



## **Call for Proposals: 2023 Engaging Classrooms Space (re)Design Grant**

The Engaging Classrooms QEP Space (re)Design Committee invites proposals for the development of active and engaging learning spaces which will begin planning, construction, and renovation in the 2022-23 academic year, with (anticipated) completion by August 2023.

### **Introduction**

Across all disciplines and at all levels in higher education, studies consistently indicate effective use of active learning strategies in the learning environment improves student learning and success. Despite the evidence of its benefits, faculty nationwide are often reluctant to incorporate these teaching methods into their regular pedagogy. The barriers that faculty identify for preventing implementation are consistent: a lack guidance and time to make the needed changes and physical constraints.

To alleviate these barriers, the 2019-2024 Engaging Classrooms QEP (EC-QEP) at Sam Houston State University is focused on increasing the number of faculty using evidence-based active learning best practices, increasing the amount of time spent in active learning scenarios, and increasing student engagement, learning, and success, particularly in lower-level courses. One means to reach this goal is to remove the physical barriers to active learning in instructional spaces through classroom (re)design grants. The best means for the university to identify and renovate these spaces is to involve faculty who routinely teach in them and that are committed to integrating active learning strategies in their instruction.

This grant is an opportunity for faculty to share their vision of an active and engaging instructional space for instructors and students, both in their department and across the university, with a focus on transformation and student success. If awarded, the redesigned space will be added to the showcase of EC-QEP Spaces and is subject to Engaging Classrooms Observations for SACSCOC accreditation.

### **What are Active Learning Spaces?**

Active learning spaces are those that allow students to work with each other in various sizes of groups and that foster engagement through technologies that could include dry-erase boards, movable furniture, computers, and other digital media. Active learning can vary by discipline or lesson. Faculty are encouraged to think outside the constraints of existing instructional spaces on campus. Though overlap in the design and technology of each space may exist, faculty can also explore unique elements not currently found on campus. Active learning spaces include features to promote collaboration, encourage movement, empower choice, and engage learners in an instructional classroom space.

### **How Should I Plan my Proposal?**

A successful proposal requires careful consideration at multiple levels:

- Classroom / Learning Space
- Department
- College
- IT@Sam
- Facilities
- Budget

## Choosing a Classroom

Faculty submitting proposals should identify a classroom or learning space to redesign in the proposal. The proposal should include a thoughtful and comprehensive overview of the intended use of the space, how the redesign will foster active learning strategies, and the benefit to instructors and learners.

Though campus instructional spaces can be scheduled by all departments, many are housed inside a building traditionally associated with a department's home building and primarily used by that department. Because classrooms are scheduled up to nine months in advance, begin by discussing department scheduling needs and the impact that a space redesign would have on the department or other departments that typically utilize the space.

Similarly, keep in mind evidence-based design practices of successful active learning spaces, plan for approximately 25 square feet per student, and ADA, egress, and occupancy guidelines.

## Coordinating with the Department

Coordination with the department is necessary prior to submitting the proposal.

- First, work with the department chair to determine whether the proposed instructional space redesign is feasible with the department's scheduling needs. Next, work closely with the department chair and building manager to ensure the vision fits with the department's needs.
- The proposed instructional space must be removed from the course schedule for **Summer 2023**. Therefore, short-term classroom assignments will likely be affected throughout the department and/or building. The space would be back online in whole or part by **Fall 2023**; Spring 2024 at the latest if there are unexpected supply chain delays.
- Future classroom planning will be affected. The awarded lead faculty member's department will be expected to share the availability of the renovated space with faculty and instructional departments throughout the SHSU campus community. Specifically, the awarded faculty and their department will have first-rights on course scheduling in the space up to **65%** of the space's instructional time, as defined by THECB.
- The department may need to sustain the space once renovation is complete. For example, technology updates, supplies, repairs, etc., though some items will be covered by manufacturer warranties.

## Coordinating with the College

The academic dean should be involved in the process to assist with the following considerations.

- Ensuring that the proposal does not conflict with classroom or instructional space projects already planned by the college or neighboring departments.
- Planning for sustainability of the space should the department's budget fall short when repairing furniture, replacing supplies, maintaining technology, etc.

- Providing approval for the final proposal prior to submission to the EC-QEP Spaces (re)Design (EC-QEP SD) Committee for consideration.

### **Consultation with IT@Sam**

Digital technologies enrich active learning and should not be viewed as the sole means to an end. However, the EC-QEP SD Committee recognizes the fundamental needs for instructors to convey instruction in a variety of modalities. In designing the renovated instructional space, equipment may need to be replaced or new tools added, such as:

- Overhead multimedia projectors and screens
- LED panels in lieu of projectors/screens
- Field- or subject-specific technologies
- Peripheral devices (scanner, printer, document camera, instructor digitizer tablet and pen, etc.)
- Student computing devices (desktops, notebooks, or tablets)
- Distance learning / broadcast capabilities
- Infrastructure and network load for data, both wireless and wired

It is crucial for IT@Sam to be consulted during proposal development. To complete this portion:

- Contact the IT@Sam Service Desk and request a “room review with the A/V Team”
- Place the request at least 6 weeks before the proposal due date
- When meeting with the A/V Team
  - inform them that the request is for an EC-QEP SD proposal
  - include information on software requests that may be included in your proposal
- A/V Team will conduct a site survey and provide an official IT Project Proposal packet for inclusion in your EC-QEP SD proposal submission

