.neufeld@ubc.ca

Name: Alan Richardson, Philosophy

Email: alan.richardson@ubc.ca

Name:

Email:

This project is: **New Small Project TLEF**

Request for continued funding: **2nd year** **3rd year**

For continued projects please attach one-page Progress Report to the application.

Previously submitted but not funded

Budget Requested from TLEF 2015/2016: \$ 5,670

From Other Sources: \$ 0

If this is a request for CONTINUED funding, please provide the following information:

Historical TLEF Funding for this Project:

Year: \$

Future TLEF Requests Anticipated for this Project:

Year: \$



Year: \$

If this is a NEW TLEF project:

- This Project will Require Funding for one year only. Future TLEF Requests are Anticipated for this Project:
- | | |
|---------|----------|
| Year: 2 | \$ 9,288 |
| Year: | \$ |

Please Note: The Central funding cap for the entire duration of the project is \$50,000.

Other existing TLEF-funded projects currently held by the Principal Applicant:

n/a

Project Title: Cultivating citizenship skills through teaching and learning in the humanities

Project Summary (150 words maximum)

Policymakers and students both describe “citizenship skills” as desirable learning outcomes and graduate attributes in higher education (UBC 2009, Banks 2007, Sax 2004). This project aims to identify methods of teaching and learning within the humanities that are correlated with a positive increase in citizenship skills, using validated psychological measures of perspective-taking, empathy, interpersonal and intercultural fluency, and tolerance of other’s values (outlined below). We aim to test the hypothesis that the rigorous and charitable study of literature and philosophy drawn from diverse cultural traditions positively influence traits perceived to be conducive to good citizenship (cf. Kidd & Castano 2013); if true, we aim to identify content and pedagogical perspectives and practices that are correlated with citizenship skills by creating pilot courses on several hundred students in year one, adapting and expanding in year two, and to disseminating these results within and beyond the university community.

How many students will be impacted by this project annually?

- Year 1: approximately 560 students enrolled in CLST 105, CLST/PHIL 211 and 212, and PHIL 310.
- Year 2: expansion to approximately 1500 students, including adaptations to pilot courses studied in year 1.

Provide a clear statement of the project’s rationale and objectives, and how it meets TLEF criteria. (500 words maximum)

Rationale. “Citizenship skills” such as perspective-taking and empathy are often described as valuable outcomes of a university education, facilitating social and corporate leadership (Sebastian et al. 2012) and civic responsibility (Ehrlich 2000); they are also valuable for a campus committed to equity and diversity. But they are rarely identified as course-level or program-level curricular outcomes. Recent research has tentatively suggested that content and methods associated with the humanities – such as languages, philosophy, literature, religious studies, and creative and performing arts – can nurture these skills (see Seifert et al. 2008, Stephan and Finlay 1999), but more research is required to situate this hypothesis in the context of higher education, and to explore whether some content and methods of teaching and learning are more conducive to these outcomes than others.

Objectives. This project aims to identify teaching and learning practices in the humanities that are correlated with increases in students’ perspective-taking and empathy (Davis 1980; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright 2004), intercultural fluency, tolerance of ambiguity (Mannetti et al. 2002), and integrative complexity (Suedfeld, Tetlock & Streufert 1992; Suedfeld & Leighton 2002), the ability to differentiate and integrate multiple perspectives on an issue. The project aims to expand beyond an initial group of 560 students in Classical Studies and Philosophy courses (the experimental group) and extra-humanities disciplines (the control group) in year 1 to reach a significant percentage of students enrolled in humanities courses across the Faculty of Arts in year 2. We will focus on identifying *correlations*



between teaching styles (measured by the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI: Pratt 1998), the use of particular evaluation methodologies (peer review, wording and detail of instructor feedback), student perception of lectures (from teaching evaluations), on the one hand, and any positive or negative changes in the traits described above. In year 2, we will begin to implement preliminary results from year 1 as modifications in (at least) the pilot courses. For example: in year 1, CLST 105 will implement detailed peer review via TurnItIn, while CLST/PHIL 211 will emphasize interdisciplinary perspectives in lectures, and CLST/PHIL 212 will emphasize in-class group discussion among students. If any of these pilot courses demonstrate a stronger effect (controlling for variables like instructor and prior experience), we will integrate more of these elements into the pilot courses in year 2.

Sustainability. The results of the study should be sustainably applicable to humanities pedagogy within and beyond UBC. In year 2, the project group will publish results online and host a workshop describing course content and teaching practices (measured by the TPI: Pratt 1998) correlated with positive or negative changes discovered in the traits described above, and the results of qualitative focus groups with instructors and students discussing possible causes of any positive or negative change.

Outcome-based criteria. The project aims to identify and disseminate data and inviting students and instructors to discuss the possible causes of correlations. At the course level, the pilot courses will be modified in year 2 to integrate results from year 1. More broadly, we will publish any data gathered about correlations between change in these traits and...

