

Memorandum of Agreement

between Montclair State University (the University) and AFT Local 1904 (the Local) regarding the Provost Faculty-Fellowship Program for Higher Education Academic Leadership

The Provost of the University intends to implement the Faculty Fellowship Program for Higher Education Academic Leadership (HEAL).

The University and the Local agree to the following terms and conditions for the implementation of the HEAL Fellowship Program:

1. *Eligibility*

- a. Applicants must be members of the University Faculty.
- b. Applicants must have a minimum of three years of full-time employment by the University.

2. *Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals*

- a. Criteria for evaluation of proposals are delineated in Attachment A, unless and until specifically altered by announcement of the Provost or designee.
- b. The Provost, or designee, will consult with a designee of the Local prior to any change in the evaluation criteria.
- c. The criteria used to evaluate proposals in response to a specific solicitation shall be fully specified and announced to the University Faculty no less than ten (10) business days prior to the application deadline.

3. *Application, Review, and Appointment Procedures*

- a. The Provost will solicit applications with a deadline in November or December for projects to commence at the beginning of the following summer or fall term. The application deadline shall be no earlier than thirty (30) calendar days following the complete, official dissemination of the solicitation.
- b. Application materials, as delineated in Attachment A, will be uploaded to Interfolio or another electronic document management system.
- c. The Provost and/or designees will review proposals, and may conduct interviews with relevant employees of the University. Proposals may also be evaluated by external reviewers designated by the Provost.
- d. Applicants will be notified in writing by the Provost or designee whether their proposal has been accepted, and they will be offered a HEAL Fellowship, or declined no more than sixty (60) calendar days after the application deadline.

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- e. The letter to an accepted applicant (Offer Letter) shall include:
 - i. the initial term of the fellowship appointment;
 - ii. deadlines for interim and final reports, as well as presentations;
 - iii. specification of the associated compensation;
 - iv. other anticipated reimbursements (e.g., for fellowship-related travel expenses and conference registration);
 - v. any other arrangements to enable activities under the fellowship.
- f. Applicants offered a fellowship shall have ten (10) business days after receipt of an offer letter to accept or decline an offer of appointment.
- g. Applicants whose applications are declined shall receive from the Provost or designee a letter, no later than ten (10) business days after the announcement of awards, stating the reasons that the declined application received lower priority than the accepted applications.
- h. The number of applications accepted in response to any solicitation shall be at the discretion of the Provost.

4. *HEAL Fellow Activities*

- a. HEAL Fellows (Fellows) will work both independently and in conjunction with the Provost and/or designee(s) to execute and pursue the projects delineated in their respective applications and Offer Letters.
- b. The Provost may assign a Fellow to serve as a member or observer on University committees relevant to the Fellow's project.
- c. The Fellow will confer with the Provost or designee on a monthly basis, or more frequently as the project demands.
- d. Any substantial additions or alterations to an initial work plan, including those emerging as a result of previous work under the Fellowship, shall be documented in written changes to the plan to be submitted to the designee(s) of the Office of the Provost.
- e. Time spent by the Fellow on HEAL fellowship-related activities will be proportionate with the reassigned time and compensation.
- f. Each HEAL Fellow shall:
 - i. submit mid-term and final reports according to a template and/or written guidance from the Provost or designee;
 - ii. give a presentation at the conclusion of the fellowship at an on-Campus venue determined by the Provost in consultation with the Fellow;

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- iii. meet at least twice a semester with other Fellows, facilitated by the Provost and/or their designee(s), to discuss learning, progress, approaches, and ideas;
 - iv. attend a national conference with direct relevance to the Fellow's project and/or to learning in higher education leadership.
 - g. Participation in the HEAL Fellowship Program is voluntary and no evaluation of the participation of the Fellow in the HEAL program shall be retained in a personnel file or record. However, a Fellow may request a written documentation and evaluation of their participation and work.
5. Intermediate work products and an accounting of activities undertaken by each Fellow in pursuit of their respective project will be documented by the Fellow and submitted to the Provost or their designee(s), with these documents held by the Office of Faculty Excellence (OFE). Such materials, with the Fellow's permission, may be made available to the University Community and/or generally available via the World-Wide Web.
6. *Compensation and Reimbursement*
- a. Each HEAL Fellow will receive three or four (3-4) TCH of on-load, reassigned time for each fall or spring term comprised by the appointment, with the purpose of reducing the number of assigned course sections by one each semester, or equivalent reduction in instructional duties assigned to the Fellow.
 - b. If the fellowship appointment includes a summer term (between the end of a spring term and the beginning of the following fall term in a given calendar year), the Fellows with 10-month appointments shall receive compensation equal to 10% of their base salary as determined by their range and step and the salary guide, effective as of July 1 of that year. The compensation shall be in two equal payments, on each in the first regular pay dates of July and September of the same year.
 - c. HEAL Fellows with 12-month appointments shall have their regular duties outside of the fall and spring terms reduced and/or reassigned in an amount equal to the time required for Fellowship activities.
 - d. In consultation with each HEAL Fellow, the Provost, or designee will identify conferences and/or meetings relevant to pursuit of each Fellow's project. For such conferences and meetings, the Fellow shall receive reimbursement or direct support for travel expenses, conference registration, and/or for related materials for the project, in accordance with State of New Jersey/ COUNCIL OF NEW JERSEY STATE COLLEGE LOCALS, AFT, AFL-CIO Collectively Negotiated Agreement, Article XXIII.
7. *Extension of a PFF Fellowship*
- a. The Provost may offer a HEAL Fellow an extension of the term of their fellowship in order to better achieve the goals and outcomes of the original fellowship appointment.
 - b. HEAL Fellows offered an extension shall have five (5) business days after receipt of the written offer extension to accept or decline extension of their appointment.

