

SECTION 10 – STRATEGIC POSITION AND DIRECTION

These notes will appear earlier in the self-study:

Note on acronyms: DFRS: Director of Faculty Research Support, CFR: Corporate and Foundation Relations

Note on terminology: the DFRS is an individual in the Office of the Dean and doesn't have an "office" of her own. That said, the work of supporting grants and fellowships is conceived as the work of an "office" – perhaps an office of one, perhaps an office of more than one if additional staff is possible in the future. In such situations, the "office" is referred to as "DFRS/Office."

10.0: OVERVIEW

- 1) Overarching goals for the DFRS/Office
- 2) Interconnected Strategies for Reaching Office Goals

10.1: STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- A. DFRS Summary of Factors That Position Us Well for Success
- B. Summary of Strengths and Opportunities from Faculty Survey
- C. Summary of Strengths and Opportunities from Administrative Office Review

Attachment 10.1.A: Strengths and Opportunities: Quotes from Faculty Survey

10.2: WEAKNESS AND NEEDS

- A. Summary of Weaknesses and Needs from Faculty Survey
- B. Summary of Weaknesses and Needs from Administrative Office Review
- C. Summary of Weaknesses and Needs from DFRS (elaborated on in Section 10.3)

Attachment 10.2.B: Weaknesses, Needs and Recommendations: Quotes from Faculty Survey

10.3: PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

- A. Develop culture for long-range, strategic planning for external funding
- B. Develop mechanisms for faculty to provide ongoing guidance to DFRS/Office
- C. Foster intentional grant-seeking culture
- D. Develop mechanisms to provide grant-seekers with structured time to make progress on grants and fellowships
- E. Enhance resources in targeted ways in order to invite engagement and grant activity from all interested faculty, regardless of division, rank, and identity
- F. Formalize the "Office" in order to build capacity
- G. Develop systematic processes of post-award and compliance support throughout the lifespan of active grants
- H. Evaluate the structure and functions of the "Office" including its scope and its capacity for collaborations with allied offices

Section 10.0: Overview

There are a number of factors that position Colorado College for success in the area of external funding for scholarly and creative work. There is a changing culture; incoming faculty are increasing both research-active and grant-active. The College has numerous sources of internal funding that can support scholarly work. The DFRS/Office has embarked on new messaging, outreach and programming to help unify the grants community. The DFRS/Office has strong relationships with numerous administrative offices in support of external funding, which position the College for improved collaborations. The DFRS's past one-on-one support of faculty applications has created trust and an interest in seeking external funding provided they have the time and appropriate support. The CC faculty who have sought external funding, or who have expressed interest in seeking external funding, are interested in being in community.

Overarching Goals for DFRS/Office in Next 5 Years

As a result of this self-study, the DFRS has articulated the following goals for the "Office" for the next ~5 years. The Office aims to:

- 1) Help faculty interested in external funding to develop confidence in the likelihood of success
- 2) Ensure grant-seekers feel part of a strong grants community
- 3) Keep the grants community well informed about ongoing and new resources & opportunities
- 4) Support faculty from all disciplines, ranks and identities equitably
- 5) Strengthen internal collaborations to manage existing external funding and leverage additional resources
- 6) Assess the scope of the "Office" to ensure we are appropriately structured to leverage success

Interconnected Strategies for Reaching DFRS/Office Goals

As a result of this self-study, the DFRS has articulated the following interrelated strategies for reaching the above goals. The Office aims to:

- A) Develop a culture for long-range, strategic planning for external funding
- B) Develop ongoing mechanisms for faculty to provide ongoing guidance to DFRS/Office
- C) Foster an intentional grant-seeking culture
- D) Develop mechanisms to provide grant-seekers with structured time to make progress on grants and fellowships

- E) Enhance resources in targeted ways in order to invite engagement and grant activity from all faculty, regardless of division, rank, identity, etc.
- F) Formalize the “Office” in order to build capacity
- G) Develop systematic processes of post-award and compliance support throughout the lifespan of active grants
- H) Evaluate the structure and functions of the “Office” including its scope and its capacity for collaborations with allied offices

Section 10.1: Strengths and Opportunities

DFRS’S SUMMARY OF FACTORS THAT POSITION US WELL FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Changing Culture

- Incoming faculty tend to be research-active and grant-active
- The College’s Antiracism Initiative, which demonstrates the College’s forward thinking, puts us at a strategic advantage
- There is interest in grant activity by academic staff, which could be encouraged

Internal Funding

- The College has numerous and generous sources of internal funding, which signal the College’s support of scholarly and creative work
- The SEGway program is viewed as a strong asset in supporting research and encouraging future grant proposals

