

# **2002-2003 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIR CHARLES PHELPS TAFT MEMORIAL FUND**

The Taft Fund continues to be one of the most important and reliable sources of support for scholarly activity in the humanities and social sciences in the McMicken College of Arts & Sciences. As the University and the College continue to struggle with funding, the Taft Fund has supplied the Taft departments, faculty and students with a wide array of programs to support their scholarly efforts. This report details the activities of the Taft Fund for the previous year, and looks ahead to some of the issues that the Fund will address in the coming year.

## **I. Administration and Governance**

After several years of changes and reorganizations, the Taft office is now stable and operating smoothly. Joy Dunn has continued to do excellent work managing the Taft office and its interactions with the department offices, the college office and other agencies on campus. The normal operations of the Fund have operated effectively and efficiently this year.

The Faculty Executive Board met six times during the year. There were no major changes in the Fund's programs this year, so the Board's activities this year were focused on three areas:

- Normal oversight of the Faculty Awards programs and the Departmental Enhancement Awards. These are discussed in the Committee reports.
- Refinements of the policies and procedures for the new programs that have been created in the last few years. These are discussed in the Committee reports.
- Consideration of the appropriate usage of the funds accumulated in the Chair's Contingency Fund. This is discussed in Section V.

Last year, an on-line reporting system was created for the Graduate Enhancement Awards, and for reporting on the Graduate Fellowships. There are still technical difficulties involving the location of the file server to support the system. The current arrangement is an *ad hoc* one, provided by Professor Wlodek Bryc in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. Both the successes and shortcomings of this year's experiment indicate that a long-term arrangement for the hosting and maintenance of the Taft web services will need to be found. We are also developing another experimental system for online submission of Faculty Awards applications. A successful online system will make the application process easier for both applicants and the committee reviewing proposals. If this experiment is successful, we will expand the online application process to other Taft programs. Dr. Bryc was again employed to develop this system, and again received \$1,000 in travel funds for doing so.

## **II. Student Programs (37.6% of the Fund)**

### **A. Student Awards Committee (37.6% of the Fund)**

The Committee membership for the 2002-03 academic year included H. Scott Dumas (Mathematics), Katarina Gerstenberger (German), Alan Sullivan (Anthropology), Bill Whitmore (Economics), and Russel Durst (English), Chair. The responsibilities of the Committee involve

awarding the Taft Advanced Graduate Fellowships to fourteen advanced doctoral students nominated from doctorate-granting Taft departments, and making awards for the Taft Graduate Student Travel Grant, Taft Graduate Enrichment Award, Taft Graduate Enhancement Award, and the Taft Undergraduate Enrichment Award. The gross annual budget for the Committee totals \$398,925.

### **Graduate Fellowships**

The Committee met in mid March to evaluate the 17 departmental nominees for Advanced Fellowships. We awarded 14 fellowships. Eight Departmental awards carry with them a summer stipend of \$3,000 in addition to the academic year stipend of \$12,000. Six Competitive awards went to the departments of English, German, History, and Philosophy. Overall quality of the awardees was high, with many winners having refereed publications, presentations at national conferences, strong grade point averages, and excellent faculty recommendations.

### **Graduate Travel Awards**

Our budget for Graduate Student Travel Grants was \$20,000 for the academic year, with individual awards capped at \$500 per student for the year. The Committee met once a quarter to evaluate applications. For the year, we awarded a total of \$14,463.58, about \$1,000 more than in the previous year. All student awardees either presented a paper or served as a discussant at a conference in their field. We are pleased that more students are taking advantage of this fund, which helps to professionalize our graduate students as well as increasing the visibility of the University of Cincinnati in academic circles.

### **Graduate Enrichment Awards**

The budget available for Graduate Student Enrichment Awards was also \$20,000. These awards are capped at \$2,500 per student over a 24-month period. This was the third year for the Enrichment Awards. In the previous year the Committee gave only seven awards for \$9,931, slightly less than half our total budget for this category. This year, however, we went slightly over budget, allocating \$22,557.67 to 18 students. Awardees came from Anthropology, English, German, History, and Sociology,

### **Graduate Enhancement Fellowships**

The Graduate Enhancement Fellowships were established this academic year. Each Taft department was given a sum of money based on the size of its graduate program and was permitted to use the money either to provide enhancements to existing graduate assistant stipends, to fund new GA positions, or to do a combination of both approaches. A key motivation for establishing this new program is the inadequacy of existing graduate stipends in attracting the best students to graduate programs in Taft departments. All departments except Romance Languages and Literatures made use of the funding. From a total of \$120,000, we distributed \$89,860.14 to nine departments.

