UMassAmherst | Center for Teaching & Learning

TIDE AMBASSADORS FELLOWSHIP Application Form
Teaching for Inclusiveness, Diversity & Equity

Part 1: Program Information & Application Guidelines

Program Overview

The Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) welcomes applications from full-time faculty for the 2026-2027 TIDE Ambassadors fellowship program. This initiative enhances student learning and academic success across cultural, social, and learning differences through a strength-based, inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

Core Program Elements

- Experiential learning
- Collaborative engagement
- Reflective practice
- Equity-centered pedagogy
- Leadership development

TIDE Ambassadors develop enhanced teaching practices and create projects that contribute to campus-wide dialogue on inclusive education. Fellows continue supporting University diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts beyond their fellowship year through departmental work and CTL programming support.

This program directly supports the UMass Diversity Strategic Plan and recognizes faculty as vital catalysts for creating an inclusive, equitable college experience for all students.

Program Goals

Fellows participate in a year-long dynamic learning community that offers:

1. Sustained peer engagement and facilitated support
2. Development of inclusive teaching expertise
3. Leadership development through the Ambassador role to share knowledge with the broader UMass community

During the fellowship, participants will:

- Participate in experiential learning activities
- Engage in reflective practices and share teaching experiences
- Study relevant pedagogical scholarship and theoretical frameworks
- Apply learning to course design and teaching
- Develop a TIDE Ambassadors project
- Set ongoing professional development goals

UMassAmherst | Center for Teaching & Learning

Fellowship Components and Schedule

May 2026 Intensive Institute

- Dates: FR May 22, WE May 27, and FR May 29, 2026 Time: 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM daily (lunch will be provided)
- Format: In-person, on-campus (mandatory attendance)
- Additional work: Preparatory readings and learning activities through Canvas fellowship site

Monthly Cohort Meetings

- Schedule: Selected Fridays of each month Time: 9:30AM – 11:30AM
- Fall 2026: August 28, September 18, October 16, November 20, December 11, 2026 (Fall 2026)
- Spring 2027: February 19, March 12, April 9, May 7 and May 13, 2027
- Format: In-person, on-campus (mandatory attendance)
- Additional work: Preparatory readings and learning activities through Canvas fellowship site

Additional Components

- January 2027 Institute: TU, Jan 26 1:00PM – 3:00PM and WE, Jan 27 1:00PM – 3:00PM
- May 2027: Two half-day concluding sessions (see above)
- Ambassador project development
- Three program feedback surveys

NOTE: If necessary, the cohort meeting dates can be adjusted through group consensus.

Compensation

Fellows receive $1,500 in GOF funds for professional development, distributed in two installments:

- First installment: June 2026 (upon completion of 3-day May Institute)
- Second installment: June 2027 (upon program completion)

Eligibility Requirements

Candidates must meet the following criteria:

1. Eligible positions include: tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, and non-tenure track faculty. Must have completed at least two semesters of teaching at UMass Amherst and demonstrate a substantial commitment to teaching on our campus.
2. Demonstrate strong interest in inclusive and equity-focused teaching practices
3. Show potential for leadership and positive departmental/institutional impact

Note: Previous experience with diversity initiatives is valuable but not required.

How to Apply

Applications are due by Friday, February 27, 2026, and should be **submitted as a single document (maximum three pages) to Kirsten Helmer at khelmer@umass.edu.** Your application should address four key areas: (1) your motivation for applying to the program; (2) your assessment of personal strengths and areas for growth in creating inclusive learning environments; (3) your commitments for engaging in collaborative learning within the TIDE community; and (4) your aspirations for taking on a leadership role as a TIDE Ambassador who will leverage the fellowship experience as an institutional change agent.

UMassAmherst | Center for Teaching & Learning

CTL staff will review all applications with the goal of selecting 10 fellows by the end of March 2026, representing diverse experiences and departments. Semi-finalists may be invited for interviews. Questions about the program or application process can be directed to Kirsten Helmer at khelmer@umass.edu.

TIDE AMBASSADORS FELLOWSHIP Application Form
Teaching for Inclusiveness, Diversity & Equity

Submission Deadline: Friday, February 27, 2026
Submit to: khelmer@umass.edu
Format: Single document, not exceeding three pages

Part 2: Application Form (to be completed by applicant)

_____ _____
Name of Applicant Department

_____ _____
Rank and Role(s) Email

_____
Courses that you will teach during the AY 2025- 2026 (Course titles and #)

Personal Reflection Questions

Please respond thoughtfully to each of the four section below, considering the guiding questions. Your complete response should not exceed 3 single-spaced pages.

1. Journey, Experience, and Aspirations

What brings you to the TIDE Ambassadors program at this moment in your career? In your response, please reflect on:

- What you hope to gain from this intensive fellowship experience
- Key experiences or realizations that have shaped your interest in inclusive teaching
- Professional development programs, training, or workshops that have influenced your approach to inclusive teaching
- Diversity-related work (committees, projects, mentoring, etc.) you've undertaken and its impact on your teaching

2. Growth and Development

As you consider your development as an educator, how would you assess your current strengths and areas for growth in creating inclusive learning environments? Please discuss:

- Aspects of inclusive teaching that you already implementing

- Areas where you face challenges or uncertainty
- Skills or knowledge you most want to develop
- How you typically approach your own learning in challenging areas
- How your previous training and experience inform your understanding of where you need to grow

3. Community and Collaboration

The TIDE program emphasizes peer learning and community building. How do you envision both contributing to and learning from this community? Consider:

- Unique perspectives or experiences you would bring to the fellowship cohort
- What you hope to learn from colleagues with different backgrounds and approaches
- How you typically engage in collaborative learning environments

4. Becoming a Change Agent

Looking beyond the fellowship year, how do you hope to leverage this experience to create lasting impact by taking on a leadership role as a TIDE Ambassador and change agent on our campus? Reflect on:

- Changes you hope to make in your own teaching practice
- Ways you might influence your department or broader institution
- How you would sustain and share what you learn
- Your vision for contributing to a more inclusive campus community
- How this fellowship would build upon your previous diversity and inclusion work

Please email your application to khelmer@umass.edu no later than Friday, February 27, 2026.