Recent Messaging

- DFRS has initiated new comprehensive messaging about needing a “long runway” before applying in order to allow faculty to engage in long-term strategic activities
- Training sessions encourage faculty to plan on resubmitting, given that likelihood of funding increases significantly with resubmissions

Recent Outreach and Programming

- There has been a significant and intentional expansion of resources & trainings
- One-on-one meetings with tenure-track candidates have been well received by Chairs and new faculty
- Irons in the Fire has been well-received

DFRS Proposal Support

- One-on-one proposal support with the DFRS have been viewed as effective and supportive

DFRS/Office Philosophy

- All grants and fellowships are valuable, regardless of amount
- The process of applying for grants and fellowships can be valuable, regardless of funding
- The success of the DFRS/Office is measured by the quality of support

Recent Grants Success

- Grant activity and success has been strong in the area of the natural sciences. Success leads to more success, as we document to funders that we have a strong research community and the institutional structure to support research grants
- Past grant/fellowship activity and success in the humanities and social sciences should signal that we at CC are competitive

Grants Community

- Faculty expressed interest in building the grants community and have a tradition of being generous in sharing their knowledge and resources with their colleagues

Internal Collaborations

- Administrative Office Survey: As found in the study conducted with 12 individuals in nine offices by the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, the DFRS/Office has strong relationships with a number of internal offices that support the research enterprise. Positive feedback themes included Positive [Experience], Precise, Proactive, and Knowledgeable

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM FACULTY SURVEY FINDINGS (SEE ATTACHMENT 10.1.A)

- Trainings by DFRS have been well received, particularly one-on-one sessions
- One-on-one proposal support by DFRS has been effective
- SEGway is considered a strong asset
- There was general appreciation for the recent expansion in the availability of resources & trainings
- Some faculty expressed appreciation for Controller/DFRS collaboration but recognize that more support would be beneficial

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM FINDINGS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW
(SEE ATTACHMENT 7.2.A)

- Administrative participants interviewed by Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness cited working with the DFRS as an entirely or almost entirely positive experience, noting themes such as “precise,” “proactive” and “knowledgeable.”
- “The ultimate takeaways from the positive feedback portion of the interview appeared that everyone enjoyed working with [DFRS] and she has an incredible amount of experience in her field and is an extremely professional individual. Participants also loved her ideas and the work she has done to further streamline the grant process, from grant writing to process[ing] payments. Many also cited [DFRS’s] workshops as great resource for faculty and staff when applying for grants and her accessibility and hands on approach to coaching people through the grant process a positive component to their work.”

Section 10.2: Weaknesses and Needs

SUMMARY OF WEAKNESSES AND NEEDS FROM FACULTY SURVEY

The following themes emerged

- Faculty time and energy
- Faculty confidence
- Faculty feeling encouraged to apply
- Seeking more structure in preparing grants
- Seeking comprehensive information and discipline-specific information
- Seeking more support/familiarity with and training on resources
- Post-Award Support

(SEE ATTACHMENT 10.2.A FOR QUOTES ORGANIZED BY THEMES)

The faculty also made several recommendations based on needs, including:

- Workshops or trainings that get more granular about the writing of grant narratives, including discussion of the structure of proposals and the level of detail that should be included in various contexts.
- Broad, proactive communication on her office and services, including department-focused email or visits.
- More support for the arts, perhaps in alignment with Office of Creativity and Innovation, as a “new avenue of service.”
- Interest in a variety of “proposal cohorts” as a way to create accountability, improve the quality of proposals submitted, and as a “model of collective and community success.”

SUMMARY OF WEAKNESSES AND NEEDS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES REVIEW (SEE ATTACHMENT 7.2.A)

Constructive Themes:

- Communication
- Additional Support
- Working Too Many Roles
- Automation
- Integration, and
- Promote Faculty Work

[Semi-colons added for clarity] “The major themes of the constructive feedback predominantly centralized around problems with communication with the grant process and emphasize the importance of providing [DFRS] with additional staff or resources. The common themes participants conveyed in their interviews was the need for more communication on projects and grant applications, either through automation of forms, some tracking mechanism, such as an excel sheet people can use to send updates about a grant application’s status; additional support, or people who explicitly said that the office needed more resources, specifically mentioning more staff or an administrative assistant; workload of the office, which many people thought that [DFRS] had too many responsibilities for a single person to take on; Automation, or the idea to automate the grant process to further streamline communication; integration, or melding CFR or similar offices with Office of Faculty Research Support; and promote faculty’s work, or highlight the work faculty have been doing, specifically with students, emphasize Faculty of color and faculty from marginalized demographics, and any nationally relevant grants that a faculty member received.”