### **Undergraduate Enrichment Awards**

The Undergraduate Enrichment Awards budget was \$16,000 for the year, with awards capped at \$2,000 each. The Committee found that student demand for this award was very strong. We allocated the entire budget for the year but were still not able to accommodate all the deserving

applicants. Therefore, we used an additional \$2,599 that was left in our other funds, for a total of \$18,599. Thus, the Committee recommends increasing the amount allocated for these awards in future years. These awards were for language study, travel abroad programs, individual research projects, and conference attendance. The Committee views all such activities as very valuable for undergraduate students, and we wish to support this program as much as possible.

### **III. Faculty Awards (20% of the Fund)**

#### **A. Faculty Awards Committee (19.2% of the Fund)**

The Faculty Awards Committee consisted of Maura O'Connor (History, chair); Victor Kaftal (Mathematics); Robert Richardson (Philosophy); Vernon Scarborough (Anthropology); Nicolas Williams (Economics).

#### **Competitive Faculty Fellowships**

These fellowships allow a faculty member to be released from teaching for one quarter in order to pursue a specific research project. It is expected that applicants will have obtained at least one additional quarter of release time (generally in the form of academic or professional leave). This year's competition, like last year's, was not very competitive since only six applications were submitted and the committee awarded five fellowships. The majority agreed that these were overall competitive applications; several were indeed very strong; however, several were less strong. But in the end, we awarded five fellowships with the research supplements that they requested to the following: Christopher Gauker (Philosophy), Steve Carlton-Ford (Sociology), Charles Groetsch (Mathematics), Christopher McCord (Mathematics), and Maria Paz Moreno (Romance Languages and Literatures).

#### **Summer Research Fellowships**

We awarded twelve Research Fellowships of \$5,500 each and six received research supplement of up to \$1,500 in addition to the fellowship. Sixteen faculty members applied for these fellowships. Nine of these applicants were from junior faculty and we awarded fellowships to eight of them initially; one applicant received an outside grant and so declined the Taft award. Consequently, it went to our first alternate who was also a junior faculty. Seven applications were from associate and full professors, and four of these applicants were funded. The criteria for selection changed this year in accordance with the resolutions passed by the Taft Faculty Board in May 2002. The junior faculty applications, this year were much stronger than last year's competition. We received more applicants from tenured faculty as well and we hope that this trend continues in the future.

#### **Research Travel Grants**

Research Grants for Travel are grants meant to cover expenses for faculty who need to travel in order to conduct their research. These awards are limited to \$3,500 in any 24-month period. This year we awarded nine grants; all but one of these was to conduct research outside of the United States. This year we awarded four fewer than last year.

#### **International Conference Travel Awards (Academic Meeting Travel Grant)**

Taft provides support for faculty members who are invited to make presentations at international

academic meetings. These grants are particularly valuable to our faculty and they continue to be a popular and well-utilized source of funding. These grants enable faculty to publicize their research around the world and garner important and useful contacts with international colleagues in their fields. We were able to fund the majority of requests, making 31 awards at an average of \$1,345 per request.

### **Domestic Travel Grants**

The Taft Fund continued its program to help defray travel expenses for faculty members invited to make presentations at academic meetings within the United States. Currently such funds are limited to \$500 per request and can cover the costs of transportation only, generally airfare or driving expenses, with the assumption that departments will help out whenever possible with additional accommodation expenses. Only one request per faculty member per academic year is allowed. This program has been very successful and popular. We received many applications and most of these were funded. In all, we made 43 awards at an average of \$380 per request. The number of awards increased by seven this year from last year.

