



TO: External Grants Expansion Plan (EGEP) Team Members

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FROM: Chancellor Richard Wells *rw*

RE: External Grants Expansion Plan (EGEP) Team Charge, Goals, Roles and Responsibilities

DATE: October 22, 2007

Recently, faculty representing several disciplines have expressed their desire for greater institutional support and coordination of their efforts to: 1) secure the requisite extramural funding to support their scholarly endeavors and 2) conduct such scholarly endeavors after funding has been secured. Provost Lane Earns and I worked closely with a small team of faculty, Associate Vice Chancellor Perry Rettig, Linda Freed (Director, Grants and Faculty Development), and Tom Grogan to develop the External Grants Expansion Plan (EGEP) Team Charge, Goals, Roles and Responsibilities for the team. We greatly appreciate the work that was in preparing the following document.

It is our pleasure to confirm your assignment to the EGEP Team. It is important to note that this is not a committee or task force. Instead, it is a group of people with common experience and vision selected because of their expertise and commitment to work together toward common goals as they hold themselves mutually accountable. All team members will be expected to serve for a minimum of two years. Given that several members have job descriptions directly related to the team's goals, they will remain on the team as long they hold positions at UW Oshkosh. The EGEP team will consult with an advisory group consisting of private sector/community and University administration representatives. Given his experience securing external grants, his perspectives on measures needed at UW Oshkosh to facilitate external grants expansion, and the time and effort he has already committed to the EGEP endeavor, I am appointing Dr. Todd Sandrin (COLS, Department of Biology and Microbiology) to a two-year term as Chair of the Team.

Rationale for Enhancing Extramural Support of Research

At least seven well-documented facts underscore the need to enhance extramural support of research at UW Oshkosh:

1. Research informs, invigorates, and is integral to high quality teaching.
2. Active participation in research provides undergraduates with myriad unique and invaluable hands-on experience not available in the classroom or even laboratory courses.
3. Research by faculty and staff advances theoretical knowledge and the reputation of those faculty and UW Oshkosh
4. High quality, state-of-the-art research often requires extraordinary levels of financial support and infrastructure that the University cannot provide without extramural support
5. Grantwriting and post-award grant management require considerable amounts of time, effort, and institutional support.
6. Workloads of faculty actively engaged in research can be optimized to allow them to secure additional extramural support, thus making more efficient use of their unique talents and interests to better support local and state economies, the University and the students it serves.

The Charge for the Team

The team is charged with developing an External Grants Expansion Plan (EGEP), which will complement several existing key operational plans. The EGEP Team will:

- Articulate how the EGEP is vital and integral to UW Oshkosh's Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Core Values, Governing Ideas, and Strategic Planning
- Ensure that the development of the EGEP remains an open and expansive process
- Establish the necessary framework to structure tactics that will facilitate development of a campus culture that encourages and rewards the pursuit and procurement of extramural support
- Identify and learn from institutions (e.g., UW Milwaukee) that have recently implemented particularly successful plans to expand support for research

Team Goals

- Maximize campus ownership of the planning process and the resulting plan
- Engage representatives from University administration and the community in the continuing operational planning and refinement of the plan
- Develop a Key Operational Plan that specifically addresses the EGEP and its role in maintaining faculty vitality in research and teaching.
- Articulate elements of a dynamic new program to facilitate rapid and dramatic increases in extramural support for research that is tailored to the individual needs of grants-active faculty and staff. Mechanisms to explore to bring such a program to fruition might include: 1) reassigned time from teaching (e.g., 3 SCH buyouts per semester for two to three years, covered by enabling

graduate students to teach entry-level course laboratories), 2) 11-month contracts to grants-active faculty to support summer grantwriting and grants management, 3) support for on-campus core facilities, 4) networking programs that partner UW Oshkosh faculty and staff with collaborators at more research-intensive institutions, and 5) support personnel dedicated to the post-award management of research grants.

- Identify and develop strategies to eliminate existing disincentives, both on-campus (e.g., lack of teaching/SCH credit for mentoring undergraduates in research) and within UW System (e.g., limits on faculty overload salary) that discourage faculty and staff from pursuing extramural support.
- Design strategies to: 1) foster a campus culture that supports and encourages faculty and staff to pursue extramural support, 2) encourage junior faculty to recognize the importance of pursuing extramural funding, and 3) reward grants-active faculty to encourage their continued pursuit of extramural funding

Increasing Extramural Support for Research: Definitions and Conceptual Framework

The importance of research at liberal arts institutions such as UW Oshkosh is well-documented. While teaching appropriately remains regarded as our primary mission at UW Oshkosh, high quality teaching cannot be maintained without faculty remaining actively engaged in timely and relevant research. A synergistic relationship exists between teaching and research that allows faculty and staff to achieve more and students to acquire invaluable, practical experience that prepares them for careers in their chosen fields. Knowledge resulting from undergraduate-faculty/staff collaborative research benefits state, local, and global communities. Unfortunately, performing such cutting-edge, meaningful research usually requires substantial financial resources that only extramural sources can provide.

