

# 2018 First Year Experience (FYE) grants

## Embedding transition pedagogies in the curriculum

### Application form

Project applications (expressions of interest) must be submitted on this form.  
Applications must be submitted by **10am Friday February 16th, 2018**.

Applications are to be submitted by email to Kathy Egea, UTS FYE coordinator at [Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au](mailto:Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au).

<b>Project applicant/team leader:</b>	
Name: Elaine Huber	Position: Senior Lecturer, Science
Contact email: Elaine.huber@uts.edu.au	Contact phone no: x1655
Faculty: Science	
<b>Other applicants if team application:</b>	
Name: Dr Yvonne Davila	Position: Lecturer, Science
Name: Dr Renee Dowse	Position: FYTE coordinator, Science
<b>Title of project:</b> Supporting and implementing Transition Pedagogies in FY and transition summer subjects with intensive mode delivery	
<b>Transition subjects involved:</b>	
65111 Chemistry 1	
37151 Introduction to Statistics	
65212 Chemistry 2	
91400 Human Anatomy and Physiology	
33116 Statistical Design and Analysis	
91123 Biocomplexity	
91314 General Microbiology	
<b>Endorsement by Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)</b>	
I ..... endorse this project application and confirm that embedding of the project outcomes in the subject will be supported by the Faculty.	
Signed	
Date:	
<b>Have you received one or more FYE Grants previously?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Reports from earlier grants will be taken into account.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

## Project outline (max 1-2 pages) (See guidelines for detail)

### A brief description of the aims and rationale for the project

As the student body at UTS diversifies, flexible study options are becoming increasingly important. In response to this and to the introduction of the new academic learning calendar, more summer subjects are being offered. There was an increase in summer subjects offered by the Faculty of Science from five previously to 25 in 2017. Of these, 13 subjects were first year subjects and six of these were delivered for the first time in an intensive (or block) mode over 3-4 weeks (instead of 12 weeks). Around 350 students enrolled into intensive mode Science subjects in 2017, and this number is expected to increase in summer 2018. However, due to the short lead-in time to prepare for summer subject delivery in 2017, there was limited time and resources available to support academics in their planning, many of whom were new to teaching altogether.

Intensive mode delivery (IMD) enables students to focus intensively and exclusively on a single subject; however, there are concerns that some subjects require more time for students to understand the concepts and master the skills (Daniel, 2000). Previous research has shown that less than half of surveyed faculty staff make adjustments when changing from a traditional to intensive mode delivery (Kretovics et al., 2005). A good practice guide for designing intensive mode subjects was developed by Male et al. (2017); however, this was not specific to first year or science disciplines. Results of an audit of undergraduate and postgraduate subjects offered in IMD at Australian universities in 2012 showed that the majority of IMD subjects were at postgraduate level (Harvey, Power & Wilson, 2016). Discipline biases were evident with more subjects offered in area of business, management and law (Harvey, Power & Wilson, 2016). We aim to investigate how the First Year Transition Pedagogy may be incorporated into IMD subjects in order to support our first year students through their summer subjects.

Our goal is to evaluate the 2017 first year summer subjects to identify which (if any) first year curriculum principles were considered, how they were implemented in the compressed mode to support first year students, and how new academic staff are being educated and supported in this important area. This will be achieved by interviewing or surveying the 2017 summer academic staff. With these insights we will draw together the existing good practices in conjunction from those in the literature and develop support resources aimed specifically at first year intensive mode subjects to ensure that our first year students are supported in their transition year through their summer session.

### First Year Curriculum Principles for Transition Pedagogy (TP) addressed by the project

***Diversity:** The first year curriculum embraces and supports the diversity and reality of students' backgrounds, previous experiences and preparedness for university.*

In Science, students come to study their first year subjects with a range of backgrounds. With the introduction of summer subjects, there are additional levels of diversity that link to preparedness and previous experiences:

1. Some students are repeating the subject and have prior knowledge of the content, while other students are new to the subject (either accelerating their study or attempting to stay on track)
2. Some are FY commencing students, while others are second/third year students taking the FY subject.

The proportion of repeating and 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year students taking FY IMD subjects is expected to be higher than the regular session. With this diversity in our summer subjects, academic staff may need to make adjustments to the curriculum, activities, support materials and delivery in order to support all of their students (Daniel, 2000).

