

Name	Monique Myers
Department	Communication
Typically, participants are awarded a course release in order to make time for their participation in the seminar. However, in select cases, we will consider awarding a stipend instead of a course release if the applicant's department can't cover the course release.	Course Release
Please indicate whether you will be requesting a course release or stipend if you're chosen to participate in the seminar:	
Has your chair sent an email to the Director of the CTL indicating his or her support of your application and willingness to find coverage for your course reduction (if you are requesting one)?	Yes
In which semester would you prefer to participate in the seminar?	Fall
Project Title	Experiential Learning and Leadership Pedagogy

**Project Proposal (500–750 words, including a rationale, project description, a discussion of the benefit to the Stonehill community, and your "community outreach plan") -- see full requirements on the CTL website.**

I have wanted to revamp my Leadership & Communication course for a while now. I first designed and taught this course while a visiting scholar at Emerson College (2002–2004) at both the graduate and undergraduate level. I integrated this course into the curriculum in the Communication department at Stonehill College in 2005. As this was originally designed as a 4-credit undergraduate or graduate course it had, and still has to a large extent, a top-heavy theory component. There is a lot of reading (3 texts) and much writing involved (anywhere between 50–75 pages) depending on the student. The first time I taught Leadership & Communication at Stonehill one of my students jokingly stated in an outraged voice, "I counted up how many pages I wrote for this class and it was 70! I almost wrote a book!"

I have integrated an experiential learning component in the course in the form of a leadership term project and presentation (see syllabus, attached). This component has ranged from wildly successful to desultory. In large part the difference reflects student motivation; however, I consider myself responsible for being able to motivate even the most disengaged student to reach for personal success and challenges. I would like to refine the course to be more engaging and experiential in nature without losing the rigor and challenge that it now possesses. I would like to do so in a more systematic way; for example, I would like to learn about successful experiential course components in similar Leadership & Communication courses at other institutions as well as become more knowledgeable about the literature in the field of Leadership pedagogy in general.

In 2005, I had the great benefit of participating in the forerunner of the TLSS-- then called the Davis seminar. As a fairly new faculty member in the Communication department, I inherited a course the senior faculty gladly passed down, "Communication Theory." The first time I taught it, even I was bored. Students dreaded this course and put it off for as long as possible. So I proposed, and fortunately was accepted, to revamp this capstone course for seniors during

the Davis Seminar. What I wanted to learn about in 2005 was how to invigorate the dreaded “theory” course to be more experiential and engaging for our students. My major goal for the seminar and the course was to learn about the growing pedagogy of service learning (now called Community-based Learning “CBL” at Stonehill). The outcome was nothing short of a radical makeover for the Communication Theory capstone course. Students engaged the CBL component enthusiastically, and their engagement invigorated the entire course. Their learning became relevant when they could apply, use, and analyze theories in real life communication interactions with clients and staff at the CBL sites. In turn, students brought their real life experience into class discussions. Communication Theory became a course students looked forward to instead of dreaded. It took a lot of time, learning and planning to accomplish this, and thanks to the course reduction and the structured and very supportive teaching and learning seminar, I was able to accomplish my goals to improve students’ learning and my teaching.

I would like to have a similar opportunity in Fall 2013 to the one that I had in Fall 2005, and I expect similar success in revamping the Leadership & Communication class. I want to learn about the latest trends in higher education regarding successful and engaging experiential course content and challenging projects in Leadership, and I know I will greatly benefit from feedback I will receive from my colleagues here while I consider how to restructure the course. I also would like to learn more about how to motivate the occasional unmotivated student. I truly believe in Stonehill’s mission “to produce graduates to think, act, and lead with courage toward the creation of a more just and compassionate world.” I want to learn more how I can achieve that mission for all of my students in my Leadership class. Although CBL is an option for my students, and a pedagogy I am comfortable with and support, I want to learn about and incorporate other experiential pedagogies for today’s 21st century student. Having a semester with the time and a structured seminar to work on my goals in revamping and reinvigorating my Leadership & Communication class could have the transformational impact that was so successful years ago in overhauling the Communication Theory Capstone course.

This opportunity to reinvigorate the Leadership & Communication class with cutting edge experiential teaching and learning styles will hopefully benefit not only the students in my classes, but Communication majors and the Stonehill community at large as well. As I will be teaching Leadership & Communication in Fall 2013, my students in that course that semester will have the benefit of the latest trends and successful pedagogy in Leadership. I will be able to “test drive” some of the techniques/project descriptions/ideas on my colleagues before employing them with Fall semester’s class. What works well will be incorporated into future classes. I will share my learning with colleagues in my department (as I did with CBL after I learned about it and adopted it in my capstone course; now Professors Leone and Paradise also both teach their capstone Mediated Theory courses with a CBL emphasis). I would be happy to share my learning at a Round Table/Teaching Squares type of workshop and/or a break out session on AD day. As a result of my Davis seminar experience, I wrote an article with the former director of Service-Learning at Stonehill, and I presented at several academic conferences. I intend to similarly share the results of this TLSS seminar, should I be select