### **Summary**

We made significant changes last year (May 2002) in terms of the criteria that governs the selection of summer research fellowships as well as the requirements for certain competitions in terms of the length of the project description or the necessity of reports from previous Taft Awards. We think, thus far, that the changes have been effective. We won't know the significance of changes made to the summer research fellowships until a few more years have passed. We are anticipating an even greater increase in the number of applications from senior faculty in next year's competition, however, in light of the increased amount of the fellowship award beginning summer 2004. I would recommend to the next chair of the Taft Faculty Board and the Chair of the Faculty Awards Committee that s/he review the summer research fellowships program in a few years time to see if our changes have made a significant or notable impact sustaining faculty members' research programs at all ranks.

### **B. Publications Committee (0.8% of the Fund)**

The Publications Committee consisted of Haynes Goddard (Economics), Sung Eun Kim (Mathematics), Brian Lawson (Political Science), and Ann Twinam (Chair, History). In the academic year 2002-2003 the Taft Board voted additional uses for this fund, adding translations (see chaps for change) as another use for the subvention up to \$1,000 award.

Taft faculty who are authors of books under contract to a press or accepted articles to a scholar/creative journal can request subsidies for indexing, TRANSLATIONS, the preparation of photos, illustrations, and maps, and accompanying copyrights.

### **Subvention:**

Anthropology---Vernon Scarborough, *The Flow of Power: Ancient Water Systems and Landscapes* (School of American Research Press). Subvention - \$4,000

Romance Languages & Literatures---Carlos Gutierrez, *La espada, el rayo y la pluma (The Sword, the Quail and the Lightning)* (Purdue University Press). Subvention - \$1,500

**Publication Costs:**

Anthropology---Vernon Scarborough, *The Flow of Power: Ancient Water Systems and Landscapes*. Slides - \$1,000.

History---Barbara Ramusack, *The Indian Princes and Their States*. Illustrations - \$1,000

History---David Stradling, *Cincinnati: The Queen City*. Photographs - \$1,000

Romance Languages & Literatures---Jeff Loveland, *Pancoucke and the Circle-Squarer*. Images - \$100

**IV. Departmental and Interdisciplinary Programs (40% of the Fund)****A. Conferences and Lectures Committee (6% of the Fund)**

The committee consisted of Marcia Bellas (Sociology), Jintai Ding (Mathematics), Laura Jenkins (Political Science) and Chris Gauker (Philosophy) and was chaired by Jon Kamholtz (English). This was our second year working with the new Taft Competitive Lectures, and much of our energy went to continuing to refine and clarify the committee's mission. Last year, the committee struggled with the document that brought the new grants into being, looking for clues that would help them divine the criteria that would enable them to decide between proposals. This year, the committee entered the process with a clearer sense of what the by-laws meant and implied, and a clearer sense of the sorts of judgments and priorities that they could bring to their decisions.

The committee believes that one priority of the current Taft Executive Committee is that Taft programs can afford to broaden the clientele being exposed to some central contemporary academic concerns. This would help meet educational goals and garner some publicity for Taft and U.C. both within and beyond the academy. In this regard, the committee was glad to be able to fund two speakers from the English Department's series on Racism, which reached a large and varied audience. (The committee was also impressed with the outreach plans of Romance Languages and Literatures conference, as with the ambitious international scholarly aims of the proposed conference in Mathematics; more on these later.) The committee was also impressed that more Departments were thinking about a slightly wider range of types of activities that could be considered for funding as a "Lecture." Though there continued to be a solid core of talks designed for research specialists within particular Departments, there was also the appearance of Anna Rosmus, the subject of the movie *Nasty Girl* for Germanic Languages and Literatures, talking about her activism in Holocaust awareness in Germany. History has also engaged in some exemplary work in collaboration with other colleges.

In making our funding decisions, the committee gave preference activities that seemed to fit in clearly with a Department's vision of its research emphases and pedagogical goals. Traditionally, Taft lectures have been designed to bring speakers in to complement individual faculty member's ongoing research interests. The committee took note that this could be expanded without diluting scholarly focus or intention, as when Sociology brought in speakers to talk about family issues, which several faculty members share interests in, or when History brought in a speaker whose talk

could be used as part of a capstone to a new, required undergraduate research methods course.