SUMMARY OF WEAKNESSES AND NEEDS FROM DFRS (ELABORATED ON IN FOLLOWING SECTION, SECTION 10.3. - RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES)

- Need for better communication methods with faculty & chairs/directors
- Need to support faculty supporting faculty (grant-writing groups, Pay It Forward Panels)
- Need for better support/resources for faculty in certain disciplines, demographics, and career stages
- Need for more intentional work to broaden our funding landscape
- Need to take better advantage of research resources (eg. Pivot and CITI)
- Need to better support grant-seeking culture (Mission Statement, capturing data consistently)
- Need for more systematic support for post-award management
- Need for more time and attention on compliance matters

Section 10.3: Preliminary Recommended Strategies for Achieving Goals

As noted in Section 10.0 above, the DFRS has articulated the six goals for the “Office” for the next ~5 years. The DFRS has begun to articulate the following strategies for achieving these goals. The following recommendations are preliminary. A final report, informed by recommendations by the external review team, would outline the full rationale for each action step as well as potential budgetary impacts and other considerations.

A) Develop culture for long-range, strategic planning for external funding

Overview: While some may view grant proposal development as a means to an end, a short-term activity that leads to additional funding for a particular project, a more effective mindset is to view grant and fellowship work as part of one’s ecosystem of scholarly work – a form of professional development, which can be undertaken over the course of one’s professional career. With this frame of mind, it is appropriate to approach training in grants in a methodical way, leading to more effective grants and fellowship applications over time.

Recommended Action:

A.1. Offer grants preparation training that accommodates faculty’s schedules

The DFRS will shift to on-demand, individual training for all faculty, using recently developed PowerPoints. Faculty will begin with a one-on-one Grants Orientation session, and move through the training sessions as their schedules and interest permit. (See [Flow Chart](#).)

Rationale: For many years DFRS has offered training in an informal way – during the process of working with faculty one-on-one on grants. The slate of programming that the DFRS has developed was designed to ensure that all faculty receive the same comprehensive foundation of information. While originally the intent was to present most information in group settings, a lesson learned during Fall 2021 is that even when training sessions are offered multiple times a semester, it’s unlikely that a particular session at a particular time will align with the busy schedules of the relatively few faculty who might be interested in and ready for that topic at that time. While this may not appear to be “efficient,” it is far more important to create time for these conversations to take place.

Logistics: DFRS to block off Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for this purpose. DFRS to use Calendly link in her email signature to encourage faculty to sign up for a one-on-one session at a convenient time. The topic at any given time will depend on where that faculty member is at that time; we will move through the trainings as outlined in the “flow chart.”

Anticipated Challenges: Faculty can be surprisingly modest about “claiming” help on their research. For example, the DFRS has heard over the years many faculty say such things as, “Oh, it’s a small grant. It’s not worth your time.” It would be very important to emphasize to faculty that the DFRS has set aside the time to help all interested faculty with individualized one-on-one discussions.

B) Develop ongoing mechanisms for faculty guidance to DFRS/Office

Rationale: As the findings from the faculty survey demonstrated, the faculty have many ideas and “friendly amendments” for improving the forms and methods of support offered by the DFRS/Office. It would benefit the DFRS/Office and faculty to ensure that faculty have concrete, understandable, accessible ways to provide feedback to the DFRS/Office.

While many changes can be addressed easily in an iterative fashion, some changes by the DFRS/Office requires strategic thinking. With this understanding, in 2014 the Faculty Scholarship Action Team recommended that the College establish an advisory board for external research support. The faculty opted not to pursue this at the time due to committee overloads and a focus at the time on compliance concerns. However, in order to make progress on more complex changes in support, it is vital to have faculty offering guidance in a holistic way.

Such a faculty advisory board could help support, guide and advise the DFRS/Office in making changes recommended by the Self-Study/External Review.

Recommended Actions:

B.1. DFRS will offer a method for ongoing anonymous feedback via link in her email signature and on her webpage

B.2. The multi-divisional SEGway Committee’s charge should be expanded beyond allocation of SEGway funding, tentatively titled Advisory Committee for External Support (ACES). The Committee should also include representation from CFR to encourage consideration of academic grants more broadly.

Anticipated Challenges: The faculty body can be understandably hesitant to increase the number of standing faculty committees. Advisory board would lead to greater demand on faculty time, but with the benefit of a more holistic, strategic overview of improvement to support for all faculty.

