

STRATEGIC PLAN TO PROMOTE AND EXPAND RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVITY

BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

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It is important for Buffalo State faculty and staff to be active researchers. Research supports effective teaching and is an essential component in the development of faculty as “scholars in the classroom.” Research provides students with unique learning experiences as has been well demonstrated by the college’s undergraduate research program. Research and scholarship are important factors in promotion and tenure decisions. Research dollars are a key factor in SUNY’s Budget Allocation Process and thus the college’s research activities contribute substantially to the college’s base budget. Support for research, therefore, is essential to help the college remain intellectually vibrant and provide appropriate student learning experiences. This plan presents strategies to help promote sponsored program activity by faculty and staff and hence enhance research at Buffalo State. The plan was developed to respond to the following strategic direction in the Buffalo State Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: Research, Scholarship, and Creativity

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 2.1: Coordinate and integrate research throughout the campus.

Goal: Provide support for basic and applied research, centers of excellence, visiting scholars, and interdisciplinary initiatives.

ACTION STEP 2.1.1: Seek new and enhanced sources of external funding to support research, scholarship, and teaching innovations.

ACTION STEP 2.1.2: Expand and strengthen initiatives to support grant-writing and research methodology, applications, and opportunities.

ACTION STEP 2.1.3: Establish a diverse campus wide visiting scholars program.

ACTION STEP 2.1.4: Expand student creativity and research initiatives.

Background

Buffalo State’s sponsored program activity has been impressive. System wide, Buffalo State continues to outrank all of the other SUNY University Comprehensive Colleges in terms of sponsored program activity. For FY 2003 Buffalo State’s total volume was \$33,019,000. This accounted for almost half of the total activity for all of the SUNY comprehensive colleges combined and Buffalo State continues to significantly out-perform the University at Binghamton, a SUNY University Center. This success also contributes to the college’s general SUNY budget. The current SUNY Budget Allocation Process (BAP) provides a match of

20% for each dollar of sponsored program revenue calculated on a three year rolling average. Recent allocations to the college related to its sponsored program activity are:

Year	College Research Expenditures	20% Match
2001-02	\$25,273,630	\$5,054,700
2002-03	\$25,303,390	\$5,060,700
2003-04	\$27,554,050	\$5,360,900 (19.4%)

In the 1960s SUNY established the Research Foundation as a non-profit foundation to administer externally funded programs. As a non-profit foundation the Research Foundation has greater flexibility than under State regulations regarding the expenditure of funds and related procedures. Support for research through the Research Foundation comes largely from the recovery of indirect funds assessed to funded projects. The indirect cost rate is negotiated with the Federal Government based on factors unique to Buffalo State College and is designed to reimburse the college for appropriate costs related to administration, facilities, utilities, and use of library and office space. The full indirect cost rate is not collected on all funded projects. Some sponsors, typically Foundations, do not allow indirect costs. Other sponsors, such as is the case with most US Department of Education awards, limit indirect costs to 8%. Nonetheless, the college undertakes these funded projects because they are central to the mission of the college. Further, through the research foundation staff and their services, the college provides an outstanding support infrastructure to assure the success of these grants while maintaining appropriate fiscal and legal compliance. From time to time, as funds are available, the college has provided faculty incentives to promote research as well as equipment match and related cost share expenditures. These incentives, as well as the support for the Research Foundation staff, must all be funded from the college's recovered indirect costs.

The college incurs other research costs. The Central Research Foundation charges a fee for its stewardship of system-wide research (2.3%) as well as a fee for services that Buffalo State contracts directly from central office (0.2%). The Chancellor assesses an annual fee of 0.6% for system wide initiatives. There is also an Oracle assessment (\$111,931) to finance the implementation of the research foundation's new accounts management system. This year the Research Foundation Central Board implemented a new assessment of 0.15% to help establish healthier corporate reserves. These assessments will total \$1,195,329 for FY 2005. In addition the college pays interest on funds it borrows from the research foundation to cover expenses, primarily from CDHS contracts, until the college receives reimbursement from state agencies. At any month the total borrowed funds can be quite extensive. Because of recent low interest rates the projected interest for FY 2005 will be

approximately \$344,000. The college may also have to fund unrecovered cost share whenever there is insufficient faculty cost share to support the cost share requirements of a grant. All these costs are charged against the college's indirect cost recovery funds. What is left over is available for use by the college to stimulate new grants. However, during the past three years there have been few funds remaining as interest costs and system assessments have increased at a rate greater than our indirect cost return. Because of good fiscal management and increased research efforts by faculty and staff, we hope that better days are soon ahead.