The committee noted that it would be wise of Taft Departments to make sure that the cover letters made it clearer just how the proposed lecture fit in with the Department's vision of its goals. When there was more coherence between a proposed speaker and the Department's sense of its particular academic identity, the committee tended to count that as a factor in a proposal's favor. It follows, therefore, that some proposals were hindered if their only support came from rather *pro forma* letters. Additionally, the familiar problem of cross-disciplinary communication arose more than once this year. All parties must make sure they are able to communicate the potential significance of their proposals effectively to those outside their disciplines.

Three other issues are worth brief mention:

- The committee preferred proposals with clear and detailed budget statements;
- The committee was occasionally irritated by proposals that obfuscated, rather than illuminated the speaker's qualities and potential contributions (*Example*: Not to be outdone by the Department that sent along a 32 page vita, one Department sent a 44 page single-spaced vita, which stretched from the speaker's high school graduation at one end to grants not due to expire until 2004 at the other);
- Sometimes the price differentials between disciplines were striking; it seems a better deal to be in English or Mathematics than in Philosophy.

As far as Conferences were concerned, our main frustration was in not getting more applications. It is hard to say why these have dried up over the past few years. Are people too busy? Too isolated? Feeling too specialized? Is there inadequate administrative support? In any case, Conferences seem like an underutilized resource at this time.

The applications the committee did receive were of very high quality, both serious and resourceful in their approaches to what a conference might do. The committee was struck by the differing models of what a conference goals and audiences, and even how they might accomplish them. The Philosophy Department proposed and was funded for a straightforward series of sessions about animal intelligence, an issue of broad and intense interest these days. Romance Languages requested to use the Taft portion of its finances to help build a budget that would enable their annual conference (no longer supported by Taft *per se*) to add a component to attract area teachers of language. Mathematics proposed a conference at the other end of an extreme, where a small group of highly specialized researchers from all over the world might meet in Cincinnati.

Our only caveat is that those who request funds must bear in mind how the great differences between disciplines and specialties affect how a conference achieves its goals. Romance Languages envisioned area teachers attending the scholarly portions of the conference as a whole as part of the audience, but having separate breakout sessions of their own; Mathematics envisions a conference where all those attending are likely to expect to be paid to be presenters.

## **B. Research Support (19% of the Fund)**

The Research Support Committee consisted of Armando Romero (Romance Languages &

Literature), Lucille Schultz (English), Joel Wolfe (Political Science), Bingyu Zhang (Mathematics), and was chaired by Annulla Linders (Sociology).

The committee had three regularly scheduled meetings during the year (Oct, Feb, April), one special meeting convened to evaluate the proposals for the Proposal Writing Workshop (Jan), and one email meeting to process a resubmitted proposal (March). The committee reviewed a total of 17 proposals (9 cost-sharing and 8 special requests, 4 of which were requests for library purchases) submitted by faculty in 8 different Taft departments [Anthropology (1), English (1), German Studies (2), History (5), Mathematics (4), Philosophy (1), Spanish (2), Sociology (1)].

In addition, the committee proposed a few changes to the guidelines referring to the schedule of submissions, cost-sharing application materials, and library requests.

### **Cost-Sharing Awards**

Of the three major cost-sharing applications, one involved a supplement (salary replacement) to an external grant from the German Academic Exchange Service. Since the share paid by the Taft Fund cannot exceed the amount granted by external sources, the committee reduced the \$10,000 request to the amount of the external grant (5,570 Euros). The second proposal involved a cost-sharing component of a proposal to be submitted to the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (the agency caps awards at \$100,000). The committee had some questions about the proposal, but approved the \$9,844 request under the assumption that it will only be funded if the applicant receives the external grant. The third proposal involved a supplement (salary replacement) to an external grant in the amount of 25,200 Euros from the Humboldt Foundation. The committee approved the requested \$10,000, but denied a request for an additional \$5,000 to offset expenses during the fellowship year; the Committee decided it would be unwise to tinker with the established \$10,000 cap for cost-sharing awards.

