

California State University, Stanislaus  
**Support Unit Review**  
**Executive Summary**  
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs  
Submitted: 08/28/2009

## **Self-Study and External Review**

### **1) Annual reports and self study**

#### **a) Evaluation process**

The AVP for ORSP invited all staff members of the unit to participate and contribute to the compilation of the self study. Each staff member was asked to offer input addressing assigned specific areas within the self study, but were welcome to offer input into other areas. In addition to staff contribution, an online survey assessment tool sent to the University community was used to gather data and insight for further review and applicable implementation to improve services.

#### **b) Divergence between self study and review team findings**

The external review team findings were based more on a user's perspective of the services and the University's expectations on faculty research activity. They felt that there needs to be a larger effort to publicize across the campus community the functions of the ORSP.

The self study findings focused on internal operational improvements. The staff felt more effective and efficient methods for grant management need to be addressed and implemented. By creating a more efficient operation, ORSP would increase its level of productivity and faculty would be more inclined to invest into the pursuit of externally funded projects.

### **2) Mid-year and annual budget reports**

Funding provided to ORSP for human resources are adequate in relation to the pre award production. Greater resources are needed in post award management. Additionally, greater resources are needed to procure and implement a more effective and efficient grant management system including both pre and post award functions. A University-wide integrated system of grant management is an immediate need.

### **3) Effectiveness of the unit in supporting the mission of the university**

#### **a) Mission, goals, and values**

In support of the University's vision, ORSP is committed to working in close cooperation with faculty governance and the University administration to support faculty and student sponsored research, creative, and academic activities. ORSP will do its part to enhance the academic stature of the institution and the overall success of a diverse body of students, providing the necessary services in support of the University mission.

#### **b) Processes and assessment**

Currently, no formal assessment and evaluation of ORSP and its functions are performed. ORSP keeps records and reports of grant and contract activity. These reports detail the number of grants/contracts proposed and awarded, and the fiscal amount of grants/contracts proposed and pledged each year. ORSP also tracks Student Research Competition data, RSCA awards, and compiles the CSU Stanislaus Research Compendium.

#### **c) Special issues**

Through externally funded research and programs, students may have the opportunity to participate in research activities with the faculty serving as principal investigators, project directors, or key personnel.

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Faculty active in research offer a greater depth of knowledge and remain active and current in their fields of study and disciplines. The knowledge gained through these activities will then be incorporated into the curriculum improving the quality of student learning.

ORSP sponsors and administers the CSU Student Research Competition whereby students at the undergraduate and graduate level have the opportunity to present their research. In addition, students with the strongest research presentation are selected to represent the University at the CSU state-wide competition, with ORSP providing the required infrastructure and funding.

No formal mechanism to assess ORSP's support to student learning is in place at this time. ORSP receives informal feedback through correspondence with students who present in the CSU campus and state-wide student research competition.

### **Strategic Implementation Plan**

#### **Identify and prioritize the goals of the unit over the next five years and identified strategies for accomplishment**

ORSP is committed to enhancing our faculty and students' ability to obtain external funding and increase productivity in research, scholarly, and creative activities at CSU Stanislaus. Facilitating this process is a fundamental incentive to promote a culture of engagement in research, scholarly and creative activities, which is an integral part of academic life. The following prioritized goals of the unit are as follows:

1. **Develop an integrated and efficient pre and post award management process.** A more efficient grants and contract management process has been a major concern in campus. In this respect, starting in April 2008, pre and post award activities, including the transactional accounting function, will be housed under a single roof to provide continuity of service. We are establishing a "one stop shop" for grants and awards, and are determined to make the transition from separate pre and post award grant operations to a single seamless operation.
2. **Reassess Facilities and Administrative (indirect) cost recovery and salary savings distribution policies.** The current CSU Stanislaus policy dates from 1999. A new cost analysis that takes into consideration all the infrastructure and operation expenses, as well as the central and departmental costs in support of research and sponsored programs needs to be performed to reflect the current environment. Furthermore, this new formula should provide incentives to faculty, departments and colleges to encourage further scholarly work.
3. **Facilitate and encourage research and sponsored activities among our faculty.** One of the fundamental tenets of the ORSP is the importance of scholarly achievement as a major driver of academic excellence. We should always highlight the significance of academic pursuit for an engaged faculty, and the benefits resulting from the interdependence of teaching and scholarly activities. To this effect, we will ensure a stronger overall support system that encourages our community to commit to their academic and research pursuit.

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4. **Promote student participation in research and scholarly activities at CSU Stanislaus.** The involvement of students in scholarly activities is a fundamental part of the learning process. Collectively, we need to create a campus culture to support undergraduate and graduate research. Providing students with research opportunities increases awareness to professional careers they might not have considered before, and significantly improves their understanding of the world and boosts self confidence. We will ensure that when available and applicable, students are integrated in research activities with faculty pursuing external funding to perform said activities.
5. **Celebrate research and creative activities at CSU Stanislaus.** The stature of a University is directly linked to the quality of education and the quality of the faculty and students' engagement in research and creative activities. It is fundamental that we recognize academic excellence. To this effect, the ORSP will strive to spotlight the accomplishments of our community members.
6. **Improve web presence.** As we continue to improve and expand the services of the ORSP, we will strive to maintain an accurate and up-to-date web presence where information regarding research, scholarly, and creative activities of the University, as well as the services provided by the ORSP, is easier to find.
7. **University Advancement.** Current ORSP procedures involving grant submissions to those foundations requiring a 501(c)3 are in need of greater clarification in conjunction and coordination with University Advancement and Financial Services.

#### 1) Identify the expected outcome or results of the strategic implementation plan

Basic indicators to assess the effectiveness of the services provided by ORSP are as follows:

- Increased number of proposals submitted and pledged awards received through the ORSP office, which will be monitored through monthly reporting.
- Increased financial stability of research and sponsored programs, reflected in an upward trend in revenues to the institution, both in terms of direct and recoverable costs, measured on an annual basis.
- Increased intellectual productivity of our faculty and students as reflected in the annual research compendium and student participation in the Student Research Competition.
- Increased participation of students in faculty research and scholarly activities.