

Missouri S&T CAFE Active Learning Mini-Grants 2026 Request for Proposals (RFP)

Program Overview:

Active learning is a learner-centered instructional approach that requires students to actively engage with course material rather than passively listen to lectures. Research shows that active learning increases student engagement, improves learning outcomes, and promotes the development of higher-order thinking skills.

Active learning strategies may include discussions, problem-solving activities, case studies, role-playing, simulations, collaborative projects, and other interactive teaching methods. These approaches help students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills that prepare them for success in their academic and professional careers.

The **Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence (CAFE)** invites proposals for the **2026 Active Learning Mini-Grant Program**. These grants are designed to support Missouri S&T faculty in designing, implementing, and evaluating active learning strategies in credit-bearing courses.

Funding and Timeline:

CAFE's Active Learning Mini-Grants provide support to faculty members, faculty teams, or academic departments in developing and implementing active learning initiatives. Funding may be used to support course design/redesign, classroom resources, instructional technology, student assistants, or assessment activities that promote active learning. Funding may **not** be used for classroom furniture, field trips, or food. All funded projects must be completed by **June 15, 2027**.

Brief midpoint and final reports summarizing project outcomes, project spending, and lessons learned are required.

Types of Supported Projects:

Proposals may include, but are not limited to, the following types of initiatives.

1. Active Learning Resources and Materials

Funding may be requested for supplies or resources that support hands-on or collaborative learning activities in the classroom. Examples include:

- Classroom activity kits or building materials for hands-on learning
- Published case studies or scenario-based learning materials
- Concept-mapping or collaborative learning tools
- Software that allows students to manipulate datasets or generate visualizations
- Whiteboard mounted on side walls or moveable white boards

2. Flipped or Blended Course Development

Faculty may request support to redesign portions of a course using a flipped or blended format. This may include flipping individual lectures, designating one day per week for active learning (e.g., “Flipped Fridays”), or redesigning an entire course. CAFE can provide modest funding and instructional design support for course redesign.

Note: Courses that are more than 25% flipped must be scheduled as blended courses in the university system and must receive approval from the department chair.

3. Development and Assessment of Active Learning

Faculty may also propose projects that evaluate the impact of active learning strategies on student engagement and learning outcomes.

CAFE can provide support (both monetary and non-monetary) for:

- Statistical design of experiments
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications
- Data collection and analysis
- Dissemination of results

Project outcomes may be shared through presentations at S&T’s **Instructional Teaching and Learning Conference (ITLC)**, professional conferences, and/or scholarly publications.

Eligibility:

Full-time Missouri S&T faculty members may apply individually or as part of a faculty team. Departments may also submit proposals that support multiple courses or instructors. All faculty members involved in funded projects are expected to attend CAFE’s ALICE Active Learning Workshop. Adjunct faculty members or GTAs can be listed as project contributors but can’t serve as PI or co-PI. You are welcome to ask questions before applying at cafe.mst.edu.

Active Learning in Classroom Environments (ALICE) Workshop:

This new hands-on workshop will provide an overview of Active Learning (AL) and several techniques demonstrations. Active Learning resources and an S&T Active Learning Handbook, with over 30 techniques explained, will be provided to all attendees. The workshop will be offered multiple times starting at the end of April and will last approximately two hours. More details will be coming soon.

Proposal Requirements

1. Project Description (Maximum 5 pages)

The proposal narrative should include:

- Project summary
- Objectives and goals
- Description of the active learning strategy or strategies
- Implementation methodology
- Expected outcomes
- Assessment plan
- Plans for dissemination (if applicable)

2. Course Information

Describe the course or courses that will be impacted, including:

- Course number and title
- Estimated number of students affected each semester
- Frequency of course offerings
- Role of the course within the relevant degree program(s) (e.g., prerequisite)

3. Investigator Information

Provide a brief biography for each principal investigator or team member, highlighting relevant experience in teaching or educational innovation. **Limit: 1/2 page per investigator**

4. Letter of Support

Include a letter from the Department Chair or Dean confirming:

- Support for the proposed project
- Alignment with departmental priorities
- Commitment to support the instructor(s) and course(s) through teaching assignments, etc.

5. Budget and Timeline (Maximum 1 page)

Provide a preliminary budget and project timeline. Faculty compensation is limited to **\$7,000 per faculty member**. Hiring student workers is permitted if appropriately justified.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight
Financial justification & return on investment	30%
Feasibility and clarity of the proposed project	30%
Assessment plan and potential educational impact	30%
Departmental endorsement and support	10%

Submission Deadline and Review Process:

Proposals will be reviewed on a **rolling basis beginning June 1, 2026**, and will continue until all available funds have been awarded.

Contact Information:

For questions or proposal submissions, please contact:

Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence (CAFE)

Missouri University of Science and Technology

Email: cafe@mst.edu