

Research Academy for University Learning at Montclair State University

Faculty Services

Research-based Teaching Initiative

Using Research to Answer Teaching Questions and to Experiment



The Research Academy supports and encourages a research-based approach to teaching and learning. That often means experiments in creating more

effective teaching and learning environments, experiments that begin with existing research findings and then make their own contributions to knowledge about human learning. Those experiments can become important catalyst for change within a discipline or across disciplines. But a research-based approach to teaching can also mean the

increased use of research findings by individual teachers as they make pedagogical choices.

Departments, schools, or individuals may come to the Academy with a learning issue. Examples:

- How do I best help all students achieve a level of learning that they have not traditionally achieved?
- How do I best help improve the learning of a particular segment of students--defined by whatever demography--who are not learning as well as their previous academic records and scores suggest that they should?

The Academy will work with faculty members to help review the available research literature that might suggest a hypothesis about what initiative will work most effectively. It will then help frame a program to implement that hypothesis (design an experimental program) and an assessment to measure the learning outcomes--with plans to use the evaluation to improve the effort and to understand more about why it does or does not work.

The Academy envisions that many of these projects can win outside funding and can, in turn, make significant contributions to the literature on university learning while enhancing the learning environment of Montclair State University students.

Providing Proposal-Development and Assessment Support

As part of this initiative, the Research Academy is developing a research and evaluation unit that will work with departments and schools or other groups of faculty members who have secured or who are seeking external funding for an educational initiative and who need independent assessment of that project. The Academy can help provide that assessment, design assessment procedures, and assist in the development of proposals. Many funding agencies are increasingly expecting sophisticated understanding of major learning issues and of the central conclusions emerging from the research and theoretical literature on human learning.

Supporting Individual Professors in Their Teaching

The Research Academy will work with individual faculty members to help identify relevant research and theoretical literature on student learning and teaching, literature that can help inform pedagogical issues.

Additional Resources:

- [Bibliographies on Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Critical Thinking Project](#)
- [Call for Papers: Reflective Essays](#)
- [The Reflective Essay](#)

- [Teaching as Scholarship](#)
- [Research on Evaluation of Teaching: Student Ratings](#)
- [Research on Evaluation of Teaching: A Comprehensive Perspective](#)