

**Office of Sponsored Programs  
Strategic Plan  
2004-2009**

## **INTRODUCTION**

{ The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is guided by the principle that research is a fundamental function of the University and that research informs good teaching. Faculty not only teach the works of others, but actively contribute to what is taught. Guided by this principle, OSP's vision is to be a model sponsored programs office for universities that, like Texas State, are in transition, moving from being predominantly undergraduate teaching institutions to becoming research-intensive institutions building programs of research. Being a model office dictates that OSP will be a role model for other offices of research administration to the extent that when research administrators at other institutions have questions or are searching for a better practice, they turn to Texas State for help. OSP will provide seamless research administration for faculty and staff submitting grant proposals and contracts, serving Texas State faculty and staff who pursue grants and contracts by making the process, from conception through grant close-out, simple and thorough, while at the same time assuring that Texas State is compliant with all regulations (federal, state, board of regents and university). We will be on the leading edge of using technology so that we become a paperless office; we will be innovative and effective in addressing federal and state compliance issues; we will have processes in place that allow us to interact with faculty and staff in ways that encourage them to seek external funds; and we will earn the reputation for being an office that solves problems rather than one that causes problems. As a member of the Federal Demonstration Partnership, Texas State's OSP will work with other institutions across the nation to develop processes that will facilitate the submission of grant proposals and the administration of grants. OSP will work in partnership with chairs and deans to develop collaborative proposals. We will build opportunities for external funding by developing partnerships with other universities and industries, as well as between departments and colleges on campus. } **Retain** {OSP (pre-award) will be co-located with Grants and Contracts Administration (post-award). } **Completed**

The number of new employee lines: Six

- a. Director of Federal Relations **in progress**
- b. Contracts Specialist **completed**
- c. 2 proposal coordinator/budget specialists **completed**
- d. Technology Specialist **in progress**
- e. Compliance Officer **in progress**

{ Estimated total funding, excluding staff lines, over five years: \$800,000. OSP's current M&O budget is approximately \$100,000 per year. Of this amount, \$60,000 is used to pay for the contract with the Advocacy Group. OSP's M&O budget should be increased to approximately \$160,000 per year. First, the current M&O budget should be increased immediately by \$60,000 to provide adequate operating funds. Second, the M&O budget should be increased 4% each year, to offset increased costs of doing business and to allow for growth needed to cover increased grant activity. } **In progress**

## **II. Process used to develop unit plan**

As a support office serving the entire university community, OSP engaged in three primary activities to develop this plan. The **first** was a review of the current status of the office, including the number of personnel, the numbers of grant proposals and contracts processed annually, and the requirements of the governing sources that require our compliance (federal, state, system and university). This review included an examination of the responsibilities of the current staff, the fact that the staff is too small (staff members are only "one deep" on activities related to submitting grant and contract proposals), and the danger into which this shortage places the university, both in terms of compliance with regulations and in terms of meeting funding sources'

deadlines. The **second** was a review of the strategic plans of the colleges, concentrating on their plans for grant and contract activity over the next five years. The **third** was collaboration with the Research Planning Committee, made up of representatives from across campus who were charged with “reading across” the college plans.

### **III. Program Maintenance: Outline any activities that are inadequately funded due to growth, inflation or other cost increases.**

- A. { Current needs: As stated above, the office is inadequately staffed. **First**, grant and contract proposals are increasing in number—but they are also increasing in complexity. As more and more agencies adapt electronic means of proposal submission, the job of submission becomes, ironically, harder, rather than easier, than it has been in the past. The reason for this irony is that each funding agency has its own method of submission and each method has its quirks. Submitting a proposal formerly required making paper copies and placing them in a shipping box. Now it takes real computer knowledge in general and specific knowledge of multiple funding sources’ electronic submission processes in particular simply to submit the proposal. OSP is in need of two additional personnel immediately, just to keep up with the current demand. As it stands now, because of the workload in the office, the staff is only “one deep”—that means that no cross training can take place because there simply isn’t time. If any one staff member is absent, we are in danger of not submitting a grant proposal on time. The estimated cost for these two positions is \$75,000 per year. **Second**, the university’s current annual budget for OSP is insufficient to operate the office, and most staff members have not received market adjustments for over three years. These staff members are highly specialized and deserve to have their talents rewarded in terms of salary increases. The total immediate need for raises for the current staff is \$20,000 per year. **Third**, contracts are growing in number every month, and the university has no contracts specialist. This situation places the university in danger of missing a deadline and at risk of accepting terms that it should not. The need for a contracts specialist is dire. Cost for such a position is estimated at \$60,000 per year. **Fourth**, the university’s federal legislative agenda requires a full-time person to work in Washington, DC, with our elected representatives to Congress. Currently, the AVPR and Director of Federal Relations is that person, but because he has so many other responsibilities, he cannot be in Washington as often as Texas State needs a representative there. A full-time Director of Federal Relations would cost approximately \$100,000 per year. **Fifth**, current demands from funders to do all proposal submission and grant reporting electronically, and the need for a complex, up-to-date website demands that OSP hire a technology specialist (\$40,000). **Sixth**, Texas State is maintaining compliance with federal, state, system and university regulations, but the current compliance officer will not be able to handle any increases in activity. A second compliance officer is needed. (\$35,000). } **In progress.**