C) Foster an intentional grant-seeking culture

Rationale: We need a way for faculty at all stages of the process to be “plugged in” to resources and support. Joining a “grants collective” would allow new faculty to actively identify as being interested in pursuing grants in the future, which would facilitate earlier communications with the DFRS/Office. It would allow faculty engaged in the process to lean on various sources of support, including the DFRS and other faculty. And it would allow experienced faculty to more readily share their knowledge with the community.

Recommended Actions:

C.1. Develop and support methods of targeted communications and connection

(“Targeted Transmission Affinity Groups” or TTAGs) This would involve the development of “opt-in” email lists based on the following, for example:

- Divisions (humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and creative production)
- Career stage (early career, mid-career and later career faculty)
- Demographics (marginalized populations)
- Particular key funders (NEH, ACLS, NSF, Fulbright, etc.)

Targeted affinity groups would facilitate communication between the DFRS and faculty when new opportunities arise, provide a direct method for the DFRS to advertise training sessions geared for particular disciplines, and support reminders on resources and deadlines. Previously, targeted emails could be sent only to divisional listservs or to chairs/directors for distribution to their department/program, but there has been no way to reach out to particular faculty who might be mid-career in the sciences, and looking for more support. ([Ex, targeted way to reach out to faculty interested in NSF’s MCA solicitation, for example.](#))

DFRS will develop an Outlook or Google Form for faculty to use to express interest in affinity groups and other grants community opportunities.

C.2. Develop and support creation of Writing Affinity Groups (WAGs) for faculty who have identified a target funder and are beginning to develop a proposal.

Ideally faculty would be in a WAG for one to two years after first identifying a particular funder and then beginning to work on a proposal. “WAGS” could be created based on communication in the TAGs; people identify being interested in working methodically on a grant proposal to a particular funder over an extended period of time. DFRS could work with WAGs to create and support dedicated time together, perhaps by reserving

the Faculty Commons for a few hours each week, or by reserving the CC Cabin for a 3-day grant writing retreat. Faculty within a WAG would become a natural cohort to read each others' drafts, which is an extremely valuable practice for the reader and writer alike.

C.3. Develop and promote ways for experienced faculty to support the grants and fellowships work of other faculty. In the past, some experienced faculty have served as readers of colleagues' draft applications, which has benefited both the competitiveness of the grant application as well as an enhanced sense of community.

This might also involve the organization of "Pay It Forward" Panels that would highlight the wealth of knowledge on campus. The DFRS has had interest in developing "Pay It Forward" panels (see possible topics and panelists in **Attachment 10.4.C.**) for some time, but has been concerned with faculty burnout. Faculty and staff have, over the years, expressed interest in serving on a number of panels, including

- a panel on the non-financial benefits of applying for grants (if by unfunded faculty, "Failure Fest")
- a panel on what faculty learned by attending CUR or NSF conference

C.4. Develop and support ways for participating in the grants community to be rewarded. As one faculty member put it, "with a model of collective and community success, participating would be an asset in the tenure or review process."

For example, language could be added to Section VII.A.2 of the Faculty Handbook (The Tenure Decision/Criteria for Tenure/Scholarship, page 17), such as:

Scholarly activity may include: research and experimentation; writing, analyzing, creating; conference papers or presentations; presentations to the public; work in progress; responsible roles in professional organizations; **active engagement in the College's grant-seeking community**; applying for and receiving outside grants and fellowships; developing new fields of expertise, and collaborating with students in any of the aforementioned activities.

C.5. Develop and support ways for participating in the grants community to be recognized.

- Return to offering an annual recognition event for faculty who have applied and who are considering applying one day.
- Identify more ways for faculty to be recognized for the work that they pursue with students, made possible by grants

Anticipated Challenges: The primary challenge will be for the DFRS/Office to have the time to organize, implement and maintain these efforts.

D) Develop mechanisms to provide grant-seekers with structured time to make progress on grants and fellowships

Rationale: We need a way for interested faculty to build grants work into their schedule in a way that helps them experience consistent and regular progress toward a grants/fellowship goal.

Recommended Actions:

As described above in C.2, the DFRS/Office could create dedicated time during the academic year by reserving the Faculty Commons at regular times during the block, or by DFRS helping plan short grant-writing getaways at the CC Cabin, based on the request of faculty in particular Writing Affinity Groups. In addition, the following extended programs could provide dedicated time to make progress on grant and fellowship proposal development:

D.1. Develop a three-year, summer-only program to foster strategic approach to grant and fellowship activity. In first summer, foundational training is provided, the best-fit funder is identified and resources are identified to best support an eventual proposal to that funder, including internal and external resources, and strategic activities are identified to position the faculty member for success. In the second summer, a first draft of the proposal is begun, writing conventions are discussed, sample proposals to that funder are reviewed and discussed, and friendly and expert readers are identified, with a plan developed to share multiple drafts over the next year. In the third summer, the proposal is finalized (although timing may be adjusted to account for funders' deadlines). Faculty would receive a modest stipend for participation via SEGway program.

