

# **2003-2004 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIR FACULTY EXECUTIVE BOARD CHARLES PHELPS TAFT MEMORIAL FUND**

The Taft Memorial Fund continues to be the most reliable and important competitive source of support for scholarly activity in the humanities and social sciences in the McMicken College of Arts & Sciences. The Taft Memorial Fund offers the Taft departments, faculty, and students a wide array of programs to support their scholarly efforts. This report details the activities of the Taft Memorial Fund for the 2003-4 academic year in which 217 individual awards to faculty, graduate and undergraduate students were granted along with support for 20 visiting lectures, 4 on-campus conferences, 2 department enhancement grants, and continued recognition of 5 Taft Professorships.

## **I. Administration and Governance**

In 2003-4, Professor Richard Harknett's five-year term as Chair of the Faculty Executive Board began. This represented the fourth term-limited transition to occur under the by-laws adopted in 1991. The transition went smoothly due to the fine work of the former Chair, Professor Chris McCord. The work of Joy Dunn as Taft Secretary was exceptional as she continued to manage the Taft office and its interactions with faculty, students, departments, the college office and other agencies on campus effectively and efficiently.

The Faculty Executive Board met six times during the year. The Board's activities this year were focused on three areas:

- Normal oversight of our programs and standing committees. (See Program Sections).
- Minor refinements of policies and procedures associated with new programs that have been created in the last few years. (See Graduate Enhancement Fellowship Section).
- Planning for the Taft Research Center. (See Concluding Section).

We adopted a new reporting document that centralized all annually reported information into one submission and required Department Heads to provide this single report before new academic-year money would be released (August 31<sup>st</sup>). In its first use, all reports were completed on time. While increasing the information the Taft office can now organize and archive, the Department Heads noted that this new form actually reduced their overall reporting burden.

The Chair put in place an improved accounting system on the income side of our ledger. In doing so, we discovered that in several previous years, the Fund's approved budget was not matched through the actual monthly distribution (-\$83, 646). This problem was resolved. In the end, the budgeted distribution actually remained in the principal of the endowment. This shortage did not hamper the payment of any award.

## **II. Student Programs (36.4% of the Fund)**

### **Student Awards Committee**

The Committee membership for the 2003-04 academic year included Russel Durst, Chair (English), H. Scott Dumas (Mathematics), Katharina Gerstenberger (German), Alan Sullivan (Anthropology), and Bill Whitmore (Economics). The responsibilities of the Committee involved 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 Fellowship, and the Taft Undergraduate Enrichment Award. The gross annual budget for the Committee totaled \$392,955.

### **Advanced Graduate Fellowships**

The Committee met in mid-March to evaluate the 21 departmental nominees for Advanced Fellowships. We awarded 14 fellowships. Eight Departmental awards carried with them a summer stipend of \$3,000 in addition to the academic year stipend of \$12,500. Six Competitive awards of \$12,500 went to students from the departments of English, German Studies, History, Math, and Political Science. 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 \$11,010. This was a slight decline from the previous year. We are, however, pleased that this award is supporting the professionalization of our graduate students as well as the visibility of the University of Cincinnati in academic circles. Students from seven different departments traveled to twenty-four conferences during the year.

### **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 fourth year for the Enrichment Awards program. In 2001, the Committee gave only seven awards for \$9,931, slightly less than half our total budget for this category. This year, however, fourteen students received awards and we allocated \$19,444. Awardees came from Anthropology, English, History, Political Science and Romance Languages.

### **Graduate Enhancement Fellowships**

The Graduate Enhancement Fellowships was refined this year based on three years of practice to improve the opportunity for Departments to recruit and retain the very best students. Under the program, each Taft department is given a sum of money based on the size of its graduate program to provide enhancements to existing graduate assistant stipends, to fund new GA positions, or to do a combination of both approaches. An original motivation for establishing the program was to redress the inadequacy of existing graduate stipends in attracting the best students to graduate programs in Taft departments.