***Engagement:** The first year curriculum incorporates pedagogies, teaching approaches and materials that engage students in their learning and facilitates interactions with peers and staff.*

Engaging students over summer intensive mode subjects can be a challenge, with some students expecting less time commitment compared to the 12 week session (reviewed by Kretovics et al., 2005). Exhaustion is a threat to student learning in intensive mode (Male et al., 2017). Therefore, the nature of the block mode delivery means the ways of engaging FY students and facilitating interactions may need modification.

By investigating these particular aspects of FY teaching, we want to understand the challenges of our FY students enrolled into summer IMD subjects. We aim to collect enrolment data to understand numbers of repeating students and diversity. Based on the data and information that we collect, we plan to prepare a short guide for new summer subject coordinators and teachers of FY subjects to help guide the redesign and delivery of subjects in intensive mode to ensure they incorporate the FY transition pedagogies.

#### **Other University/Faculty/Course/Subject priorities addressed (optional)**

Our work addresses teaching and learning relating to implementing the academic learning calendar and the faculty FYE strategy, as well as Casual Academic Staff development.

#### **Key project activities and timeline, including appropriate activities that engage the overall teaching team (if applicable)**

##### February to March

1. Write survey / interview questions
2. Ethics application
3. Contact 2017 summer subject coordinators to participate

##### April to June

4. Interview subject coordinators
5. Collate and analyse data (transcripts, SFS and enrolment data)
6. Conduct literature review
7. Triangulate findings and literature to develop guidelines with examples for FY summer coordinators – format to be determined, but will include a blog post on Futures and web page on Faculty Intranet
8. Run a focus group with selected students to get feedback on the resources

##### July to October

9. Disseminate guidelines (1-2 page) to summer coordinators (this activity to coincide with faculty T&L workshops and preparation for summer delivery)

##### November

10. Summer session begins

##### Post summer delivery

11. Potential follow up with academics to see how our resources were used to guide and redesign summer subject offerings in 2018.

#### **Your evaluation strategy ie how you will know that the project has been successful, with particular focus on the transition pedagogies that you have chosen, and how will you collect information to improve the outcomes?**

This is an evaluation project and as such, the data collected will be used to improve future intensive mode subjects by informing their design. Student engagement can be evaluated using SFS data shared by the subject coordinator. We will try to correlate this with qualitative data from subject coordinators. We are not trying to influence TPs in this project but rather develop guidelines for IMD summer, so evaluating the final resource – which will be a longer term activity – will take place in 2019.

**Attach a copy of your evaluation plan available here: <http://tiny.cc/evalplan>**

**Project Budget** (insert table or spreadsheet if appropriate) **and budget justification** (remember to add on-costs – approximately 16%) Salary rates- see guidelines for comments.

Activity item	Hours	Rate	Total
3-7	40	Casual academic, other academic activity with PhD - ~\$64.56 per hour (\$55.18 + 17% oncosts, Nov 17 rate). The RA has experience in interviewing and data analyses relevant to this project.	\$2583
8		Focus group (1 hr) incentives for 6 students * \$50 movie voucher = \$300.	\$300
1,2,7 and 9	70	In-kind from Faculty for learning designers time	0
		<b>Total requested</b>	<b>\$2883</b>

### References

- Daniel, EL. (2000). A review of time-shortened courses across disciplines. *College Student Journal*, 34(2), 298- 308.
- Harvey, M, Power, M, Wilson, M. (2017). A review of intensive mode of delivery and science subjects in Australian universities. *Journal of Biological Education*, 51(3), 315–325.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00219266.2016.1217912>
- Kretovics, MA, Crowe, AR, Hyun, E. (2005) A Study of Faculty Perceptions of Summer Compressed Course Teaching. *Innovative Higher Education*, 30(1), 37-41.
- Male, S, Baillie, C, Hancock, P, Leggoe, J, MacNish, C, Crispin, S. (2017) Intensive mode teaching good practice report. *Proceedings of STARS Students Transitions Achievements Retention & Success conference 2017, Adelaide, 2-5 July, 2016*. Paper 03C.