



**The Superior Innovation Initiative: Request for Proposals  
Big Pitch Application Form – August 28, 2015**

**Instructions**

1. Complete this application for the Superior Innovation Initiative.
2. Please review your submission with your department chair or supervisor and obtain signature indicating review.
3. Send electronically your submission to Provost Faith Hensrud ([provost@uwsuper.edu](mailto:provost@uwsuper.edu)) by October 1, 2015.

Your proposal must include: project title and project plan, budget narrative, project timeline, and proposed budget form.

**The Superior Innovation Initiative Project Proposal**

Project Title:	Establishment of an Environmental Sciences/Studies Degree Program
Project Leader:	Deborah Augsburg and Mary Balcer
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Unit/Program/Department:	Social Inquiry
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<b>Project Plan:</b>	
In order to evaluate proposals in a fair and equitable manner, please write your plan according to the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please address the following topics in your proposal (500 word maximum)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide a brief description of the project proposal and emphasize why it is innovative.</li> <li>b. How will this proposal increase student enrollment (recruitment/retention) or increase campus revenue?</li> <li>c. When do you think you can reasonably launch this initiative?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	

d. How soon can the university see increases in enrollment or revenue?

This proposal would establish an interdisciplinary program in Environmental Science/Studies at UW-Superior. There is broad and long-standing interest on campus for a program of this type. Such a degree is in demand by both students and employers, and will prepare students to live and work in a world facing serious environmental challenges. We will build upon our unique assets at UW-Superior including the campus's research institutions, regional natural resources, and the academic strengths of the natural sciences, social sciences, legal studies, First Nations studies, writing, business, economics, and other programs.

The plan is to develop a 34-36 credit major and a 21 credit minor that build on current course offerings with 2-3 new courses and redesign of some existing courses. The major would contain several different concentrations, such as: Environmental Science (with more science courses), Environmental Studies (with more social science), and Environmental Studies and Public Policy (with sustainability management, policy and/or economics courses). This flexible major could be part of a double major or complement an existing minor from other departments at UWS.

While other campuses offer similar degrees, this program will be innovative because it will be based on our regional assets, particularly Lake Superior and the St. Louis River Estuary, and our institutional assets, including faculty engaged in environmentally-relevant studies and research scientists from the Lake Superior Research Institute (LSRI) and the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR). These assets can provide unique opportunities for experiential learning, including student exchange opportunities through the NERR system, and leverage state and federal grant funding.

This program would serve students with a range of backgrounds and disciplinary orientations, from traditional STEM students who want to add more holistic policy and social science training to students with a humanities/social science orientation, enabling them to add environmental science skills to address environmental problems. This offering will increase both student enrollment and retention by attracting and keeping students who are now looking elsewhere for environmental studies/sustainability programs. Potential target audiences include:

- Prospective students interested in a "hands on" natural resources/environmental experience at a small school that supports undergraduate research.
- Current students who transfer elsewhere to pursue an environmental degree or leave because they have not encountered a major that engages them.
- Students transferring from tribal and community colleges which offer Associates' degrees or significant coursework in Environmental Studies.
- Non-science majors interested in an environmental studies minor or double major.

- Science majors who want an environmental studies or policy minor or double major to complement their degree program.

A core group would identify curricular resources and needs by December 2015, and produce a proposal to System by spring 2016. With a projected summer 2016 approval by System, the Environmental Science/Studies program would be ready to enroll students by fall 2016. A marketing plan would be ready to launch once the major is formally approved, though appropriate press coverage of the development of the program could aid with retention of current students and increasing enrollment of late deciders.

- **Budget Narrative (limit to 250 words).**

The budget for this project is \$9,600. This includes a 3-credit reassignment or overload for one or more individuals to serve as the chair of a group of faculty and research staff members who are interested in developing the curriculum for the interdisciplinary major. The chair would take responsibility for drafting the final proposal and shepherding it through governance at UW-Superior and UW-System in accordance with the proposed timeline. Another three credits would be split between faculty engaged in course design or revision. Some of that work will necessarily be done as overload. We have also included a budget for materials for initial marketing of the new program to prospective students. Marketing design services will be provided free of charge by LSNERR.

**Project Timeline:**

(Prepare a timeline for project not to exceed 2015-2017 time frame)

*Be SMART about the Project Plan and Project Timeline.*

*Specific: Your objectives must be clear so that if someone reads them, s/he can interpret them.*

*Measurable: Is the objective measurable?*

*Achievable: Is the project objective reasonably achievable?*

*Realistic: Are the available resources sufficient to achieve the objective(s)?*

*Time-Specific: Specify when an objective will be attained (date/timeline). Set specific milestone dates.*

**By November 2015**

- Establish core group
- Designate project chair to take spring course release and supervise/shepherd proposal for program, minor, and major
- Review previously-gathered information and market research

**By December 2015**

- Determine nature and scope of the curriculum



- Determine which courses need to be created or revised, and assign 1-credit overload grants to accomplish this in spring 2016

**January 2016**

Begin course design and redesign process

File notice of intent to UW-System

**By March 2016**

Submit proposal for program to UWS governance

**By May 2016**

Submit proposal for program to UW-System

“Soft” marketing launch

**June–August 2016**

UW-System governance approval

Launch official marketing of program

**September 2016** – Major and minor available for enrollment

**Fall Semester 2016** – Admissions begins marketing the program

**Proposed Budget:**

	Item Description ( <i>person or item</i> )	“Hours and Rate” (if labor) or “Purchase	Line Total
1	3 credit course release		\$ 3,800
2	3 credits of overload grants		\$ 3,800
3	Marketing expense – placement (purchase)		\$ 2,000
4			\$
		<b>Total Request:</b>	<b>\$ 9,600</b>
1	Matching Funds (Source:		\$
	(add lines as necessary)		\$
		<b>Total Matching</b>	<b>\$</b>



Check which of the following might apply (check all that apply):

This project requires System review and approval.

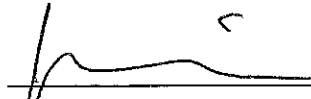
This project requires campus governance review and approval.

This project requires departmental review and approval.

Mary Balcer  
Print Name

Digitally signed by Mary  
Balcer  
Date: 2015.10.01 13:10:00  
-05'00'  
Mary Balcer  
Signature

Joel Sipress  
Print Name

  
Signature (Social Inquiry)

Submit project applications by 4:30 p.m. on October 1, 2015 to [provost@uwsuper.edu](mailto:provost@uwsuper.edu)