



2026 Innovation in Teaching Awards  
Sponsored by the Center for Excellence in  
Teaching and Learning (CETL)

The Innovation in Teaching Award (ITA) provides a \$2,000 stipend to support faculty-led instructional innovations that enhance student learning. This competitive award recognizes creative, evidence-informed approaches to teaching that improve student engagement, learning outcomes, and overall educational effectiveness.

### **Innovation in Teaching Award Categories**

Applicants must select *one* innovation category that best aligns with the primary focus of their proposal. Categories provide context for review; all proposals are evaluated using the same rubric and standards of excellence, regardless of category. Projects that span multiple areas should be submitted under the category that best reflects the primary pedagogical emphasis of the proposed work.

2026 award categories:

#### **Laboratory & Experiential Learning Innovation**

Innovations focused on laboratory courses, field-based learning, simulations, clinical instruction, or hands-on experiential learning environments.

#### **Online & Hybrid Course Innovation**

Innovations that significantly enhance student learning, engagement, or assessment in fully online or hybrid course formats.

#### **Seminar & Discussion-Based Course Innovation**

Innovations centered on small-enrollment, discussion-driven, writing-intensive, or advanced seminar courses.

#### **Generative AI & Digital Pedagogy Innovation**

Innovations that integrate generative AI, digital tools, or other emerging technologies in ways that enhance learning, transparency, and academic integrity.

#### **Curriculum & Program-Level Teaching Innovation**

Innovations that impact multiple courses, scaffold learning across a program, or address curricular coherence and student progression.

### **Eligibility**

This competitive award is open to all faculty and staff with continuing appointments and course development responsibilities (i.e., an assignment from the dean, chair, or designee to develop a new course or significantly revise an existing course). Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, tenured and tenure-track faculty; clinical instructional faculty; lecturers; and graduate student teachers.

Applications from teams of collaborating proposers are encouraged. However, only one stipend will be awarded to the primary applicant named in the application. Proposed activities may not be substantially similar to other submitted or previously funded projects. Faculty who have received an Innovation in Teaching Award within the past five (5) years are not eligible to apply.

## Application Deadline

Applications are due **Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, at 12PM**. Award recipients will be announced at the end of the academic year during the 2026 Faculty Awards Banquet.

## Application Procedures

Applications are handled electronically. All proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document to [cetl@uttyler.edu](mailto:cetl@uttyler.edu) by the application deadline. Proposals may not exceed **five (5) pages**, excluding required attachments.

Each application must include the following components:

### Applicant Information

- Primary applicant contact information
- Collaborator(s) contact information, if applicable

### Proposal Narrative

- Project Title
- Innovation Category (select one)
- Rationale and need for the proposed innovation, including relevant pedagogical literature
- Detailed description of the proposed innovation, including how the project will improve student learning outcomes
- Target students and course(s)
- Project timeline
- Description of how the effectiveness and impact of the project on student learning will be evaluated using both formative and summative methods, as appropriate

### Required Attachments *(not included in page limit)*

- Support letter from Chair or Dean
- IRB approval documentation, if applicable

For questions regarding the ITA application, please contact Dr. Danielle Bailey, Director of the CETL, at [dbailey@uttyler.edu](mailto:dbailey@uttyler.edu).

## Selection Process

All proposals will be reviewed by the UT Tyler CETL. Proposals will be evaluated within the context of the selected innovation category, recognizing that innovation may take different forms across teaching environments, modalities, and disciplines.

Applications will be judged on the following criteria:

### **Innovation**

How fresh or original is this approach?

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Does the proposal include clear, measurable learning outcomes?

### **Evidence-Centered Design**

Is the proposal grounded in relevant pedagogical theory and/or research?

### **Impact & Sustainability**

How does the project impact student learning? Who will benefit from this project? Are the proposed activities transferable to other courses, institutions, or disciplines?

### **Assessment**

Does the proposal include a clear assessment plan to identify whether and how the project was effective?

### **Feasibility**

How feasible is the project given the proposed timeline, resources, and scope?

A copy of the evaluation rubric is provided in this application packet. Applicants may request a copy of the completed rubric after the award decisions are announced.

### **Reporting Requirements**

All award recipients must submit a final report to the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) no later than **Friday, April 30, 2027**, summarizing the outcomes of the project. The final report must include:

1. Project summary
2. Examples of innovations used
3. Project evaluation results, if available
4. Analysis and discussion of student learning outcomes
5. Next steps and follow-up plans
6. Description or evidence of completed publication(s) or presentation(s)

*In lieu of a final report, recipients may submit evidence of a completed manuscript submitted for publication. Publications may include peer-reviewed journals, newsletters, or other professional outlets.*

Award recipients are also expected to conduct a CETL workshop related to the implementation and outcomes of their project. The project may still be in progress at the time of the workshop. Workshops will be scheduled at the recipient's convenience but must be completed prior to the end of the **2026–2027 academic year**.

### **Award Funding**

The stipend will be distributed in one installment after all above requirements have been met.

## Teaching & Learning Awards Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair
Innovation	Proposal activities demonstrate a clear and intentional vision for teaching innovation that is well aligned with the course context and learning goals.	Proposal activities include an identifiable element of instructional innovation or creative redesign that is appropriate for the course context.	Proposal activities demonstrate limited evidence of innovation or rely primarily on standard or unchanged instructional approaches.
Student Learning Outcomes	Proposal includes clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are measurable and directly aligned with the goals of the Innovation in Teaching Award.	Proposal includes student learning outcomes, but outcomes are vague, weakly aligned, or not clearly measurable.	Proposal does not include student learning outcomes
Evidence-Centered Design	Proposal includes a strong and relevant engagement with pedagogical literature that clearly supports the need for the proposed innovation and informs its design.	Proposal references relevant pedagogical literature, but the connection between the literature and the proposed innovation is underdeveloped or unclear.	Proposal does not include relevant pedagogical literature and fails to establish adequate need or rationale for the project
Impact & Sustainability	Proposal clearly articulates how the project will positively impact teaching and student learning and describes the value it will bring to students. Proposed approaches demonstrate potential for sustainability and/or adaptation beyond the initial course context.	Proposal describes how the project will impact teaching and student learning, but the long-term sustainability or broader applicability of the project is limited or unclear.	Proposal provides limited information regarding the impact or sustainability of the project
Assessment	Proposal includes specific and clearly articulated methods for assessing the effectiveness of the project, including how assessment results will be used. Both formative and summative assessment strategies are thoughtfully incorporated.	Proposal includes an assessment plan, but assessment methods are limited, underdeveloped, or not clearly connected to project goals.	Proposal does not address how the effectiveness of the project will be assessed
Feasibility	Proposal includes a realistic and well-defined timeline for obtaining resources (if necessary), implementing the innovation, and assessing outcomes within the proposed timeframe.	Proposal includes a project timeline that may not be feasible by the end of the year	Proposal does not include a timeline, or the objectives cannot reasonably be completed by the end of the year