



INSTRUCTIONAL
CONNECTIONS

Small Grant Details

Instructional Connections (IC) provides small research grant opportunities for faculty within our partner institutions to conduct research around the efficacy of the Academic Coaching Model in an accelerated course environment across a variety of disciplines.

Instructional Connections small grant opportunity will award grants up to \$15,000 and must be completed within a 12-18 month time frame. Consideration for submitting an ongoing longitudinal study (3 years or less) may be given if the proposal presented is sufficiently compelling to warrant that consideration.

Our goal is to advance the understanding of online learning and its relationship to coaching to continuously improve the learning experience for students. Therefore, we anticipate proposals to demonstrate a strong research design, and stringent analytic methods. In addition, proposals should present a clear and compelling explanation as to how the research proposed may be significant for educational practice. Each proposal should provide a conceptual framework and discuss related research, showing how it will contribute to understanding in ways far beyond the present study.

The call for proposals is always open. However, we award grant proposals **once a year during the month of July**. We are open to proposals that seek to research innovative approaches and outcomes (for example):

- **any salient areas** of research that involve the Academic Coaching Model such as:
 - student support
 - faculty support
 - assessment/grading
 - student outcomes
 - the influence of academic coaching on faculty productivity
 - student persistence
 - teaching practices
 - continuity of care for online students' with academic coaching
 - artificial intelligence use and the intersection of students, faculty and coaches.
 - online faculty with academic coaches - improve student learning

Additionally, preferred proposals are those which address **current trends** in online education.



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Eligibility Requirements

The eligibility requirements for submitting a research proposal are the following:

1. You must be a faculty member at an IC partner institution and currently teaching a course that uses IC Academic Coaches.
2. You must possess a desire to further scholarly research in the area(s) of student support, faculty support, assessment/grading, student engagement, student persistence, teaching practices or other salient areas of research that involve the Academic Coaching Model. Repeat items above.
3. You agree to seek publication and presentation opportunities and show proof of this action at the culmination of your research project [via email confirmations, or publication requests]. In the case of presentation opportunities, Instructional Connections retains the right to present with you in order to represent our services and field any questions with regard to our company and may assist with travel or conference fees if approved for presentation from conference committee(s).
4. You must not use this grant in conjunction with other grants or funds.

Proposal Evaluation

Reviewers will use the following criteria to evaluate proposals:

- Overall presentation of a concise, cohesive and compelling project proposal.
- Reviewers will evaluate the centrality of academic coaching in the research, the importance of the topic to its field, and the quality of the research question(s) and/or direction of inquiry.
- Reviewers will evaluate how other researchers have treated the same topic and how well the proposal responds to prior work and theory.
- Reviewers will evaluate the overall quality, sophistication, and appropriateness of the research design as well as its alignment with the research question(s) and/or conceptual framing.



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- Reviewers will comment on the potential of the investigator(s) to complete the study as described and share the results or other findings.
- Reviewers will assess whether the research will add to scholarly literature currently available on the topic.
- Reviewers will look for detailed information on the research method which will be employed to analyze or make meaning of the data. As well as look for the educational significance of the research, the research questions, and the proposed activities (data collection and analyses).
- Reviewers will review the budget and timeline for a proposed research project that fits within a 12-18 month timeline.

The Evaluation Process and Grant Expectations

Instructional Connections uses a peer review process for all eligible submissions. Each proposal will be reviewed by both external panel reviewers and internal staff. The review process for this program takes approximately 1-2 months from the deadline date. The review panel for this program is made up of scholars in the field of education research with expertise across many disciplines and methodological areas.

A rubric for proposal evaluation will be used. Each review panel member will submit their individual scores, which will then be averaged. Once the decision is made, IC will contact the grant awardee. Award decisions are conveyed within six weeks of the award committee completion of the review process.

Once the grant is disbursed to the institution, your time frame for the research begins. If an extension of time is required for completion of the research, you will need to submit a request in writing to IC at least three months prior to the end of the original date of completion, with a full explanation for why the extension is required.

Additionally, periodic requests for research updates on the progress of the research are required until completion. Once the grant project is completed, a formal research summary as well as one or more of the following: proof of academic journal submission for publication and/or, conference proceedings and/or submission for conference presentations are required for fulfillment of the grant award.