The refinement put in place in 2003-4 was based on the recognition that departments experience

fluctuations in the quality and size of their recruitment pools. Therefore 50% of unexpended money each year will now move into a general Graduate Enhancement Fellowship Reserve, so that departments that have an extraordinary year in recruitment can request an additional disbursement to attract a specific student. The creation of a reserve allows for more targeted use of the fellowship money, while still allowing departments to engage in multi-year planning for their recruitments. In 2003-4, thirty-eight students received some form of Taft GEF. We disbursed \$125, 242 to the Taft departments during the year from which we created a GEF Reserve of \$28,146. The formula by which department allocations are calculated also was modified in order to promote more stable and strategic recruitment planning.

### **Undergraduate Enrichment Awards**

The Undergraduate Enrichment Awards budget was \$20,000 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 \$13,500 that was left in our other funds, for a total award distribution of \$33,500. If competition remains high this year as well we will likely request an increase in this program after the first year of the Center's opening. The eighteen undergraduates were supported 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 (20.2% of the Fund)**

### **A. Faculty Awards Committee**

The Faculty Awards Committee included Victor Kaftal, Chair (Mathematics); Robert Richardson (Philosophy); Vernon Scarborough (Anthropology); Debashis Pal (Economics); Linda Przybyszewski (History).

### **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 required that applicants obtain 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 four fellowships, which they deemed to be of very high quality. The committee held to its standards and despite having a fifth award did not find the other applications of sufficient quality to warrant support. The low application rate is tied to the demographic cycle of who is eligible for sabbatical in the college. Next year, for example, we will see a spike in sabbaticals and thus a significant increase in the number of applications. The four awards went to: Willard Sunderland (History); Armando Romero (RLL); Vern Scarborough (Anthropology); David Minda (Math). The Executive Board approved the Committee and Executive Chair proposal to reduce the amount of the award to the departments to \$5,000, to put it in line with other faculty replacement funding by Taft and be able to shift monies to fund more travel awards (domestic, international, and research).

### **Summer Research Fellowships**

We awarded twelve Research Fellowships of \$7, 000 each and an additional \$7,000 in research

supplements for specific project costs. Twenty-five faculty members applied for these fellowships. This was a sizeable increase from the sixteen applications received last year. Sixteen of these applicants were from junior faculty and we awarded fellowships to six. Nine applications were from associate and full professors, and six of these applicants were funded. The criteria for selection changed last year in accordance with the resolutions passed by the Taft Faculty Board in May 2002. There was a significant increase in tenured faculty applications, which was the main goal of the reforms. A number of department heads raised concern that the reforms may have shifted opportunity away from junior faculty and the Board will take up this question in 2004-5 to see if a small adjustment in criteria is necessary. However, the Committee was pleased that competitiveness increased and that the intent of the reforms – to move away from an expectation that junior applicants would always be funded – was upheld in practice.

### **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 four grants to Jon Hughes (English); Wayne Durrill (History); Robert Skipper (Philosophy); Christelle Viauroux (Economics).

### **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 31 awards (the same number as last year) at an average of \$1,266 per request.

### **Domestic Travel Grants**

The Taft Fund helped defray travel expenses for faculty members invited to make presentations at academic meetings within the United States. In 2003-4, such funds were limited to \$500 per request and covered the costs of transportation only, generally airfare or driving expenses. Only one request per faculty member per academic year was allowed. This program has been very successful and popular. We received many applications and most of these were funded. In all, we made 36 awards at an average of \$353 per request. Given the value and, in fact, necessity of conference travel to stimulate and maintain the scholarly endeavors of our faculty, upon the recommendation of the Faculty Award committee, the Board approved a slight adjustment to the grant. Beginning in 2004-5, we will cover conference registration since this is a required expense to apply for this award and cap the overall award at \$700 per academic year. This is to encourage faculty who may have the opportunity to present work at more than one conference to do so. This also creates an incentive to find the least expensive travel option to maximize the Taft grant. Since our average award has been below the previous cap of \$500, these changes do not require a budget line adjustment for 2004-5. We will monitor closely how this reform impacts our faculty's profile nationally and whether we see more presentations being made and whether additional funds maybe needed.

