SAMPLE
NARRATIVE
TEXT
STATEMENT OF NEED: SAMPLE TEXT

A study at 10 community colleges across the US revealed that more than 50% of 4,000 community college students surveyed were experiencing a current or recent mental health condition, with 11% experiencing suicidal ideation. These findings are in line with a recent Wellness Center survey of 449 LaGuardia students. Half of those surveyed had experienced depressive symptoms within the past 12 months: 12% experienced suicidal ideation, 5% engaged in intentional self-harm, and 10% experienced feelings of shame surrounding mental health treatment.

Over the past five years, the Wellness Center has seen a steady increase of suicidal ideations and prior mental health history among students on LaGuardia campus. These students also confirm (1) trouble at home; (2) social struggles; (3) relationship break-ups; (4) difficulties at school; and (5) stress in choosing a career. In 2017-18, the Wellness Center’s seven personal counselors had 2,577 student contacts, which resulted in the diagnosis of 214 students in a mental health crisis with 14 hospitalizations. LaGuardia has a crisis response plan and a medical withdrawal policy to aid such students. However, we need to do more to expand and strengthen the “safety net” for those who are at risk for mental health-related crises.
ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND- EXAMPLE #1: CONTEXTUALIZED FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

LaGuardia Community College opened in 1971 in the former Ford Instrument Company factory building in Long Island City. LaGuardia was an early pioneer in the development of learning communities, successfully merging credit-bearing academic content and non-credit remediation. Over the past 47 years, LaGuardia has expanded its footprint in Western Queens, and today it educates approximately 20,000 degree students and 30,000 continuing education students per year.

Our Business Services Programs have helped more than 18,800 small businesses grow and have created close to 8,000 jobs in little more than a decade. In 2014, we launched the College and Career Pathways Institute to provide professional development that helps educators prepare adults and out-of-school youth to get back on track to college and careers through innovative contextualized and integrated instructional strategies. LaGuardia was selected by Goldman Sachs as the first community college in the country to host its 10,000 Small Businesses initiative. The program has since helped small businesses in our community create new jobs, secure loans, and negotiate new contracts.
LaGuardia Community College’s mission is “to educate and graduate one of the most diverse student populations in the country to become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens who help to shape a rapidly evolving society.” As of the Fall of 2012, Liberal Arts is our largest major, which is interdisciplinary from its initial structuring of learning communities in the first year to the capstone (“Humanism, Science, and Technology”) in the final year, and stresses the importance of the humanities as the foundation of a liberal education. In 2014 and 2017, LaGuardia was awarded “Humanities Initiatives” grants totaling almost $200,000 by the NEH to examine the Liberal Arts curriculum.

The relevance of our *Summer Institute on Incarceration and the Humanities* to important institutional commitments is significant. For example, the most recent edition of our in-house publication *In Transit* focused on connections between incarceration and LaGuardia’s mission. As well, there are a number of projects, programs, and courses that specifically engage with the Institute’s key themes of incarceration, rehabilitation, and education. Included in these efforts are LaGuardia’s Prison to College Initiative, our volunteer teaching at Queensboro Correctional Facility, as well as our annual Criminal Justice Conference. We offer a wide range of majors, including the popular Criminal Justice major which over 1,200 students are currently pursuing. In addition to our impressive suite of Criminal Justice courses, we have classes throughout the humanities that address the key themes of our proposal, including the Philosophy of Law, Crime and Justice in Urban Society, and Law and Human Rights in America.
METHODOLOGY/IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: SAMPLE TEXT

(excerpt from NEH proposal)

(2) Content and design. The core grant activities of our “Summer Institute on Incarceration and the Humanities” will take place during two intensive summer institutes, which will bring together faculty fellows from LaGuardia with visiting scholars whose work adopts a humanistic approach to the subject of incarceration. Over the course of the two year grant, there will be 18 faculty fellows (8-10 per year) and six visiting speakers who will participate in the summer institutes.

In the semester before the grant begins, faculty members will apply to be fellows via our Center for Teaching and Learning. Applications will be reviewed and 8-10 faculty will be selected to participate based upon their scholarly interests, the courses they teach, and any relevant co-curricular work they do. Prior to the weeklong institute, the selected fellows will come together for a one-day orientation session in early April. During this session, we will review the structure of the institute, discuss key topics and distribute readings, and the fellows will sign-up to present on the academic or pedagogical work that they will create in connection with the institute. In mid-May they will share either a scholarly abstract or a proposal for a classroom assignment, which will allow time for the fellows to review each other’s work and develop feedback that we will share during the institute’s afternoon workshops.

In June of each year, the fellows will meet for five days from 10am until 4pm. The intensive nature of the schedule, along with the fact that fellows will not be teaching during the institute, means that we will be able to dive deeply into the materials. As participants will have already prepared responses to the readings and shared their work with each other prior to the
institute, we will be primed for high quality discussions about both. Days will be split into two sessions: morning sessions will be dedicated to discussions about the readings, presentations by (and discussions with) invited speakers, and off-site visits; afternoons will provide space for us to critique each other’s work and make revisions. These afternoon workshops will be thematically organized such that our morning discussions provide a strong theoretical foundation for critical engagement.

Each institute will be organized around a set of important topics in the humanities study of incarceration. The theme of the first year’s institute is *Incarceration as Punishment*. Our readings, speakers, and afternoon workshops will explore historical, philosophical, and technological questions about the punitive nature of incarceration. We’ll read selections from texts such as *Rethinking Punishment in an Era of Mass Incarceration* and *Race, Incarceration, and American Values*, which explore debates in the humanities about how, why, and who we punish. We have invited Michelle Alexander for the second day of the institute to talk about the history of race and incarceration in the United States. On the third day, Lisa Guenther will discuss her phenomenological analysis of solitary confinement and the death penalty. For our off-site visit, we will travel to John Jay College of Criminal Justice (a senior CUNY college where many of our students transfer) to tour their New York Prisons and Jails archive at the Lloyd Sealy Library. This site visit will provide fellows with the opportunity to do scholarly research, as well as to identify materials for classroom activities that will help students build bridges between the scientific and humanistic approaches to the study of incarceration.

The second summer institute will follow the same schedule as in year one though with a different thematic focus on the complex issues of *Rehabilitation and Reentry*. Our readings will explore what humanities scholars have to say about the relation between democratic values
and the rehabilitative aspects of carceral punishment, including the challenges of reentry and the role of education in mitigating these challenges. For example, the fellows will read *Democratic Theory and Mass Incarceration*, by Albert Dzur who will discuss his research at the institute. Professor Daniel Karpowitz will also be presenting his work; we are particularly excited for him to share the knowledge about incarceration he’s acquired through his work with the Bard Prison Initiative. In addition, we have invited LaGuardia Professors John Chaney and Joni Schwartz to talk with us about their collaborative work with formerly incarcerated students and faculty, which will help us to build bridges between the humanistic work of our grant and other incarceration-related projects at LaGuardia. In connection with their presentation, we will go on a site visit to Queensboro Correctional Facility, which is a minimum security correctional facility located across the street from LaGuardia where several faculty members volunteer teach during the semester.

The final session of each summer institute will be a full-day workshop for secondary feedback on our projects, revisions, planning for our presentation(s) to the larger community, uploading work to the grant website, and identifying next steps. In the Fall semester following each institute, faculty fellows will share their work with the college-wide community during our Opening Sessions (a day of theoretical and pedagogical workshops for faculty and staff held each year). In addition, we’ll share the classroom activities and assignments, along with the scholarly projects that arose out of the grant activities on a website hosted by CUNY Academic Commons so that they are available to an even larger audience.