Six of the cost-sharing proposals were linked to the proposal-writing workshop offered by the Office of Research and Advanced Studies; these awards (\$5,000) require that the departments of the applicants release the applicants from teaching or in other ways facilitate the proposal writing process (e.g. by distributing the money over the summer). Of the five initial applications, the committee approved four and denied one. The denial was based on the fact that the proposal did not specify how the project would promote faculty research (the project was for a new undergraduate program, Latin American Studies). Regarding the cost-sharing aspect, two of the applicants were to be released from teaching during spring quarter, one was to receive the grant during the summer, and the fourth to receive various other departmental support. The sixth proposal was a resubmission for the proposal writing workshop, with a different project, from the faculty member who was previously denied a grant. This application was approved.

### **Taft Research Support**

This Fund is an amalgam of past, transformed, and new programs, aimed at underwriting expenses associated with faculty research through (1) department allocations (fixed \$5,000 per department; not processed by the Committee), (2) special requests for research, and (3) special requests for library purchases.

Of the eight proposals for special requests, four involved major library purchases (three from History, one from German Studies). These purchases, all of which were approved, will greatly enhance the university's holdings; they are 1) the Mass Observation Archive, parts 3-6 (on microfilm), 2) Communist Party of the USA File, 3) Bibliothek der deutschen Literatur. Supplement, 1850-1880 (on microfiche), and 4) Digital Historical New York Times, 1851-1924. All four proposals requesting research support involved bringing a collaborator to the University of Cincinnati. Of these four requests three were approved as submitted, and one was modified (the Committee granted \$5,300 of the requested \$8,688). The proposal we modified raised some new issues for the Committee. The visitor in this case was a graduate student from China; our guidelines do not explicitly address the status of a visitor, so the fact that it is a graduate student is not in itself problematic (the Committee briefly discussed the possibility of limiting visitors to PhDs, but in the end decided against it). Given our mandate to support faculty research, however, we tried to balance the request (which very much benefited the student) with the anticipated benefits to the faculty. Moreover, the budget contained some items that were not appropriate for our committee (visa, health insurance, travel within the US). We also concluded that a small portion of the proposal (involving travel within the US for the faculty member) had to be submitted as a separate proposal to the appropriate committee.

## **Changes to Procedures and Guidelines**

### **Cost-Sharing**

(1) Under the general description of matching funds, the Committee recommended the addition of the *italicized* section below:

Matching funds for external grant proposals. The Taft Fund will provide up to \$10,000 in matching funds on an external grant. The amount provided by the Taft Fund may not exceed the amount awarded by external sources, *and may not bring the applicant's total income (grant plus matching funds) during the grant period to a level that exceeds the applicant's regular salary.* Taft funds may be used for any valid University expense: release time/salary, travel, students, materials & supplies, etc.

This proposed change had its first reading before the Board on May 6<sup>th</sup> and was approved on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

(2) Under Committee Procedures, schedule, the Committee recommended that the submission deadlines for Cost-Sharing Awards be changed to reflect the Committee's meeting schedule; old language is crossed out, and new language is in italics:

Cost-Sharing Awards will be evaluated by the Research Support Committee, following the same *quarterly* schedule as *Research Support applications* ~~travel grant applications~~.

This proposed change had its first reading on November 4<sup>th</sup> and was approved on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003.

(3) Under Cost-Sharing Application Materials (p. 2), point 5, support letter from department

head, the Committee proposed to make a letter from the department head a requirement of all proposals, not just the ones involving release time; old language is crossed out, and new language is in italics:

~~If you are applying for release time, a~~ support letter from your department head is required. ~~This~~*In case you are applying for release time, the* letter should clearly indicate the duties from which you are released.

This proposed change had its first reading on November 4<sup>th</sup> and was approved on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003.

### **Special Requests**

(4) Under Guidelines for Special Requests, insert a **new bullet** under The following restrictions apply:

- Expenses involved in bringing visiting scholars to the University of Cincinnati include airfare plus up to \$1,000 per week in expenses.

This proposed change had its first reading before the Board on May 6<sup>th</sup> and was approved on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

(5) Re: Research Support, Library Purchases, Application Materials (p. 3), point 5.

