Producing a Strong Research Proposal

Fairfield University supports faculty research in a number of meaningful ways. The Faculty Research Handbook Committee evaluates applications for the following grants and makes recommendations to the Provost's Office:

> Pre-tenure Research Leave
> Sabbatical
> Senior Summer Fellowship
> Summer Research Stipend
> Research Grant
> Faculty Grant
> Wall Award (the FRC chair participates in the selection process for the Wall Award)

13 Tips for Producing a Strong Research Proposal:

1. Closely review the application guidelines (available on the General Faculty Secretary's website, which we recommend bookmarking: http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/gfs/\) and adhere to them very closely. Make note of any deadlines, which are published at the start of the academic year. Follow the same numbering system used in the application.

2. Explain why the proposed research is important to the applicant's field.

3. Target your application for an audience of faculty who are not specialists in your field. Eliminate unnecessary jargon/discipline-specific language and explain essential unfamiliar terms.

4. Clearly explain the methodology to be used and what data will be examined, especially if quantitative research is being conducted. When access to data sets is essential to the project, applicants should indicate whether access to the data has been secured.

5. Explain precisely what will be done during the grant period. Include a timeline.

6. Describe anticipated outcomes for the proposed project.

7. Indicate how the research will be disseminated (ex: chapter in a book under contract, article to be submitted to the Journal of X, proposal presentation at the American Conference of X).

8. If appropriate, consider including evaluations of work cited in the proposal (ex: a confirmation letter from the editor, a reader report, etc.)

9. Describe the outcome of previous research grants/sabbaticals.

10. Proofread with care for spelling and grammar.

11. If there is a page/word limit, honor it.

12. Circulate the proposal to several colleagues for comment before submitting it for review.

13. In sum, make it easy for the committee to recommend the proposal by producing a clear, thoughtful, and organized application.

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