

STRATEGIC GRANT SEEKING TASK FORCE

MARCH 18, 2004

MINUTES

The meeting of the Strategic Grant Seeking Task Force was called to order on March 18, 2004, by Dr. Marty Giddings, Chairperson. Those in attendance included: Dr. Stephen Lahr, Dr. Mark Fenster, Ms. Shanika Hezekiah, Dr. Thomas Manning, Ms. Deborah Davis, Dr. Mary Watson, and Ms. Brenda Kelley.

The three charges provided by Dr. Krotseng were revisited by the group, and the Task Force began to discuss development of a set of recommendations in order to respond to each charge.

Charge 1: The Task Force agreed that the new institutional data base will be an excellent resource for faculty members. Members commended Dr. Mary Watson for the existing web-page, and agreed that the changes will add to the value of the web page, "fine tuning" the resource. Hyperlinks are being created to connect users with multiple web sites. Deborah Davis suggested that a "how to" page should be added with step-by-step instructions for users. Task Force members agreed that the Institutional Database offers an increased level of support for faculty. Members also suggested the establishment of a secure database that includes the names of campus grant writers and the types of grants that are funded. The database potentially could increase faculty collaboration in the area of grant writing.

Charge 2: A substantial number of issues were discussed in relation to Charge 2. The Task Force proposed that the importance of grant writing should be reflected in all university documents including the VSU Mission Statement, VSU's Strategic Plan, as well as strategic plans for each academic unit. Other areas of discussion included the belief that grant writing experience should be considered in recruitment and retention of qualified faculty members. Task Force members concurred that VSU should begin to build a culture in which a significant value is placed on grant writing. Currently, there is not a well-defined relationship between faculty advancement activities such as promotion/tenure, merit raises, etc. and successful grant writing.

In terms of building a culture that reinforces grant writing, the Task Force recommended that a system of rewards or incentives be used to support faculty members with an interest in funded research. One suggestion involved taking the salary of one faculty member and using the money to hire a university grant writer. All members of the Task Force agreed that the first recommendation of the group should be to increase staffing for the Office of Grants and Contracts. The group also discussed the appointment of an Advisory Committee. The Task Force discussed the possible development of a fund to support faculty seed

grants that could increase the overall amount and number of grants in a relatively brief period of time.

Charge 3: In regard to the need to establish national and regional benchmarks, the Task Force recommended that external consultants be invited to campus for the purpose of evaluating the Office of Grants and Contracts and grant activity. These individuals would be asked to make recommendations about appropriate levels of grant activity on the VSU campus and to assist the university in developing appropriate benchmarks.

Marty Giddings volunteered to begin to synthesize the group's recommendations into a single document. Members asked their wish to have input into the final set of recommendations presented to the Planning Council. Because of spring break, the group decided to work electronically. Stephen Lahr is going to locate copies of the University Mission Statement as well as the Strategic Plans for each campus academic unit.

Brenda Kelley, Department Secretary, Division of Social Work
Marty Giddings, Director, Division of Social Work