Based on the proposals the committee has reviewed over the past year, it is evident that library collections are in a state of transition: some proposals are for new digital versions of materials previously available on microfilm, whereas others are for traditional microfilm/microfiche versions. In order to decrease the risk of purchasing something on microfilm if there are plans to digitalize that collection in the near future, we proposed inserting a sentence [*in italics below*] specifically addressing the state of digitalization of requested library collections:

All applicants requesting material purchases (books, software, data sets, equipment, etc.) must address the current availability of that material. Due diligence in determining whether or not the material is currently available is expected. For example, applicants requesting library purchases should provide documentation that the library does not currently own the material in any format, including Web or Ohio-link access; or document that the proposed format will greatly enhance their ability to use the materials. *Moreover, the request for collections currently available only on microfilm/form should address the future digitalization of the collection.*

This proposed change had its first reading on November 4<sup>th</sup> and was approved on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003.

### **D. Major Awards Committee (15% of the Fund)**

The Major Awards Committee consisted of Roger Daniels (History), Barry Isaac (Anthropology), Wolfgang Mayer (Economics), Richard Schade (German), John Tytus (representing the Trustees) and was chaired by Chris McCord (Mathematics). As there were no changes in the Taft Professorships this year, the committee's duties for the year focused on the Departmental

## Enhancement Awards.

The committee received three applications for the Departmental Enhancement Awards:

- *The Cincinnati Review*, submitted by English.
- *Henry R. Winkler Professorship in Modern European History*, submitted by History.
- *Institute for the Study of Politics and Technology*, submitted by Political Science.

The committee recommended a six-year, \$150,000 award be made to *The Cincinnati Review*. This recommendation was approved by the Faculty Executive Board. *The Cincinnati Review* is a new journal that the Department of English is establishing, which will include creative writing and literary criticism. The Departmental Enhancement Award will fund the first six years of the journal's operations (one graduate editorial assistant and publication costs for two issues a year, totaling \$25,000 a year). A matching award from the Schiff Foundation will establish an endowment to support future publication costs. This endowment, together with subscriptions, will fund the continued operations of the journal. The proposal was selected for funding because of its strong fit with the stated purposes of the Departmental Enhancement Awards:

- The journal will have a substantial impact on the department, serving as the capstone of the department's ongoing efforts to reorganize itself around a modern literature focal point.
- The journal will be a permanent part of the department, allowing the Taft Fund to catalyze a lasting improvement in the department.
- The matching award from the Schiff Foundation represents the kind of leveraging of outside resources that the Departmental Enhancement Awards seeks to encourage.

In addition to these congruencies with the Departmental Awards criteria, the proposal has some other benefits. First, it has the possibility of being a "high-profile" activity, providing visibility for the department, the college and the university. Second, it coordinates well with the other featured activities of the English department, such as the Elliston and Ropes Lecture series.

The two ongoing Departmental Enhancement Awards are the Statistical Consulting Center in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, and the European Studies Program in the departments of History, Romance Languages and German.

The Statistical Consulting Center award allowed the Department of Mathematical Sciences to establish a center in which faculty and graduate students in statistics can offer consulting services to the University community and to external customers. In its first year of operation, the Center involved two faculty, a graduate research assistant and 19 graduate students who worked as consultants in the lab for graduate credit. They served 44 clients from within the University (roughly half faculty, half graduate students) as well as one external client. The University clients came from Arts & Sciences (15), Engineering (15), Education (6), CBA (4), Medicine (2), CCM (1) and Clermont College (1). These projects led to six co-authored papers with the SCL faculty, and three of the projects produced a total of \$3,900 in compensation for the Center. This represents a very strong start for the Center, and suggests that its goal of becoming self-supporting within three years is quite realistic. Moreover, the Center has proved to be an important educational experience for the students involved in it. All have responded positively to their experience, and several have indicated that it played an important role in their successful job searches.