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- c. Such offers of extension shall be made in writing with an offer of extension that includes the elements delineated in Provision (3e) of the Agreement.
 - d. Any extension shall include additional compensation, reimbursement and support consistent with Provision 6 of this Agreement.
8. *Joint Consultation* - One year after each cohort of Fellows has completed their fellowship (earliest June 2024), the Provost, and/or one to three designees, will meet with one to three designees of the Local to discuss the HEAL Fellowship Program, including particularly successful elements as well as any areas that might benefit from adjustment or alteration.
9. *Program Continuation*
- a. The HEAL Fellowship Program will automatically continue through December 2026, and hereinafter will automatically renew for one year unless the Provost terminates it by written notification to the AFT. Upon such notice, this Agreement will expire effective at the end of the semester (or the end of the summer term adjacent to the semester) in which notice is provided.
 - b. Notwithstanding any termination of the HEAL Fellowship Program, all current Fellows at the time of termination shall be eligible to complete their current fellowship.
10. This Agreement does not otherwise alter nor supersede other agreements between the State of NJ and the Council of NJ State College Locals, nor any agreements between Montclair State University and AFT Local 1904, including the Local Selected Procedures Agreement.

In witness whereof, the representatives of the University Administration and AFT Local 1904 have acknowledged their understanding of this Letter of Agreement and affix their signatures below:

On behalf of the University

On behalf of AFT Local 1904

 14 Feb. 2024

Junius Gonzales

Provost and Senior VPAA

A. David Trubatch 13 Feb. 2024

David Trubatch, VP for Negotiations

Attachment A

Call For Proposals

Provost Faculty Fellowship Higher Education Academic Leadership (HEAL) Program

Montclair State University strives to be at the forefront of higher education. By focusing on student success, engaged scholarship and research, and involvement and service to the community, and leveraging its strengths, the university is advancing itself and its future. The complexity of this effort is underscored in light of the many and complex dynamics facing higher education (e.g., demographic shifts, public perceptions about the value of a college degree, the competition for educational content and new credentials [including from organizations outside of traditional high education], technologies, applications and engagement modalities, workforce demands, financing models and funding, globalization, the growth of 'non-traditional' learners, and many more).

Understanding that the primary goal of any higher educational institution is student success can help frame and address those challenges. Student success comprises the totality of experiences and interactions of students, attending to their characteristics, expectations, efforts, and values, with the institution and its policies, traditions, practices, and people. Teaching and learning are critically important but so are other meaningful experiences students have at the University that help them grow personally and intellectually. Montclair State University is positioned to provide many indelible experiences for students while optimizing its business and operational practices to support the success of its current and future students and other members of the university community. Faculty, with no doubt, play seminal roles in these endeavors, especially given their teaching, advising and mentoring and learning experiences with students.

The Provost's office is seeking proposals from faculty members interested in creating solutions to higher education challenges to participate in the Provost Faculty Fellowship Program for Higher Education Academic Leadership (HEAL). In this program, a faculty member can be released for up to 4 credits of on-load activity for two semesters (sometimes longer) to focus on an issue of importance to higher education. The successful fellow will be mentored and supported by the Provost's office (and other parts of the University), and focus on understanding, addressing, and impacting an issue. The HEAL Fellowship program has a need for thoughtful innovation and action, informed by active engagement and collaboration. The fellows should feel energized, be catalysts, and have their work focused with the purpose of making a measurable lasting impact.

Areas for emphasis for proposals are wide-ranging. Particular emphases will be: 1) student success, 2) faculty excellence, 3) high impact educational practices (e.g., undergraduate research, honors program, other experiential education such as service learning), 4) innovations in academic programs/curriculum, delivery modes and assessment, and 5) global reach. Other ideas and issues can be submitted and may qualify for the fellowship.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals

1. Relevance and significance in relation to the Mission and Goals of Montclair State University
2. Innovation in approach to the question, methods to be used
3. Feasibility of the study and its implementation components
4. Potential impact

Proposal Components

1. a statement of no more than 3 single-spaced pages that addresses the following. Please note that the proposal should not contain more than two (2) areas of interest:
 - a. Why are you interested in the opportunity? What topic do you want to explore and why is this of interest or important to you?
 - b. Why is this issue of importance to Montclair and its strategic direction?
 - c. Provide a brief description of a proposed project and its primary aims for an area of interest. What project outcomes and metrics for success are consistent with your proposal? Sketch out a timetable, necessary resources, and principal offices or individuals that would be helpful in supporting the project.
2. current CV
3. letter of support (no more than one page) co-signed by the applicant's chair/director and dean indicating enthusiasm for the candidate, project and support for the requested one-course per semester release.

Applications will be reviewed by the Provost and his designees, as well as external reviewers. Finalists will be invited to interviews.

A successful applicant shall:

- i. submit mid-term and final reports according to a template and/or written guidance from the Provost or designee;
- ii. give a presentation at the conclusion of the fellowship at an on-Campus venue determined by the Provost in consultation with the Fellow;
- iii. meet at least twice a semester with other Fellows (and sometimes national experts in the field) to discuss learning, progress, approaches, and ideas;
- iv. attend a national conference with direct relevance to the Fellow's project and/or to learning in higher education academic leadership.

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Note: Priority will be given to projects that hold the most potential for sustained positive impact to the University and are aligned with the strategic directions and plan of the University, which evolve given the rapidly shifting challenges facing public higher education.

HEAL Fellowship applications are available in Interfolio and are due by close of business on December 18 of each year of the agreement. Please request a template for the HEAL Fellowship Program from Jessica Montesdeoca. She can be reached at 973-655-4280 or montesdeocaje@montclair.edu.