



National Organization of Research Development Professionals

Institutional Support for the Arts & Humanities

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Texas A&M University

Founded in 1876 as an all male military college

In 1963/5, admission was opened to all, military membership made optional – enrollment 8,000.

2016 enrollment – **67,000**

- Undergraduate – **77%**
- Graduate/Professional – **23%**

Faculty:

- Tenured/tenure track – **1,971**
- Non tenure track – **1,200**
- GA – Teaching – **1,800**
- Total – **4,971**

Humanities/Arts Faculty estimate:

- Approximately **700** (Tenured/Tenure Track/Non tenure track)
 - **~14%** of faculty



Research Expenditures 2015

- All Texas A&M R&D expenditures for 2015:
 - **\$866,000,000**
- Arts & Humanities related Research funding:
 - **\$19,800,000**
 - Approximately 2.2 percent of research funding for approximately 14 percent of the university faculty. (note 14% of the 2015 Research Funding would be about \$121,000,000)
- Arts & Humanities research funding is under attack in Washington.
 - President Trump has proposed the complete ELIMINATION of both the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Internal Grant Programs at Texas A&M University

The PESCA Grant Program

- Seed grant program designed to allow researchers of any discipline do work that can be leveraged to improve chances of a federal/national/international level grant award.
 - One year grant
 - Three levels of funding
 - 10,000 for single author proposals
 - 18,000 for two author proposals
 - 25,000 for three or more author proposals

The CONACYT program

- A collaboration between Texas A&M and the Mexican CONACYT agency
 - 24,000 in joint funding for a “Regular Research Award”
 - 75,000 in joint funding for a “Special Research Award”



What of the Humanities and the Arts?

- Humanities and Arts faculty can apply to both the PESCA internal grant program and the CONACYT program but both programs tend to fund STEM related disciplines Both programs are one year in duration.
- Both programs can, and often do in the case of PESCA, receive proposals from 17 the 18 different colleges within the university.
- Both programs are cross-disciplinary, and collaborative in nature.
- Neither program provides significant support to Arts & Humanities faculty.



Steps to a solution

I began talking with Arts & Humanities Faculty

- I asked loads of questions
 - How much funding do you need for a typical project?
 - What is the timeline from start to completion for a typical project?
 - What sort of funding opportunity, should you be successful, will look best on your CV?
 - What sort of funding opportunity, should you be successful, will enhance your competitiveness most at the next level?
 - What is that next funding level for you?
 - What project do you wish you could pursue if you only had available funding?
 - (For tenured and tenure- track faculty) What impact would internal funding have on your chances for tenure and/or promotion?



I organized the faculty responses

I created summaries of the responses I received from faculty by:

- College
- Department
- Title (Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor)



Department Heads...

Next, I made appointments with all the Arts & Humanities Department Heads that I could.

We spoke about:

- What their faculty (and sometimes other faculty) said about the funding environment and how internal Arts & Humanities funding would be helpful to their work.
- What feedback and advice the Department Heads had concerning a way forward.



Research Deans!

- When I'd had all the conversations I felt were useful with both faculty and their department heads I then put together a one pager outlining my vision for the Texas A&M University Arts & Humanities Fellows Program.
- At this point common sense dictated that I should have a long conversation with my supervisor and sell her on the idea so that she could move the idea up through leadership.
- However, I didn't do that....
- I took my one pager and made appointments with the research deans whose faculty were most likely to become involved.



The Pitch!

I sat down with the Executive Associate Dean of the College of Architecture, the Associate Dean for Research of the College of Liberal Arts and the head of the Medical Humanities Program to make my pitch which contained the following main elements.

- Goal of the program
- Duration of the program
- Funding of the program
- Benefits for faculty



The Outcome

Both Research Deans, but not the Medical Humanities Department Head, agreed to:

- Participate in the program
- Promote the program amongst their faculty
- Assist with the recruitment of proposal reviewers
- And most importantly (at the time), collaboratively fund the program on a 30/70 basis with the Division of Research



The Final Step...

When I had agreements in principal with the Deans of the two initially participating colleges (there are more now!) I then took the last step:

- I rewrote the one pager to include the commitments from the Architecture and Liberal Arts Colleges.
- I explained my vision for how the program would work to my Executive Director.
- I described the logistical support necessary for the program.
- I outlined the benefits to both the TAMU Arts & Humanities faculty and the Division of Research.
- I asked if she would take the program up the chain for review and (hopefully!) approval.



Serendipity Stepped In...

- The day after I submitted the program for review, I met the VPR at a seminar I was giving and he shared with me that he felt there was a need for a research support program for Humanities and Arts faculty.
- I shared with him that there was one on the way to him at that moment. When I'd finished describing the program he told me that it was exactly what he'd wanted and he seemed a bit surprised that the colleges had agreed to a cooperative funding agreement.



Success!

- I submitted the program for review and approval on September 14, 2014.
- The program was approved for roll out to faculty on September 29, 2014.
- The first Arts & Humanities RFP was posted to the program webpage on schedule on October 1, 2014.
- The only change to the program mandated by the VPR was the name. I had initially named it the Texas A&M University Humanities & Arts Fellows Program. He changed the name to the Texas A&M University Arts & Humanities Fellows Program. Wish I'd have thought of that!



Too much of a Good Thing!

The College of Liberal Arts was so enamored with the program that they got their development office to fund a further two fellowships the first year.

This turned out to be not a very good idea....



The Program

- 1) Funding
- 2) Duration
- 3) Benefits for Faculty



Early Results!

2015: Six Fellows from:

- Performance Studies
- History (3)
- Communication
- Landscape Architecture
 - Four fellows funded cooperatively, two from the College of Liberal Arts Foundation

2016: Four Fellows from:

- Philosophy
- Visualization (painter)
- English
- History

2017: Seven Fellows from:

- History (2)
- Performance Studies (2)
- English
- International Studies
- Political Science



Lessons Learned....

- 1) It's all about the faculty.
- 2) New programs are best built from the grassroots up.
- 3) Don't concentrate on what might not work, or what might go wrong. Focus on what can go right.
- 4) Get buy-in from every level.
- 5) Document, document, document.
- 6) Concentrate your pitches on what will benefit the audience you are currently trying to persuade.
- 7) Be prepared for success!!!



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