The Europe Old and New project is dedicated to providing a common element of European Studies

in the graduate programs of the Departments of Germanic Languages & Literature, History and Romance Languages & Literature. After spending the 2000-2001 year in planning, the *Europe Old and New* project began its programmatic activities this year. The theme for the 2001-02 academic year was Nation Building and Cosmopolitanism. The year's activities included four Taft speakers, two graduate workshop course, a graduate seminar and a graduate student conference. One aspect of the year's plans, a graduate student trip to Europe during Spring Break, did not occur, for a variety of organizational reasons. Having learned some lessons from this first unsuccessful attempt, planning is now underway for a more carefully constructed student trip for the 2002-03 academic year. In addition to the year's programmatic activities, working groups in Curriculum, Grants and Publicity met throughout the year. The Curriculum group developed a proposal for a Freshman Seminar and a European Studies graduate certificate; the Grants group developed and submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Publicity group worked to disseminate information about all of the activities.

The Major Awards Committee has identified only one issue with the structure of the Departmental Enhancement Awards that needs to be addressed. The expectations for the annual reports on the awards remain unclear. The detail and quality of the reports has been somewhat uneven, and one contributing factor in this unevenness has been uncertainty as to exactly what is expected in the reports. The committee intends to address this issue during the coming year, and draw up clearer guidelines for the annual reports.

#### **IV. The Chair's Contingency Fund and a Taft Center**

The Chair's Contingency Fund serves two roles. First, it is the Taft Fund's equivalent of Departmental Operating Expenses, used for covering office expenses, entertainment costs and other incidental expenses associated with the normal operations of the Taft Fund. Second, it is a discretionary fund for the Chair, providing a flexible source of funding for activities which fall within the Taft Fund's mandate, but which are not covered by any of the formally established committees and programs. Funds also come into the Contingency Fund from two sources. A small amount of money is budgeted each year for the Contingency Fund, to cover operating costs and incidental expenses. The more significant source of funds is the unexpended committee funds. Typically, at the end of each year, over expenditures in one category are covered by under expenditures in others, and any residue reverts to the Chair's Contingency Fund.

The previous Chair, Barbara Rumusack, carefully nurtured the Chair's Contingency Fund. Added to this, the many changes of the last few years led to significant underutilizations of the Taft Fund. This is a fairly natural phenomenon, experienced whenever a new program is introduced, since there is a lag in the faculty and students' awareness of the new opportunities. As noted in last year's report, the large scale of revisions in the last few years produced a correspondingly large accumulation of funds returned to the Chair's Contingency Fund by the committees. The Contingency Fund has now grown to nearly \$200,000. This has raised two issues: for the long term, ensuring that the Taft Fund's programs are fully utilized; for the short term, determining how best to use the \$200,000 that has accumulated.

This year's patterns of activities suggest that the utilization of the Fund is returning to desired levels.

New programs such as Research Support and expanded Publications program were fully utilized this year, as were most of continuing programs. Only the Domestic Travel, Graduate Travel and Graduate Enrichment awards remain underutilized. This suggests that the efforts to advertise the new Taft funding opportunities have been effective, that the faculty and students are taking advantage of the new opportunities provided by the Taft Fund, and that the Fund has successfully aligned itself with the needs of the Taft departments, faculty and students.

The question of the best usage of the \$200,000 in the Chair's Contingency Fund has been discussed by the Board, the University administration and interested Taft faculty. There was general consensus that the money should be used for something substantial, not just to increase expenditures in the existing categories. The one idea that has drawn broad interest for such "substantial" use is the creation of a Taft Center. An *ad hoc* committee was formed to develop ideas and explore the feasibility of a Taft Center. The committee's goal was to collect information and develop plans through the spring and summer. Unfortunately, the press of other activities such as the collegiate restructuring has slowed this process significantly. The committee has identified the broad outlines of model for a Center, but has not articulated the details sufficiently to justify a presentation here of their thoughts.

## **V. Conclusion**

This year's activities suggest that the revisions of the last few years are being successfully consolidated. With the exception of a few programs, usage of the Taft Fund programs is strong, especially the new programs. We need to continue to advertise the Taft Fund programs to faculty and students, and we need to continue to refine the criteria and procedures. But for the most part, these are routine "maintenance" issues for the Taft Faculty Board and its committees. Beyond this maintenance, the two larger issues that need to be addressed are the Faculty Research Fellowships, and the use of the Chair's Contingency Fund. We need to increase the competitiveness of the Research Fellowships, and we need to determine the most appropriate use of the accumulated surplus in the Chair's Contingency Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher McCord, Chair  
Taft Faculty Executive Board