- subject matter or instruction methods
- student performance in the course (relative to general performance)
- standard university and faculty teaching evaluations.
- teaching perspectives taken from instructors according to the TPI.

Provide a clear work plan for how you will achieve the stated objectives of the project. Please include major milestones to indicate when you will initiate project development, when you will implement project with students, and when you will conduct evaluation. (1000 words maximum)

Milestones

- **June 2015:** Design student instrument including the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), Empathy Quotient (EQ), Need for Closure, and essay question scorable for Integrative Complexity. For course-level surveys, prepare instructions for course instructors to complete the Teaching Perspectives Inventory. These surveys will build on initial versions developed for a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Seed Project held by Dr. Griffin in 2014. **Budget: GRA for 30 hours at 30.73/hour.**
- **September 2015 and January 2016:** Administer surveys using Qualtrics to individual courses, including CLST 105, CLST/PHIL 211, CLST/PHIL 212, and PHIL 310A (approximately 560 students), and potentially several additional courses in these disciplines. Also administer surveys to control courses outside the humanities. Also administer surveys to a sample of students within the PHIL and CNEERS major streams to test any changes across year groups.
- **September-December 2015:** Undergraduate Research Assistants to be trained and qualified in Integrative Complexity scoring for written samples from students, with collaborative instruction from Dr. Peter Suedfield's lab (Psychology). **Budget: URA for 20 hours at 20.00/hour.**
- **January-April 2016:** URAs to score a sample of 300 essay questions for integrative complexity. **Budget: URA for 50 hours at 20.00/hour.**
- **April 2016:** Analysis of results. Evaluating change in student's self reported empathy and perspective taking over the semester and comparing net change of students in humanities courses to control courses. Determining if correlations exist between outcome variables and teaching evaluations, grades, and evaluation methodologies. **Budget: GRA for 30 hours at 30.73/hour.**
- **May 2016:** Initial dissemination of results online; development of workshop at CTLT to develop a community of interest and practice, including both participating students and instructors, to discuss possible causes of any correlations identified. **Budget: CTLT workshop facilitation, 2 days, at \$371/day.**
- **June 2016:** Redesign initial survey instrument based on initial feedback; broader recruitment of



participating courses and majors across Faculty of Arts. **Budget: GRA for 30 hours at 30.73/hour.**

- **June-September 2016: Modify and redesign pilot courses** (CLST 105, CLST/PHIL 211, CLST/PHIL 212, and PHIL 310A) to reflect hypotheses about any correlations identified in preceding year. **Budget: CTLT instructional design support, 8 days at 371.00/day.**
- **September 2016-April 2017:** administration of revised survey at the course level to approximately ten courses in the Faculty of Arts with controls outside the humanities, aiming for a sample of at least 2,000 students. Administration of revised survey at the program level to at least five majors in the Faculty of Arts with controls outside the humanities. And: trial of revised pilot courses.
- **September 2016-April 2017:** once-termly workshops at CTLT. **Budget: CTLT workshop facilitation, 2 days, at \$371/day.**
- **April 2017:** Analysis of results, Evaluating change in student's self reported empathy and perspective taking over the semester and comparing net change of students in humanities courses to control courses. Determining if correlations exist between outcome variables and teaching evaluations, grades, and evaluation methodologies. **Budget: GRA for 30 hours at 30.73/hour.**
- **May 2017:** Evaluate any change of results in survey instrument for revised pilot courses. Final dissemination of results online; final workshop at CTLT.

Overview

The study will be done on two groups of participants. During the pilot year, the experimental group will be drawn from students in the PI's (Michael Griffin's) philosophy and classical studies courses. Students in this class receive extensive training in Greek philosophy. The control group will be similarly aged UBC students enrolled in a course that does not cover humanities subjects.

Students will complete two surveys during the semester. The first will be a "pre-education" questionnaire administered during the first few weeks of classes, the second a "post-education" questionnaire during the final weeks of the course. The questionnaires will include established measures of empathy, perspective taking and moral judgment. Participants will also write an essay in which they attempt to recreate the reasoning of someone who holds a belief counter to their own on an important topic (e.g. abortion, gay marriage, tuition increase). Both their success and the amount of energy (time) expended on this task will be evaluated. To help account for baseline variation between subjects, information on demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, socio-economic status) and previous education variables (e.g., courses taken, prior knowledge of humanities) will be also collected.

Procedures

We will recruit students from several undergraduate classes at UBC. Students will be told that the instructor will not be aware of participation in or results of the survey until after all other coursework is graded and recorded. If a situation arises requiring data to be checked early, Marlise Hofer will look at the data and communicate directly with the student. Hofer will not make course instructors aware of student participation, and Hofer is not involved in teaching or grading any of the courses. Participants will be asked not to discuss the survey with other student who may participate in this research. Students who agree to volunteer will be given an Internet link to the survey.