### **Review with Facilities Management**

An assessment by Facilities Management must be conducted to investigate the feasibility of renovating the proposed classroom or instructional space. Similarly, Facilities will draft the estimated quote that must be included with the proposal. In their evaluation, Facilities will consider the following criterion:

- Building load capacity for electrical, HVAC, and life safety
- Suspect materials (asbestos, lead-based paint, mold, etc.)
- Effects on accessibility, temperature, and comfort that result from altering the space
- Potential restrictions on work hours due to noise, access around the space, etc.
- Other conditions that may be revealed in the evaluation process

### **Planning a Budget**

Each fiscal year of the 2019-2024 EC-QEP, the SD Committee may spend up to \$150,000 to support the renovation of classrooms / instructional spaces. The number of projects awarded will depend on the number of feasible proposals and the scope of each project. The goal is to approve two projects: a small project of up to \$50,000 and a larger project of up to \$100,000.

Though these funds seem significant, the costs associated with remodeling instructional spaces, purchasing equipment, especially technology, updating infrastructure, and identifying and abating harmful materials could exceed the total available budget. For planning purposes, faculty should



- Dec/Jan 2023 Applicant interviews with EC-QEP SD Committee, if needed
- Late January 2023 Grant recipients notified
- Feb/Mar 2023 Meeting(s) with EC-QEP SD Committee, Recipients, & SHSU Partners
- Mar/April/May 2023 Testing for harmful materials through Facilities Management  
Final review of renderings, budget, and anticipated timelines for construction, furnishings, infrastructure, IT/data and Audio/Video
- May/June 2023 Remediation, construction, and renovation begins
- August 2023 Classroom complete and online for Fall 2023 Semester

### **How do I Submit a Proposal?**

Faculty, as an individual or in a group containing at least one noncontingent (e.g., tenured or tenure-track) faculty member, are invited to submit proposals. The team could also include clinical, adjunct, and/or pool faculty, and/or instructional staff.

Signed applications are due by 11:59pm, December 4, 2022, via email to [engaging@shsu.edu](mailto:engaging@shsu.edu).

### **Proposal Evaluation**

Completed proposals will be reviewed by the EC-QEP SD Committee utilizing a rubric and notification of award will follow the schedule listed previously.

Committee members include:

Heather Adair, MLS, Newton Gresham Library, Chair

Traci Austin, PhD, College of Business Administration

Jeff Buro, A/V Technician IV, IT@Sam

Mary Holland, Campus Space Planner, Facilities Management

Ben Mitchell-Yellin, PhD, CHSS, QEP Associate Director for Development

Kathleen Ratajczak, PhD, College of Criminal Justice

Chase Young, PhD, CoE, QEP Associate Director for Assessment

# 2023 Engaging Classrooms QEP Space (re)Design Grant Supplement

## **Things to Consider**

- Evidence of flexibility in the space to promote a variety of active learning strategies
- Technology as a tool to support active learning, not the focus
- Visualize use of the space beyond one instructor's instructional habits and what will carry the space beyond the immediate future or present-day instructional trend
- Student movement and engagement in the space to support active learning is the priority
- Square footage per student in an active learning space: 20-30 ft<sup>2</sup>/student
- EC-QEP Spaces are subject to EC Classroom Observations

## **Proposal Requirements**

- Proposal must include preliminary, official quotes or proposals from IT@Sam, Facilities, and HBi
- Space must be off-line (not scheduled for classes or other use) during the renovation period
- No major changes may be made once the proposal is accepted unless recommended by the committee and/or campus partners in Facilities and/or IT to meet campus standards/budget

## **Awarded projects will have EC-QEP SD Committee Oversight**

- If the proposal is accepted, the EC-QEP SD Committee will coordinate all next-steps
- EC-QEP SD Committee will meet with recipient(s) before finalizing the scope of work & budget

## **Non-negotiables**

- EC-QEP SDC Committee will work with project manager to coordinate all facets
- Harmful materials testing / remediation
- Furniture – via HBi (hi / low bids)
- Technology – via IT@Sam (with an official IT Proposal packet)
- Lighting / Ceilings / HVAC / any other Infrastructure – as required by facilities
- ES Signage – in- & outside room
- Compliance with ADA, Occupancy, and fire and safety code requirements
- Carpet – low-pile commercial-grade
- Paint Colors – SW7661 (Reflection Grey) and either SW6774 (Freshwater) or SW9033 (Oh Pistachio)
- Window Coverings –1” Hunter Douglas metal blinds, #018 Satin Silver (if needed)

## **Use of Space**

- The grant recipient will have priority course scheduling in the space up to 65% of available time
- The remaining 35% will be available to eligible instructional faculty and staff for instructional use
- Unscheduled time will be open to ad hoc scheduling via the Engaging Spaces scheduling tool

## **Sustainability**

- Items (furnishings & technology) will be under limited manufacturer or installer warranty
- Defect or damage beyond warranty and/or replacement of aged items may be the responsibility of the grant recipient's department/division/college

## **Recommended Readings**

- [Engaging Classrooms QEP Website](#)
- [Designing Spaces for Active Learning](#)
- [Designing for How We Learn](#)
- [AL Spaces Support an Evolving Pedagogy](#)
- [Active Learning Classrooms IdeaBook](#)
- [IUPUI Classroom Design Focus Group](#)
- [4 Essentials for Learning Space Redesign](#)
- [Active Learning Lessons Learned](#)
- [2019 QEP: Active Learning @ SHSU](#)
- [Teaching in an AL Classroom](#)
- [About EC & Teaching Observations](#)