

Call for Faculty Proposals COLS 108 The College Experience – Fall 2026 & Spring 2027

The College Experience (COLS 108) is a 1-credit, required general education course for all new first-year students at MSUB. Students who successfully complete the course will be able to apply foundational study skills across their coursework and articulate the role of general education in their academic journey. The official learning outcomes for the course are as follows:

1. Utilize interconnected academic disciplines to collaborate and solve diverse problems.
2. Explain the value of MSUB's general education program (respect diversity, solve problems, think critically, and communicate effectively.
3. Demonstrate communication techniques for civic engagement.
4. Employ campus resources and services to support your academic success.

These outcomes will be developed through faculty-designed COLS 108 sections organized around themes that emphasize intellectual curiosity, disciplinary perspectives, and the cultivation of a supportive community of learners.

We invite faculty from across all five MSUB colleges to submit proposals to teach COLS 108 beginning in Fall 2026 and Spring 2027, with priority given to faculty who are also interested in continuing to teach the course into Fall 2027 and Spring 2028. Our goal is to build a stable, engaged group of instructors who can help sustain and strengthen the first-year experience over multiple years.

Teaching Commitment

Faculty may propose to teach **1, 2, or 3 credits of COLS 108 per semester**.

Preference will be given to faculty willing to teach **2–3 credits across Fall 2026 and Spring 2027**.

Priority consideration will be given to faculty who are also willing to teach during **Fall 2027 and Spring 2028**, supporting continuity for students and program stability.

Scheduling & Chair Approval

To support student access and minimize conflicts with required first-year coursework:

- Faculty must work with their department chair to identify three prioritized meeting times *per credit* taught.

- These times must be selected using the student-centered scheduling heat maps (below), to avoid overlapping with first-year required and general education courses.

Faculty Support & Compensation

- Overload compensation is available through the Provost's Office, when required.
- Faculty must discuss load and compensation considerations with their department chair prior to submitting a proposal.

Required Faculty Participation

To support consistency and shared learning across sections, instructors are expected to participate in the following:

- Pre-semester 2-hour faculty workshop
- Mid-semester 1-hour check-in workshop
- End-of-semester 1-hour wrap-up session

These sessions provide space to share strategies, address challenges, and collaboratively improve the course experience for students.

Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by the COLS 108 committee with attention to:

- clarity and accessibility of the proposed course theme
- alignment with COLS learning goals
- willingness to contribute to program continuity over multiple semesters
- representation across academic units

Additional calls will be issued in future semesters as needed.

For any questions regarding this application, please contact Matt Queen

406-657-2027 matt.queen1@msubillings.edu

Proposal Application

Proposed COLS 108 section title:

Please reference the course outcomes as you answer the following:

1. Utilize interconnected academic disciplines to collaborate and solve diverse problems.
2. Explain the value of MSUB's general education program (respect diversity, solve problems, think critically, and communicate effectively.
3. Demonstrate communication techniques for civic engagement.
4. Employ campus resources and services to support your academic success.

Question 1: Course Theme

Describe the central theme of your proposed COLS 108 section, and how it will reflect your disciplinary perspective or intellectual interests.

Question 2: Educational Purpose

How will this course theme help students explore the purpose of general education and develop foundational study skills within a supportive community of learners?

Question 3: Resources

Please identify the institutional resources required for your proposed section(s) (e.g., room type, audiovisual equipment, instructional materials) and indicate whether these resources are already available or would need to be secured.

Scheduling

Work with your chair to determine which course meeting times you are available to teach. Please indicate your preferred times using the course time heat map below. **Please prioritize fall availability**, as spring offerings will be limited.

| Fall | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| Credit 1 | Credit 2 | Credit 3 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| Spring | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| Credit 1 | Credit 2 | Credit 3 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Course Time Heat Map

| Days | Time | Comment on need |
|------|-------------------------------|--|
| MWF | 8:10 - 9:10 | Not many classes taught during this time |
| MWF | 9:20 – 10:20 | This is also when there are a majority of classes across campus so not an optimal time |
| MWF | 10:30 – 11:30 | |
| MWF | 11:40 -12:40 | Top slot in terms of fitting into student schedules on MWF |
| MWF | 12:50-1:50 | Top slot in terms of fitting into student schedules on MWF (Fridays in particular could catch some students who have MW classes) |
| MWF | 2:00-3:00 3:00 – 4:00 | This time slot will potentially miss student athletes and some students who need to work in the afternoons, but most classes are not scheduled at these times. Friday could catch some students in particular who have MW classes. |
| TR | 9:10 – 10:10 10:30 – 11:30 | No COLS 108 sections to be offered at this time |
| TR | 12:40 – 1:40 | Top Slot for Tuesday and Thursday |
| TR | 2:00 – 3:00 3:00 – 4:00 | This time slot potentially misses student athletes and some students who need to work in the afternoons, but most classes are not scheduled at these times. |

If you have suggested an alternative time, please briefly describe the proposed student need for that time slot here:

I am willing and available to teach the same schedule fall and spring 26/27:

Yes

No

Applicant and chair signature

COLS 108 is a priority initiative supporting first-year success and student retention at MSUB. Faculty participation requires coordination among instructors, department chairs, and the Provost's Office to ensure scheduling, staffing, and program continuity. Signatures below confirm a shared commitment to this collaborative effort and to providing a meaningful first-year experience for all incoming students.

Applicant's signature:

Date_____

Chair's signature:

Date_____