D.2. In addition to D.1. or as an alternative, develop a two-year internal fellowship program to help faculty through training and planning in two years. Faculty would become eligible for this program after completing a foundational series in their discipline (Top Priority Questionnaire completed, EGP drafted, target funder identified, several strategic steps identified).

Strategic steps taken in Year 1 and 2 -- serving as a grant reviewer if possible, sample proposals gathered, expert reader identified, being part of writing cohort based on the funder/discipline, travel to an archive or to meet with a collaborator or other expert (some steps funded by SEGway)

In Year 2, DFRS could arrange for time at the CC cabin for concerted time away for faculty to begin/finalize writing and/or perhaps faculty could be awarded a research development block to substantially draft or finalize a grant or fellowship.

Anticipated Challenges: If faculty are awarded a fellowship block as part of the fellowship program, it would be necessary to identify how to prioritize faculty or applicants. Perhaps we prioritize marginalized faculty? Or faculty who have significant research costs? Or faculty who are due to take a sabbatical in 3 (or 4?) years?

E) Enhance resources in targeted ways in order to invite engagement and grant activity from all interested faculty, regardless of division, rank, identity, etc.

Context: While all of the recommendations through Section 10 aim to invite greater engagement and grant activity by CC faculty, this section aims to note specific actions that will be needed in order to provide a more equitable experience for all faculty. As outlined in Section 7, there are a variety of users who could benefit from additional support, including interested faculty from **disciplines** such as the arts, humanities, social sciences; **ranks**, such as associate professors and full professors, and interested faculty with **marginalized** identities.

Addressing issues of confidence: As part of the goal of reaching all interested faculty, an important and difficult task will be to reach faculty who self-select out of the process due to a belief that liberal arts college faculty are not competitive or it's too difficult to find a potential funder that will align with their interests. Addressing this will require both creating the resources that lesser-supported faculty need and communicating the availability of these resources. An overarching goal of all of the following recommendations is to send a clear message that all faculty – when provided appropriate support - are competitive.

Recommended Actions:

E.1. Develop trainings designed for faculty in lesser-supported **disciplines**. In Spring 2021 the DFRS developed a “Key Funders in Your Field” training geared for faculty in the Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences. Since March 2021, she has planned to develop a parallel series for faculty in the Arts and faculty in the Quantitative Social Sciences and Natural Sciences, but this has been delayed due to time constraints.

Note regarding training for interested faculty in creative production: Funding in the arts tends to be highly specialized; a funder of film may not necessarily also fund dance or theater. A funder of creative fiction may not also support poetry. Therefore, this requires that the DFRS/Office develop distinct resources for each art form.

E.2. Encourage engagement with all **ranks**, beginning with the development of a “Grants Reboot” foundational training session for tenured faculty.

As described in **Section 7** of the Self-Study, there appears to be a significant impact on grant activity due to faculty moving from tenure track to tenured positions.

Of the 51 distinct faculty applicants involved in a proposal in the last 5 years, 65% submitted at the assistant rank, 20% submitted at the associate rank, and 16% submitted at the rank of full professor. See Attachment 7.1.B.

What are the factors that are contributing to this? How could the College better address these? How could the College better support faculty who are coming out of heavy service obligations and are interested in returning to research and grants activity?

While it is important to further explore this issue, the DFRS proposes one recommended action to begin the process: the development of a foundation session – comparable to the “Grants Orientation” session – geared for tenured faculty who are interested in pursuing grants and fellowships. Tentatively titled a “Grants Reboot,” this session will allow the DFRS to share with seasoned faculty a number of concepts that she has clarified through the recent development of her trainings (for example, her six goals for faculty, the importance of taking a long runway to an application, the importance of resubmission, etc.) These concepts have been shared consistently with new faculty, who have been the primary participants in the Grants Orientation Session (to date 20 of 24 attendees are assistant professors). It is important to share these concepts with associate and full professors, both to better support tenured faculty in their search for external funding and so that all interested faculty at the College have a similar foundational understanding of the grant-seeking process.