Items One through Four are urgent for immediate action. Item Five should be filled within one year; item Six should be filled within the next 2 ½ years.

In summary, then, **our current needs** total \$330,000 annually, to provide:

- raises for current staff, \$20,000
- hiring two additional staff members to process proposal submission and grant management (\$75,000)
- hiring a contracts specialist to process, review, and negotiate contracts (\$60,000)
- hiring a director of federal relations (\$100,000)
- hiring a technology specialist (\$40,000)
- hiring an additional compliance officer (\$35,000)

### **PLANNING CATEGORIES**

In general, OSP will provide support to any dean, director, chair, staff, or faculty member who has a goal that can be initiated and/or supported with grant or contract funding, either partially or completely. That support is indicated below with the statement “grant/contract funding where applicable.”

## PLANNING CATEGORY A: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS SUPPORT

{ Throughout the period covered by the Strategic Plan, we will selectively develop new centers and institutes and we will seek ways to increase the effectiveness of existing centers and institutes as a means forming interdisciplinary and collaborative research and public service and as a means of leveraging University resources with external funding. IN addition, currently existing centers and institutes as well as establishment of new centers and institutes will be a strategy for meeting the goals outlined in *Closing the Gaps*. } **retain**

{ By way of example, we will immediately approve the establishment of the “Advanced Criminal Investigations Research Center (ACIRC).” } **delete**

{ The creation of other Centers and Institutes will be contingent upon the development of a programmatic and financial plan that confirms the Center or Institute’s ability to meet the goals of the strategic plan. } **retain**

{ During the next three years, we will conduct sunset reviews of existing Centers and Institute to assure their continuing capacity to meet these goals. We will promote closer affiliations between our centers and institutes and the academic department(s) and college(s) that provide the foundation for their work., We will begin this process by reviewing centers, intestates, and other organizational units on campus that address issues related to water and to school safety. } **completed**

{ Increase numbers of OSP staff to help make the submission of electronic and paper smoother. } **retain**

{ Addition of a Director of Federal Relations to increase the university’s federal funds and help meet “Closing the Gap” requirements. } **retain**

{ Addition of one staff member to facilitate the university’s remaining compliant with state and federal regulations. } **retain**

{ Increased efforts to work with the university community to develop partnerships across the university and between other universities and industries. } **retain**

{ Establishment of satellite support offices in at least three additional colleges. } **in progress**

{ Co-location of OSP and Office of Grants and Contract Administration. } **completed**

{ Increased grant-finding mechanisms, such as InfoEd or SPIN. } **delete**

{ Increased proposal writing workshops at all levels—university-wide, at the college level, at the departmental level, etc. } **in progress**

## PLANNING CATEGORY d: DEVELOPMENT

1. Increased level of interaction with industry so that we can leverage existing grant funds and pursue additional funding for areas that cannot be funded by public money. As an example, we will continue to seek from private sources building funds for the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center. The International Institute for Water Resources provides another example of how we could seek the support of industrial partners for both grant money and endowment funds. **In progress**
2. Pursue the possibilities of interaction with individuals, thus allowing us to leverage current grants or to pursue public funding that might include private contributions as matches. **In progress**

3. We will continue to pursue open communications and encourage regular meetings with members of the University Advancement division so that the efforts of our two fund-raising arms of the institution can be leveraged. **In progress**