Goals

To establish goals and strategies for this plan Dr. Richard S. Podemski, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and Mr. Ted Turkle, Director of Sponsored Programs at the BSC Research Foundation, worked closely with the Research and Creativity Council, chaired by Dr. Dennis Mike. The Council sponsored a campus-wide research stakeholders' meeting in May 2003 which generated a great many ideas for furthering research and continued to deliberate research needs throughout the 2003-04 academic year.

The following goals will guide the 2004-2008 strategic plan:

Goal 1. Continue to implement Chancellor King's initiative to increase sponsored research funding by \$1.5B by 2005 by increasing the number of proposals submitted by 5% each year through FY 2008 and by increasing sponsored program funding at Buffalo State College by 2% each year through FY 2008.

Goal 2. Contribute to the college's state support from the Budget Allocation Process (BAP) by increasing the total base of external research funding.

Goal 3. Improve the overall cash position for Buffalo State by cutting deficits, reducing assessments, and improving collections, particularly as it relates to payments from the Office of Children and Family Services and the Department of Health.

Goal 4. Expand and diversify funding sources in an effort to reduce the disparity between NYS Office of Children and Family Services (Center for Development of Human Services) funding and funding derived from other sponsors. Currently CDHS grants account for approximately 73% of the college's research expenditures and 83% of recovered indirect costs.

Goal 5. Foster and improve relationships with sponsoring agencies. Establish new relationships with Federal agencies in areas of key research strengths.

Goal 6. Support faculty participation in non-funded research.

Goal 7. Increase undergraduate and graduate student research opportunities.

Goal 8. Encourage a climate within departments that promotes and provides opportunities for regular discussions and discourse centered in and around research issues, designs, collaborations and other topics.

Goal 9. Establish priorities and coordinate funding support requests for research, scholarship and creativity between the Research Foundation (state, federal and private sponsored programs) and the Buffalo State College Foundation (private gifts and bequests).

Proposed Activities and Related Costs

1. Research and Creativity Council Incentive Funds (Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8)

For many years the Research Council provided funds to assist faculty in pursuing preliminary work necessary to prepare a competitive grant proposal. These incentive grants were extremely effective. Over 80% of recipients subsequently submitted competitive grant applications. **Resources Required: \$75,000 annually**

2. Faculty Research Assistance Center (Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8)

Faculty and staff have long asked for assistance with research design and statistics. Initially the Center for Health and Social Research will be contracted to provide help with quantitative and qualitative research design, statistics, and data analysis for faculty and staff who are preparing proposals, grant reports and articles for submission to scholarly journals. These services will also be available for faculty who are engaged in scholarship that is not supported by external funds. As the demand for these services increases a stand alone Research Assistance Center will be established. **Resources Required: up to \$75,000 annually**

3. Return to Principal Investigators (Goals 1, 2, 4, 7, 8)

A model for return of indirect funds to principal investigators will be developed whereby principal investigators would receive returned indirect funds based on the amount of indirect cost generated. These funds would allow PIs to cover activities not funded by their grants and support the development of new projects. Support of this initiative clearly indicates that the college is committed to supporting research and scholarship and will promote such activity in the future. **Resources Required: \$150,000 annually**

4. Dean's Incentives (Goals 1, 2, 4, 7, 8)

These funds will help each dean encourage research productivity. Funds may be used to provide released time to write grants, hire outside experts, and sponsor trips to funding agencies or in other ways unique to the dean's area of responsibility. **Resources Required: \$100,000 annually**

5. Cost Share Program (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)

Cost sharing and/or matching is defined as those costs associated with sponsored awards that are not paid for by the sponsor. In many instances a sponsor (especially State and Federal agencies) require a cost share commitment as a condition of the award. Therefore, it is necessary for the Research Foundation to have at its disposal, funding to meet this matching obligation when it is a requirement of an application. If such a funding stream were not available, the number of programs to which the College could apply would be severely curtailed, and those programs requiring a voluntary cost share commitment on the part of the institution would be made substantially less competitive. This is especially true for CDHS projects which rely on a continuing investment of Buffalo State faculty and staff who contribute cost share. As CDHS increases its activity, additional cost share is needed. Increasingly faculty are unable to contribute to cost share as they are fully committed to cost sharing on their own grants. This cost share account will help fund new cost share mechanisms such as graduate assistants. **Required Resources: up to \$150,000 annually**

6. Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Goal 5)