E.3. Provide equitable support to **marginalized faculty** (see also **DEI section**)

There are a number of ways that the DFRS/Office could improve in order to better address issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion (See DEI Section 4.5 – Weaknesses and Needs and DEI Section 4.6 – Future Directions). Here we reiterate a few recommended actions from Section 4.6:

- Development of trainings designed to intentionally support marginalized faculty
- Update the DFRS’s talking points with tenure track candidates to include information of particular benefit to marginalized faculty
- Invite all faculty, particularly marginalized faculty, to “opt in” to grant-seeking affinity groups as they transition to the College and ensure that all faculty, particularly marginalized faculty, participate in a grant-writing accountability group

- Spend intentional time updating Curated Lists and other resources with funding opportunities of particular interest to either marginalized faculty or faculty from majoritized social groups with an interest in research that advances our understanding of inequities, isms, specific cultural groups, etc.
- Identify ways to ensure that minoritized faculty are encouraged to both take advantage of the SEGway program and submit external funding applications, such as those suggested for creating structured time in **Strategy D** above
- Continue to encourage marginalized faculty to present at Irons in the Fire
- Ensure communications plan is accessible, welcoming to marginalized faculty, and clearly outlines office services and the benefits of working together

E.4. Invest in targeted activities that **enhance funding landscape** of potential funders for all faculty, particularly lesser-supported faculty:

- Intentionally expand the “breadth” of potential funders on the DFRS/Office’s radar through various means, such as reviewing the CLASP grants list with particular attention to funders of lesser-supported faculty noted above.
- Intentionally expand the “depth” of the DFRS/office’s familiarity with a wider range of funders through various means, such as attending more funder-provided webinars, spending dedicated time gathering examples of funded proposals to lesser-known funders, etc.

Once this knowledge is developed, it is important to capture and share this knowledge in easily accessible resources:

- Identify avenues for making lesser-known funders more easily “findable” to faculty, such as by adding them to Pivot Curated Lists, the EGP template, the “Funders in Your Field” training. As these avenues are identified, communications tailored to target populations will be increasingly important to ensure faculty become aware of these avenues.

The process will be reinforcing: As more faculty engage in the process, more faculty will take the Grant Orientation or Grants Reboot training, complete the Top Priorities Questionnaire, and initiate a 5-year EGP plan. Therefore the DFRS will become more aware of the faculty’s research interests and over time it will become easier for the DFRS to match faculty with potential funders, some lesser-known and some well-known, and to direct them to helpful resources.

Anticipated Challenges: Faculty who want to work independently... find ways to connect them with possible resources like Stipend Supplement Fund... Who else has not been considered in this overview?

F) Formalize the “Office” in order to build capacity

Overview: This Self-Study sets out an ambitious set of goals for the next five years. In order to take the “Office” to the next level, a variety of elements need to be implemented.

Recommended Actions:

F.1. Development of a Mission Statement for the “Office.” As noted in Section 3, the drafting of a Mission Statement for the DFRS/Office will be an important step in concisely defining how we will reach our vision.

F.2. More Proactive and Systematic Pre-Award Support. There are a number of ways that faculty could be better supported, provided the DFRS/Office has the time to more regularly update tracking documentation so that the following activities could be initiated:

- proactive outreach to faculty to schedule next one-on-one training in their “Flow Chart”
- dedicated review of potential funding sources – beyond the usual suspects – for faculty in advance of planning meetings
- proactive outreach to faculty within ~3 years of next sabbatical
- proactive support of grant-writing affinity groups (scheduling space, providing resources)

F.3. More Regular Reporting & Capturing of Data. As the DFRS is a member of the Office of the Dean, there has been no reporting by the “office.” Metrics have been noted in the DFRS’s annual self-evaluation, but consistent information has not been captured over time.

As the adage goes, what gets measured gets done. Therefore, it’s critical that the metrics identified for regular tracking align with the College’s priorities. It would be appropriate for the Advisory Board (recommended in Section 10.4.B) to work with the DFRS to identify these metrics, which may include:

- Number of proposals (% of 1st, % of resubmissions)
- Divisional breakdown
- Breakdown by federal & private funders
- Number of students supported by federal research grants
- Number of faculty who participated in various trainings
- Number of faculty with EGP

- Number of faculty who authored publications related to grant funding
- Number of students who co-authored publications related to grant funding
- Number of faculty who served as a reviewer

F.4. Additional Staffing for the Office. Additional staffing was recommended by the Faculty Scholarship Action Team in Spring 2014, however the DFRS deemed it important to develop clarity on the kind of support such an individual would provide. As a result of this self-study, the DFRS feels much more confident in the ways that the Office could grow and the kind of support that would be needed moving forward.

