



Fostering Inclusivity and Respect in Science Together

HHMI Inclusive Excellence Initiative at Davidson College

FIRST RATE: Resources and Time for Exploration

HHMI's Inclusive Excellence initiative is a renewed call for change to "pursue daring shifts toward new institutional paradigms that embrace inclusion as an immutable indicator of excellence in undergraduate science education." FIRST is a five-year collaboration with strong emphasis on faculty development to enhance inclusion in STEM at Davidson. As one element, FIRST RATE will support individual STEM faculty members to infuse inclusive pedagogies throughout all levels and disciplines of Davidson's STEM curriculum. Specifically, **FIRST RATE provides time and support for each of Davidson's STEM faculty members to expand their knowledge of diversity, inclusivity, equity, and social justice to implement specific interventions, strategies, and/or topics in new and existing STEM courses.**

A 2017 self-study of Davidson STEM faculty members demonstrated that they widely and strongly hold personal commitments to become even more inclusive and effective in their teaching and mentoring. This self-study also revealed that lack of time, fear of failure, and limited opportunities for collaboration posed challenges that impede STEM faculty capacities to expand inclusive pedagogies. In response, FIRST RATE provides full-time, permanent, continuing Davidson STEM (BIO, CHE, ENV, MAT, PHY) faculty members with a course release to redirect 20% of an annual teaching load toward focused and supported exploration and piloting of inclusive strategies that can be assessed and sustained long thereafter. With assistance from the FIRST Leadership Team, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the FIRST Fellow, research literature, consultants, and/or colleagues, each STEM faculty member will enhance inclusivity in their course(s) via ways that they determine are most appropriate for their specific needs, topics, students, and interests. Each FIRST RATE participant will:

- devote ≥ 8 hours/week during the semester of the course release to design and conduct a professional development project that will sustainably increase their capacity to offer more inclusive STEM course(s).
- participate in bi-weekly cohort meetings that use strategies of successful writing groups to generate community, support, and accountability (during the semester of the course release)
- develop a sustainable plan of inclusive strategies to be deployed and assessed in their current/future courses (due at the end of the course release semester)
- provide annual brief written updates sharing ongoing development and outcomes (due early each summer)
- share outcomes of their experiences adopting inclusive strategies via least one presentation or publication for colleagues at Davidson and/or another appropriate professional community (deadline negotiable)

FIRST RATE participants meeting the above commitments are eligible for **\$2,000 in professional development funds** to support their continued efforts toward inclusive efforts that support STEM success for all students.

FIRST RATE will enhance inclusivity throughout all levels and disciplines of Davidson's STEM curriculum by:

- improving **existing STEM courses** offered throughout Davidson's Natural Science & Math (NSM) curricula
- creating **new STEM Justice, Equality, & Community (JEC) courses** that can be offered regularly wherein scientific knowledge and methods are applied to challenges of diversity, equity, and justice (e.g., quality of life, environmental contamination, use of big data, genetic enhancement, sustainable energy, etc.).
- stimulating **new STEM first-year group investigation courses** providing early research experiences to attract, support, and retain talented students in STEM via mentored original research within cohort course structures

Application Steps for Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 FIRST RATE Cohorts

- Questions welcome: • contact any member of the FIRST Leadership Team: Barbara Lom (director), Hilton Kelly, Mario Belloni, Lauren Stutts, Brent Maher, & Byron McCrae for more information
- Step 1 by 11.01.18 • deadline for applicants to express **intention to apply** to FIRST RATE's Fall 19 and/or Spring 20 cohorts by sending a brief email to balom@davidson.edu and copying their chair
- Step 2 by 11.20.18 • applicants **discuss** potential course release timing/options with chairs (to answer questions 13-14 below)
- Step 3 by 12.01.18 • applicants **submit short answers** to the 14 questions* below by email to balom@davidson.edu + chair(s)
- Step 4 by 12.20.18 • FIRST leadership team communicates **decisions** and feedback to applicants and their chairs

*STEP 3 Application Questions for FIRST RATE Cohorts of Fall 2019 and Spring 2020:

Answers to each question may be brief (1-4 sentences). Submit by 12.01.18 to balom@davidson.edu + chair(s)

1. Generally describe what and how you hope to expand your understandings of belonging, community, diversity, inclusivity, equity, and/or social justice by participating in a FIRST RATE course release and cohort in Fall 2019 or Spring 2020.
2. Indicate which type (a, b, or c) of FIRST RATE project you are proposing including information when you will offer the course(s):
 - a. to improve my *existing STEM* course(s) – list the course(s) and forecast how often you expect to teach the course(s) in coming years
 - b. to develop and regularly offer a *STEM JEC* course - provide a working title, draft description, and forecast offering frequency
 - c. to develop and regularly offer a *first-year group investigation STEM* course - provide a working title, draft description, and forecast how often you expect to offer the course in the coming years
3. Describe your preliminary thoughts on meaningful actions and goals for your individual FIRST RATE project. What specifically will this course release, cohort, and support now allow you to do (or do differently) with regard to inclusivity in your course(s)?
4. How will your FIRST RATE project strive to build community and/or foster belonging in STEM for your students?
5. During the semester of the course release how will you protect your released time to accomplish this work?
6. Describe briefly how interacting regularly with a cohort of other FIRST RATE faculty members will help you achieve your goals and what strengths you can bring to a FIRST RATE cohort.
7. Describe your preliminary ideas for identifying and learning from experts/resources who can expand and/or bring new dimensions of diversity to your understandings of inclusion, equity, and/or social justice.
8. How will you know if your FIRST RATE project is successful (or not) upon implementation in your course(s)? Describe preliminary thoughts on how you will assess on your project's progress (e.g., belongingness, growth mindset, class observations, retention, learning, etc.).
9. Describe ways FIRST might provide information, support, and/or resources to increase your potential for success in this project.
10. Describe how a course release and cohort semester will have a sustained, lasting impact on your future teaching and/or course(s).
11. Describe your preliminary thoughts regarding how you might eventually disseminate what you learn from your FIRST RATE project with colleagues at and/or beyond Davidson.
12. Describe preliminary thoughts on how the \$2K professional development funds might facilitate your future work on STEM inclusivity.
13. Describe your understandings from discussions with your chair regarding:
 - a. From which course(s) can you be most reasonably released?
 - b. Will your department seek to hire an adjunct/visitor to cover your release?
 - c. If your course will not be offered in 19-20, does its absence minimize disruption to your students/curriculum?
14. Describe your availability to participate in a FIRST RATE cohort in Fall 19 and Spring 20 using the choices below:
 - a. I can participate in either the Fall 2019 or the Spring 2020 cohort. (Many thanks for your flexibility.)
 - b. I can participate in the Fall 2019 cohort only because _____.
 - c. I prefer to participate in the Fall 2019 cohort because _____, but can participate in the Spring 2020 cohort if needed.
 - d. I can participate in the Spring 2020 cohort only because _____.
 - e. I prefer to participate in the Spring 2020 cohort because _____, but can participate in the Fall 2019 cohort work if needed.
 - f. As indicated above, I prefer a 19-20 cohort, but if needed will consider a subsequent cohort (F20, S21, F21, S22, F22, S23).
 - g. Other – please explain.