Benefits of extramurally funded research are manifold and manifest. In addition, the process itself of pursuing extramural funding yields benefits to faculty, staff, and student collaborators. As noted by Burgoon (1988), "pursuing extramural funding is both a means to, and a by-product of, scholarly excellence." Benefits of the grantwriting process include: 1) the opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to immerse themselves in the current body of literature of their respective disciplines as they craft competitive proposals, 2) the potential to advance basic, theoretical knowledge, and 3) the ability to collaborate with student researchers and provide them with hands-on, grantwriting experience, thus improving the quality of their education.

Several barriers to enhancing grantwriting activity on liberal arts campuses have been described. Some of these barriers exist at UW Oshkosh. The most commonly described barriers are: 1) heavy teaching loads that prohibit perception of grantwriting as a core activity/responsibility, 2) a lack of clarity regarding the importance of grantwriting in the tenure and promotion process, 3) unfamiliarity of campus personnel with post-award financial grants management and accounting procedures that act as strong disincentives to successful grantwriters, 4) lack of the requisite research facilities and/or inadequate institutional support of existing facilities, and 5) a lack of a rewards and recognition system for successful grantwriters.

Academic institutions facing these barriers have implemented plans to overcome them. Mishler (1987) provides elements all such plans should incorporate and include both institutional and academic components. Institutions are advised to: 1) provide research assistants to assist faculty in collecting pilot/seed data necessary to develop competitive proposals and 2) provide adequate laboratory space and equipment for faculty to conduct research of a comparable quality to that being conducted by faculty at research intensive universities. At the academic level, Mishler advises: 1) reducing teaching loads for grants-active faculty and staff, 2) providing salary increases and/or travel monies to faculty involved in extramurally funded projects, and 3) establishing mentors for faculty interested in grantwriting. In an effort to enhance support for research and expand GPR funding, UW Milwaukee recently implemented a Research Growth Initiative (RGI) that contains some components that may be adapted to UW Oshkosh. Through the RGI, UW Milwaukee faculty compete for RGI funds to support their research. Three criteria are used in evaluating these faculty proposals: 1) Rewards (Is the return on investment at least three times

the award amount?), 2) Risk (How probable is success of the project?), and 3) Potential (Is the project sustainable after RGI seed funds are provided?).

The specific needs and intellectual assets of UW Oshkosh faculty and staff interested in grantwriting are not identical to institutions such as UW Milwaukee. For this reason, the EGEP Team will use appropriate elements of existing plans as starting points for the development of their plan. Input of the campus community will be requested throughout the development of the plan.

The Promise to Support the Team

I am asking team members to take on very challenging tasks and to provide leadership in the development and execution of a strategic external plan; however, assistance exists in the following forms:

1. Existing, well-developed and ever-improving university strategic and operational plans, processes, actions, and successes;
2. The involvement and support of the university community and its internal and external leaders;
3. On-campus and off-campus consultant visitations as needed
4. Support for team members and others for professional development in the area of external grants expansion, faculty and professional development.
5. Course release or equivalent time reassignment from current duties for the Chair of the EGEP.
6. A budget that will allow timely launch of a pilot program that leverages internal funds to secure extramural funding as described by the EGEP.

Timetable

<u>Task</u>	<u>Date</u>
Select and charge the team	September 28, 2007
Bring representative(s) to UW Oshkosh from institution(s) that has recently implemented a successful external grants expansion plan	October, 2007
Identify key post-award grant management needs of grants-active faculty and staff	October, 2007
Lay the foundation: Outline the plan	November, 2007
Establish an advisory council that articulates to the Office of Grants and Faculty Development services faculty need to succeed	November, 2007
Devise mechanisms to reduce teaching loads	November, 2007
Devise reward mechanisms for successful grantwriters	November, 2007
Identify on-campus disincentives and strategies to eliminate	November, 2007
Solicit campus community input and revise plan outline accordingly	December, 2007
Merge the preliminary plan with appropriate Key Operational Plans. Develop new Key Operational Plan if deemed appropriate	January, 2008
Present plan to campus community and revise	January, 2008
Draft plan budget	January, 2008
Begin implementation of plan/Pilot launch of program	March, 2008
Evaluate outcomes of plan	Ongoing
Revise and enhance plan based on assessment of outcomes of plan	Ongoing

Cc: Provost Lane Earns
Tom Grogan, Office of the Chancellor