As introduced in the Vision Statement, Section 5.X:

“If additional staffing is deemed a priority, the [new] position should be designed as an entry-level exempt position, perhaps at the Coordinator or Assistant Director level, with the expectation that the DFRS and the new position both share in administrative duties. In particular, the College would design the position with the intent to recruit only individuals who identify as being a member of the BIPOC community, as there is a concerning lack of diversity in the Research Administration profession and establishing such a position would position CC as a leader in this way.”

As part of designing the position itself, the DFRS would work with appropriate members of the CC community – as well as others in her professional network – to develop a mentoring plan that is supportive and comprehensive. The DFRS would also work to develop her professional expertise, her supervisory skills and her understanding of antiracist policies and practices in order to provide an excellent opportunity for growth for herself, the individual in the new position, and the office as a whole.

F.5. Develop a strategic communication plan to ensure all faculty are aware of resources and opportunities. Faculty and DFRS/Office would both benefit from a more comprehensive communication plan that ensures that all faculty are aware of the range of resources that exist and how to access them.

Anticipated Challenges: [To be added](#)

G) Develop systematic processes of post-award and compliance support throughout the lifespan of active grants

Rationale: Our current post-award support can be best characterized as “Bookend Support” – we offer strong support to launch a recent award through the Post-Award Meeting, and we provide strong support as we wrap up an award, but we have not had the capacity to provide regular, systematic review of spending. Our goal would be to strongly support existing external funding in a way that is consistent with the strong pre-award support faculty receive.

Recommended Actions:

G.1. Explore how to better ensure consistent, ongoing financial oversight for all active grants. Based on the 2014 FSAT report, some administrative staff don’t feel comfortable questioning faculty spending. While understandable, this remains a concern. In addition, handling federal funding consistently across all grants is very important, and this is difficult under our decentralized process. Finally, some departmental staff support faculty strongly, while other departmental staff do not. The College should engage in a review of peer institutions’ staffing, with an eye toward determining whether the College should hire a part-time grants accountant. If the College does not hire a grants accountant who would take over the duties of processing all faculty grant spending, the College should enhance training and compensation to departmental staff who support active grants.

G.1. Semi-annual Post-Award Tracking (SAPAT) Meetings. The DFRS, Controller, PI and staff assistant should meet in person/via zoom twice a year to review spending. Such regular meetings have been difficult due to time constraints. This would ensure that recent spending is accurately deducted from the account, the PI is better informed of the balance for future spending, and any questions are addressed in a more timely manner.

G.2. Quarterly Post-Award Tracking (QPAT) Meetings. The DFRS and Controller should meet quarterly to discuss new grants, review active grants that are nearing expiration, discuss unresolved issues, etc. The Controller recommends they meet in the middle of each quarter (February, May, August, October) in order to address any questions before billings are issued at the end of each quarter. At each QPAT would be a review of any grants that expired in the previous quarter, and closeout checklist completed for each grant.

G.3. Review of File Sharing. The DFRS and Controller should explore a strategy for document sharing (on the Grants Drive). Perhaps this would entail sharing only tracking documentation, such as lists of active grants. Perhaps this would entail sharing all Post-Award documentation. The goal would be to ensure that the DFRS and Controller have access to the most up-to-date information related to active grants.

G.4. Compliance Tracking and Policy Development.

As described in [Section XX](#), the DFRS is also the College’s Research Compliance Officer. Given the DFRS’s recent focus on outreach and trainings, it has been difficult to attend to compliance matters unless they are time sensitive. For example, the DFRS spends a portion of her time supporting the College’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, which is a federal requirement.

Policy Development: There is a need for a comprehensive review of existing policies and practices. For example, it is time for the College to have gift vs. grant procedures, a PI Eligibility policy, a Supplemental Pay policy, and an Export Control process, among others.

In the future, a “PHS Assurance” will be required once we obtain Public Health Service (eg, NIH) funding. We have had a few faculty apply for NIH funding in recent years, but we have not yet obtained NIH funding. We are not allowed to work on an Assurance until we are funded, but once we are funded, NIH will contact us to begin the Assurance process.

Compliance Tracking. The DFRS incorporates compliance tracking into her schedule on an ad hoc basis (Responsible Conduct of Research, Financial Conflict of Interest, Effort Reporting, Excluded Party List Review), but this could be made much more systematic.

Anticipated Challenges: [To be added](#)

H) Evaluate the structure and functions of the “Office” including its scope and its capacity for collaborations with allied offices

Overview: The current structure of the “Office” – as an individual with two job titles within the Dean’s Office – may hinder the long-term growth of the College’s support for external funding. However, there are a number of interrelated factors that should be considered in this assessment. A rationale is provided with each recommendation.