The Research Foundation Office of Sponsored Programs is the campus office responsible for federal compliance related to Human Subjects and Institutional Animal Care policies and procedures. A recent evaluation of the BSC human subjects program reached several key conclusions: the Institutional Review Board (IRB) needs to meet on a more frequent basis, IRB members are inadequately trained given new federal requirements, new community members must be appointed, and a new chair must be appointed. To maintain a viable and effective Institutional Review Board funds are required for the development of manuals, presentation materials, attendance at regional and national meetings, board training and campus student/faculty workshops. **Resources Required: \$10,000 annually – Implemented in Summer 2004 because of Federal requirements**

7. Institutional Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC)(Goal 5)

A recent review of the Institutional Animal Care Use Committee reached the following key conclusions: the IACUC chair should receive a one course

release per term for his/her service as chair, and funds are required for the ongoing operation of the Institutional Animal Care Use program including the development of relevant presentation materials, board training, and attendance at regional and national meetings. **Resources Required: \$5,000 annually – Implemented in Summer 2004 because of Federal requirements**

8. Equipment Match Program (Goals 1, 2, 4, 8)

Many sponsors require equipment match dollars from the applicant institutions. In those instances where equipment match is not required by the sponsor, designated institutional match dollars may enhance the chances for funding. Historically, state dollars have not met the total costs for match obligations. **Resources Required: up to \$100,000 annually**

9. Office of Undergraduate Research (Goals 7, 8, 9)

The Office of Undergraduate Research was formally established in November, 2003 and Dr. Jill Singer was named as Director. The OUR is responsible for institutionalizing undergraduate research and its activities include the annual college-wide student research and creativity symposium, the undergraduate summer research program, the undergraduate research travel award and a newly created program to provide support for faculty development across the campus to increase opportunities for students to participate in research experiences. **Resources Required: Funding has been provided by Office of Academic Affairs (\$54,000 FY 04)**

10. Establish a Campus Wide Visiting Scholars Program (Goals 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

The purpose of the visiting scholars program will be to bring distinguished scholars, scientists, writers and other career professionals to the campus to provide new ideas and stimulation for faculty and students while at the same time nurturing better relations with the community. The scholar(s) will interact closely with departmental faculty members and students, assist in campus-based research, conduct campus seminars, and provide on and off-campus lectures to the public. Scholars will be invited for short periods of time from one or two weeks up to one semester. Depending on available funding multiple scholars can be selected each year. Annually the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will solicit proposals from the academic departments describing how a visiting scholar will help advance the department's research and scholarship agenda. The Provost will make awards to one or more departments to maximize the use of available funds and best further the college's goals. **Resources Required: up to \$65,000 annually. This program is scheduled for implementation in Fall 2005. The college**

will seek an endowment of \$1.5 million to permanently establish the program.

**11. Research Foundation and Buffalo State College Foundation
Coordination Activities (Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9)**

A multi-year plan will be developed which will establish priorities and formalize the working relationship between the Research Foundation and the Buffalo State College Foundation in support of funding for research, scholarship and creative activities across the campus. The SUNY Board of Director's Campus Related Foundations Guidelines and the SUNY Agreement will provide the framework for the implementation of the plan.

Prepared by:

Dr. Richard S. Podemski, Dean, Graduate Studies and Research

Mr. Edgar (Ted) Turkle, Director, Buffalo State College Research Foundation

Dr. Dennis Mike, Chair, Research and Creativity Council, Associate Professor,
Department of Elementary Education and Reading

Research and Creativity Council (2003-04)

Dennis Mike, RCC Chair, Associate Professor, Elementary Education and
Reading

Kimberly Bagley, Associate Professor, Chemistry

Nancy Chicola, Associate Professor, Elementary Education and Reading

Janet Kaye, Assistant Professor Communication

James Maxwell, Associate Professor, Business

Dennis McCarthy, Associate Dean, Arts and Humanities

Carolyn Ann Morris-Hunt, Director, External Development,
Institutional Advancement

Karen O'Quin, Associate Dean, Natural and Social Sciences

Richard S. Podemski, Dean, Graduate Studies and Research

Pamela Schuetze, Associate Professor, Psychology

Jill Singer, Professor, Earth Sciences and Science Education and
Director, Office of Undergraduate Research

Gary Solar, Assistant Professor, Earth Sciences and Science Education

Jerry Trentham, Assistant Professor, Performing Arts

Ted Turkle, Director, Research Foundation of SUNY, Buffalo State College

Rita Zientek, Interim Associate Dean, Applied Science and Education

Gina Game, RCC Reporting Secretary, Research Foundation of SUNY,
Buffalo State College