

Prescott, Shannon

From: The Liberal Arts Faculty and Staff Announcement List [LIBERAL-ARTS@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU] on behalf of Johnson, Charles [cjohnson@TAMU.EDU]
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2008 11:24 AM
To: LIBERAL-ARTS@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU
Subject: Appointment of Ad Hoc Research Strengths Advisory Committee

September 26, 2008

E-MEMORANDUM

TO: College of Liberal Arts Faculty and Staff
FROM: Charles A. Johnson, Dean
RE: Appointment of Ad Hoc Research Strengths Advisory Committee

I am pleased to inform you about the organization of the Ad Hoc Research Strengths Advisory Committee for the College of Liberal Arts. This committee will play a vital role as the college responds to Texas A&M University's Academic Master Planning process. Specifically, the committee will review white paper proposals and suggest linkages among various proposals that might lead to designation of comprehensive college strengths. Further, this committee will be instrumental in the development of compelling white papers for consideration by the university's research roadmap committee.

The membership of the committee is:

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|-------------------|---|
| Claudia Nelson | Department of English and Director, Women's Studies |
| Eric Rothenbuhler | Department of Communication |
| Julia Blackwelder | Department of History |
| Quan Li | Department of Political Science |
| Winfred Arthur | Department of Psychology |
| Jane Sell | Department of Sociology |

Since this is an important advisory group similar to the Dean's Advisory Committee, I will serve as chair of the committee.

Role of Research Strengths Advisory Committee

In the following section of this email you will find information relating to the nature and submission of college-level white papers. This information is drawn from the email describing the college-level academic master planning process. Information relating to the university and college processes is available at the following URL:

<http://clla.tamu.edu/collegeinfo/keyissues/academic-master-plan/> .

My expectation is that the college's Research Strengths Advisory Committee will evaluate and draw links between faculty proposals. I will also rely on the Executive Council and the posting of the white papers to encourage creative thinking about connections. The committee's deliberations should lead to the designation by October 27th of sets of collaborative white papers sharing a similar theme or focus. The authors of white papers

included in these designated sets would be invited to collaborate further on their proposals and to submit a revised white paper for their group by November 10th.

The authors of papers not identified for further development as part of the college's planning may seek a partnership with faculty groups preparing invited revised white papers. Of course, white papers not identified for further development may be refined and submitted in the university's round of white papers due on January 12, 2009. I would especially encourage submission of these papers to the University Research Roadmap Committee if there were potential partnerships with faculty groups in other colleges.

The second round of invited revised papers would also be reviewed by the college committee and a draft statement of the college's research strengths would follow from these papers. This statement would be posted for comments on November 24th.

General Instructions for Submission of College-Level White Papers:

White papers should propose a particular research strength for the College of Liberal Arts that is important today and can be sustained for the next 5 to 7 to 10 years. The first round of college-level white papers is due October 6th.

The white paper should address the following items and questions:

1. Describe briefly and succinctly the particular research strength.
2. Briefly list the academic programs and faculty in the college and university who would contribute to the research strength.
3. What evidence best demonstrates that the proposed area of scholarship or creative work is a research strength that is both broad and deep in the college?
4. How would the proposed research strength contribute to the university's development of a landmark research area that addresses a grand challenge facing society?

The white paper should be submitted in Word format, and it should not exceed two pages in length – 500 words maximum (excluding the title, author information, and a one-sentence description). White papers exceeding this limit will be returned for editing. Please email white papers to Shannon Prescott at sprescott@tamu.edu. All white papers will be posted to the college website on October 8th for review and comment by faculty, staff, and students.

Include the following in the white paper:

- Title of paper
- Author(s), academic title(s), academic unit(s)
- One-sentence description of white paper (will be used to describe paper when posted online)
- Brief description of proposed research strength
- Brief responses to Questions 2-4 above
- NO supporting documents (i.e. attachments, appendices, charts, diagrams, web links, etc.)

Paralleling the criteria to be used in the university-level reviews of white papers, the criteria to be used in evaluating proposed research strengths include:

- The merit and potential for societal and scholarly impact
- The possibilities for multidisciplinary involvement in the research area within the College of Liberal Arts and with faculty in other colleges at Texas A&M
- Alignment with *Vision 2020*

- Existence of a critical mass of faculty expertise and demonstrated excellence
- Availability of or plans for space and infrastructure to support the research area
- Possibilities for external support from governmental, corporate, or foundation sources through competitive grants (e.g., NSF, NIH, NEH, NEA), awards (e.g., Guggenheim, Humboldt, Wilson), or contracts (e.g., DoD, DoEd, HHS)

The white papers will be evaluated by the Research Strengths Advisory Committee and the dean's office with particular emphasis on responses to questions 1 through 4 and the bulleted criteria listed above.

Conclusion

Let me express my appreciation for your participation in this academic master planning process. I look forward to reviewing white papers submitted by October 6th and working with the Research Strengths Advisory Committee in identifying compelling papers leading to the designation of research strengths in the college and the preparation of well articulated white papers for the university's research roadmap committee.