

COUNCIL ON TEACHING
Follow-Up Report for
Teaching in Higher Education Conference Award

Name: Brian Lai

Department/Unit: Political Science

Conference Attended: AAC&U

Date of Conference: January 22-24, 2025

Award Amount: \$1000

Briefly summarize how your attendance at the conference enhanced your professional development and allowed you to gain a better understanding of teaching in your discipline or trends in higher education in general.

While at the conference, I attended panels on experiential learning, civic engagement initiatives, and credentialing. These panels helped me to better understand the ways in which other institutions are implementing civic engagement initiatives in a variety of classroom and outside the classroom settings. They also helped me think through how to better embed different kinds of experiential learning opportunities into my classes. Finally, the panels in the status of credentialing, including the technology, institutional cooperation, pilots, industry connections, and implications helped me to understand the ways in which students can start to prepare for this kind of system to help them better track and present their skills and experiences to employers. I am following the status of the pilots as they involve significant coordination between the AAC&U, the Association of Registrars, EduTech, and other organizations.

How have you been able to share what you learned about teaching with your department, the University of Iowa, and/or beyond?

I have talked with our DUS about the experiential learning and civic engagement discussions and we are working to implement some of those in a class on civic engagement that we have been offering. I have also talked and am going to work with David Supp-Montgomerie, who is leading the University's efforts on civic dialogue. I have also talked about the experiential learning discussions and credentialing with a committee I was on this past semester on expanding and evaluating High Impact Practices for students at the University of Iowa. I hope to continue using what I have learned in my classes, in discussions with other faculty, and in discussions with a variety of campus initiatives.