Graduate Student Challenge Grants: Building Research Partnerships Across Disciplines

September 18th, 2012

Presented by Interim Associate Dean Peter Harries with successful recipients Robert Baer, Lorraine Montegut, and Haofei Yu
Started in 2008 by Dean Liller to promote interdisciplinary research focused on four fields central to USF’s research missions:

- On average, eight projects/year funded
- Since the onset, over 100 graduate students funded in projects representing a broad spectrum of different fields
This grants are designed to promote creative problem solving in an interdisciplinary setting. They can be stand alone projects or components of participants’ research program. Areas included:

- Neuroscience
- Sustainability of populations and/or the environment
- Diabetes and autoimmune disorders
- Partnerships with industry
- Global or international research
- The Arts
Requirements

- Must consist of teams of four students
- Teams must represent at least two colleges, but the more included, the more competitive
- The project must be able to be completed in a year
- All students must have approval of their major professor/advisor
Deadlines

- Grants are due by October 26th, 2012
  - The complete grant with all sections included and approvals must be sent to Dean Liller (kliller@usf.edu)
- Final decisions will be announced in early to mid December
Proposal Content I

- Project Title
- List of all student participants
  - Project leader must be identified
  - Role of each participant must be clearly stated
- USF Research Area must be identified
- Statement related to the project’s broader significance
- Abstract – limited to 150 words (and these are COUNTED!)
- Background and Significance
• Research Objectives, including hypothesis(es) to be tested
• Research Methods
• Project Timeline
• Evaluation Plan
• Overlap with theses/dissertation research
• Budget and Justification
• References
• Mentor Approval Form
All grants will be read and evaluated by at least five evaluators

- Members of the Graduate Council’s Policy/Fellowship Committee
- Members of the Graduate School’s senior staff
- Judging accomplished using a rubric
### Evaluation: Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>1 pt.</th>
<th>2 pts.</th>
<th>3 pts.</th>
<th>4 pts.</th>
<th>5 pts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Project to the Field</td>
<td>Of no obvious significance</td>
<td>Of slight significance</td>
<td>Contributes somewhat to the field</td>
<td>Significant contribution to a field</td>
<td>Significant contributions to more than one field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Approach</td>
<td>Approach/methods not stated or inappropriate</td>
<td>Approach/methods unclear</td>
<td>Approach/methods appropriate</td>
<td>Approach/methods clearly presented and appropriate</td>
<td>Approach/methods clearly presented, appropriate, and sufficiently robust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>No evidence of innovation</td>
<td>Limited evidence for innovation in terms of approach or design</td>
<td>Some evidence for innovation in terms of approach or design</td>
<td>Very innovative in terms of either approach or design</td>
<td>Very innovative in terms of both approach and design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Design</td>
<td>No evidence of interdisciplinary research</td>
<td>Fundamentally the project of one PI, with very limited integration of others</td>
<td>Attempts at interdisciplinary research, but links tenuous</td>
<td>Evidence for some interdisciplinary research</td>
<td>Obvious evidence for interdisciplinary research with all members engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Advance Academic Programs</td>
<td>No evidence of how it links to any of the PIs academic programs</td>
<td>Limited impact on the academic program of a single PI</td>
<td>Nominal impact on the academic program of two or more of the PIs</td>
<td>Large impact on the academic program of one or two of the PIs</td>
<td>Will advance the academic programs of a majority of the PIs involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism of Grant</td>
<td>Does not cover the required topics and/or has numerous typos</td>
<td>Covers some of the topics and/or has numerous typos</td>
<td>Covers the majority of the topics, and fairly well written</td>
<td>Covers all of the topics, and, for the most part, well written</td>
<td>An exemplary proposal in terms of the topics covered and writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recipient Requirements

- Attend monthly meetings
- For projects that need require IRB approval – start that process
- Learn about the budgeting process
- ‘Mid-year progress report’ – presentation of initial results
- Final progress report