Recommended Actions:

H.1. Consider whether the DFRS/Office should play a larger role in supporting internal funding, particularly the exploration/development of an internal funding “Common App” to simplify the internal application process for faculty.

Rationale: The College is fortunate to have a number of internal funding sources managed in a decentralized way across the College. Faculty spend a fair amount of time preparing and adjusting internal funding applications to accommodate each application.

Recommendation: The College should explore developing a “Common App” that could be used for internal funding applications across the College.

H.2. Consider renaming the Office to signal a broader scope, one that provides a “home” for non-faculty sponsored projects, such as HEERF.

Rationale: The title and job duties of the DFRS are a vestige of the College’s decision to create the position in ~2005. The expectations of the “office” have become more complex, however the title/scope have not changed. In addition, federal funding like the College’s HEERF funding applications do not reflect “faculty research” and therefore do not fall under the official scope of the DFRS. And there is no other “natural home” for such federal funding.

Recommendation: Consider establishing an “Office” named the Office of Sponsored Projects, to be housed under Dean of Faculty. This would be more in keeping with the standards of our peers.

H.3. Consider how the DFRS/Office could better collaborate with allied offices to support the student experience.

Rationale: Perhaps the DFRS and CFR/Advancement could focus on developing an endowment to increase resources for student research. Perhaps the DFRS and CFR/Advancement could better support students’ applications for external funding. Considerations include:

- Students seeking federal funding (such as the competitive NIST Summer Undergraduate Research Program) do not have a clear method/office for support
- In Summer 2013, the DFRS collaborated with science faculty, Advancement and Communications to provide text to accompany photos of students conducting summer research. (Attachment XXX.) Enhanced communications & collaborations with CFR/Advancement/Communications could lead to more funding for undergraduate research and other important student experiences.
- In 2018 the DFRS created three new curated lists in Pivot: one captures more straightforward undergraduate research opportunities, one captures hard-to-categorize opportunities for stellar students (comparable to the Watson Fellowship) and one is for our more exceptional recent grads. Their use and effectiveness are not known at this time, but it would be valuable to explore making better use of this resource for our students' benefit.
- Support for GRFP and other student opps?

H.4. Consider how to better leverage collaborations with Corporate and Foundation Relations Office and Advancement more broadly

There is much potential for increased collaborations with CFR and/or Advancement. There are a number of factors that should be considered:

- Having two offices that support academic grants can be confusing to faculty, as described in Section 4.5.B, putting everyone at a disadvantage.
- Officially the DFRS's role is to support faculty funding goals, but as part of her daily work, she come across funding opportunities that can support all aspects of our academic mission. While some of these options are currently captured on the "Know Your Key Funders" page, a better way to share that information could be identified.
- Having the CFR Office set apart from academic leadership can lead to missed opportunities both large and small (See Attachment x.x for some of the larger opportunities.)
- While the individuals in CFR are motivated to work with faculty and leadership on all projects that are in alignment with the College's mission, the nature of Advancement's goal-setting paradigm means that pressures exist for the CFR officers to make decisions on how they allocate their time based on the potential award amounts.
- There may be times when faculty research would be best advanced through support from alumni. For example, in 2018 the DFRS worked with two faculty on a summary on the Fountain Valley Water Project, which was later presented to Advancement.

- One faculty member noted: “One other suggestion would be to tie in to the development office and see if an alum would sponsor a project.”

Recommendation: In 2018 the College explored how to better structure our grants offices. We believe that the model provided by Bowdoin College, wherein the two offices are co-located, may address some of the primary concerns. See **Attachment x.x**. Through physical proximity, we imagine more intentional collaborations that might include the development of consistent processes across the offices, and the development of trainings for faculty on how to work with CFR, comparable to the DFRS’s Grants Orientation, among many other benefits.

As noted in Recommendation B.2., an Advisory Committee (an Expanded SEGway committee) should include representation from CFR to allow for a more cohesive approach to academic grants.

Anticipated Challenges: [To be added](#)

Section 5.1: Vision Statement for 2026

Together, we create a vibrant, intentional community of faculty and staff who engage in grants and fellowships activity as part of the broader ecosystem of our scholarly activity and creative work. Recognizing that our research and creative work benefit both from the process of writing thoughtfully about the significance of our work as well as from sharing our written narratives with colleagues and reviewers, we foster a supportive environment for scholarly exchange. Encouraged by robust individualized programming and appropriate administrative support, we engage in strategic activities that position us well for long-term success. Because the strength of our engagement in research and creative work is clear and because such engagement enriches our teaching and thus enhances our mission to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country, the College advances creative ways to support our time and efforts in seeking external funding for our scholarly and creative work.