The two surveys will be virtually identical, with the only difference being the exact essay prompt they are given. First, participants will be asked to take the perspective of a student with an opinion different from their own. To do this, we will first ask them to give their opinion on a topic such as an increase in UBC tuition. Since most students oppose a tuition increase, we will then tell them that another student answered in support of a tuition increase. Participants will be asked to put themselves in the shoes of this student and write an essay about why this person may feel an increase is justified. The essays will also be coded for effectiveness, objectivity, and positivity. Two such essay tasks will be completed by each participant, followed by several well established scales for empathy and moral judgments, such as the Interpersonal Reactivity Index and Empathy Quotient and moral judgement scales, and other related questions. Participants will then complete standard demographic questions and scales used to account for baseline differences between subjects.



We will then look for correlations between these data and (anonymized) teaching evaluations, grades, subject matter, self-reported emphasis on writing and reading in the course, and instructors' perspectives (measured by the TPI), report on any correlations found, and organize an initial workshop to discuss the results and consider possible causes. We will also implement changes in the pilot courses in year 2 to account for any correlations found and begin further research.

Describe expected outcomes and explain how this project will contribute to enhancement of teaching and learning (what are the direct, short-term benefits; what are the sustainable benefits, etc.). (1000 words maximum)

Short and longer term benefits

Long-term goals. The primary objective of this project is to improve the value of a humanities degree and humanities coursework for students, by promoting modes of teaching and learning, and (student- and instructor-reported) characteristics of instruction that promote traits such as empathy, perspective-taking, and integrative complexity, which are perceived as both valuable in their own right and useful graduate attributes.

Short-term goals. The immediate goal would be the improvement of the pilot courses to better cultivate citizenship skills, which would be beneficial to students, and discussed with students at the end of each term (following the study). This project itself would be an initial step towards these goals, focusing on information-gathering and dialogue including both students and instructors, with publication of initial results. We will tentatively explore the possibility of using validated measures drawn from the social sciences for these traits in the humanities classroom, and involving students and instructors heavily in discussions about the use of these measures and any correlations identified between content, teaching methods, and the focus of students' assignments (e.g., writing-intensive work).

Sustainability. By holding workshop discussions at CTLT in the first two years, and publishing the results of the study online for public use, and encouraging the development of a community of interest and practice within and beyond the Faculty of Arts on campus, we hope that the results of this initial study and dialogue will stimulate further work and development at both the course and curriculum level.

Background

The ability to understand and empathize with another person or group – to “put ourselves in their shoes” – is a remarkable product of human evolution (de Waal 2012). Classified as “Theory of Mind” (ToM) in social and developmental psychology, this construct is essential to our navigation of complex social, business, and diplomatic relationships, and is strongly correlated with effective leadership (Sebastian et al. 2012). More broadly, the individual cultivation of this and a related suite of skills facilitates local and global citizenship and intercultural understanding, key outcomes for worldwide higher education and pillars of UBC’s strategic plan (UBC 2009).

The humanities – including disciplines such as literature, philosophy, history, visual and performing arts, cultural (area) studies, and ancient and modern languages – are often presented as cultivating these and similar traits. For instance, a UN policy adviser and philosopher recently argued that the humanities are indispensable to an informed civic democracy, because they cultivate empathy (Nussbaum 2010). Medical schools are experimenting with coursework in literature and art in to foster empathy among doctors and nurses (Shapiro, Morrison & Boker 2004, Schwartz et al. 2009). Another widely reported study contended, that the study of “classic,” award-winning literature enhanced Theory of Mind in adult subjects (Kidd & Castano 2013). This study aims to test which practices in the classroom could benefit students by fostering these traits.

Describe the evaluation process (how success will be determined; what outcome-based criteria will be used to measure the success of this project). (500 words maximum)

Criteria for success include:

- Successful adaptation of the pilot courses in year 2 (measured both by experimental results and standard



teaching evaluations)

- Identification and dissemination of practices and content correlated with positive or negative change in “citizenship” traits in humanities education at the course or program level, in year 1 and year 2.
- Attendance at initial CTLT workshops, in year 1 and year 2.
- Publication of results online, on a publicly accessible UBC website, in year 1 and year 2.

Describe student involvement in preparing and/or reviewing this proposal (if applicable). *(250 words maximum)*

The text of this proposal was prepared by Michael Griffin, a faculty member in Classics and Philosophy, together with Marlise Hofer, an MA candidate in the Department of Psychology.



Project Budget

Please use the Small Project TLEF Budget template to describe the resources you will need to support the development of the project. You will need to attach the completed template to your application in order to finish your submission.

Information on funding criteria and cost estimates for TLEF proposals as well as the budget template can be found on the TLEF website, under Application Process.