### **Summary**

In last year's report, Chris McCord noted the need to monitor the impact of changes in the

Summer Fellowship program. The impact was significant: whereas prior to the reforms all 12 awards went to junior faculty in 2001, this year the awards were split six and six for untenured and tenured faculty. Department Heads noted that the expectation of Summer Fellowship support is an important recruitment tool for them when hiring new faculty. The Board will discuss the impacts of these changes in 2004-5.

#### **B. Publications Committee (0.9% of the Fund)**

The Publications Committee consisted of Haynes Goddard, Chair (Economics), Sung Eun Kim (Mathematics), Brian Lawson (Political Science), and Brock Clark (English). This was the second full year of the broadened scope for the committee's funding. In addition to its traditional mission of providing subventions for the publication of faculty books, the committee may now also provide funding to meet the costs associated with faculty publications in journals and other venues. The committee was able to support nine publications (See Appendix G) and allocate \$9,696 of its \$10,000 budget.

### **IV. Departmental and Interdisciplinary Programs (40% of the Fund)**

#### **A. Conferences and Lectures Committee (6% of the Fund)**

The committee consisted of Laura Jenkins, Chair (Political Science), Jintai Ding (Mathematics), Willard Sunderland (History) and Sara Beth Estes (Sociology). This committee oversees two programs: support for Conferences to be held at UC and lectures beyond those allocated to departments, which must be considered competitively for funding. The committee received four quality proposals to hold conferences and was able to support all four. Each of the proposals had leveraged additional non-Taft money. Two conferences were sponsored through the English Department: *Shakespeare's Others: Shakespeare's Rivals and Collaborators* and *The 80's in Literature and Culture*; Math sponsored the *13<sup>th</sup> Inverse Problems in Engineering Seminar*; and, Sociology sponsored, *The Status of Women and Girls in Cincinnati*.

The committee was able to support five lectures through our competitive fund to supplement the 15 department lectures held in 2003-4. The competitive lectures came from Economics (3), German Studies, and Anthropology – the latter co-sponsoring with the University Graduate Division to bring to campus Prof. Jared Diamond, Pulitzer Prize author of the acclaimed book, *Guns, Germs and Steel*.

In both the categories of conferences and competitive lectures, we received proposals that had been able to leverage Taft money with additional funds in order to have a wider impact or bring to campus significant scholars. Finally, the Committee noted that for the first time in years, we had a graduate student conference proposal. While we were able to partially fund this literature conference, we anticipate that in the future, if our committee's funding level remains flat, graduate student conferences may not be able to compete, given our guideline that "faculty applicants have priority." This would be a loss to the university and its students. We will monitor the budget to see if we are now entering a pattern of increased demand for these funds.

#### **B. Research Support (18.5% of the Fund)**

The Research Support Committee consisted of Annulla Linders, Chair (Sociology), Armando Romero (Romance Languages & Literature), Lucille Schultz (English), Stephen Mockabee

(Political Science), and Bingyu Zhang (Mathematics).

The committee reviewed a total of 13 proposals (7 cost-sharing and 6 special requests, 2 of which were requests for library purchases) submitted by faculty in 8 different Taft departments: Anthropology (1), Economics (1), German Studies (2), History (4), Mathematics (3), Political Science (1), and Sociology (1).

### **Cost-Sharing Awards**

The committee recommended approval of six of the seven cost-sharing proposals. One of these was subsequently withdrawn after the researchers failed to secure the anticipated cost-share funding (from the Canadian Embassy). The committee recommended that the authors of the seventh proposal revise and resubmit to clarify how their project satisfied the requirements of the Taft Cost-share Award. More specifically, the committee needed more information about how the project would contribute to research endeavors and/or faculty development of the faculty members involved in the project. The proposal was successfully revised and the committee recommended funding. Thus, all the cost-share proposals were funded, for a total of \$29,975.

The cost-share proposals involved a variety of cost-share arrangements. One proposal involved departmental cost-share (faculty leave time for proposal writing), two involved cost-shares with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), one with the Canadian Embassy, one with the Spanish-American Program for Cultural Cooperation, one with the Ohio Humanities Council, and one with multiple agencies (Fulbright Alumni Award, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Department of Political Science).

### **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 six proposals for special requests, two involved major library purchases (both from History). The first proposal involved the purchase of a three-volume collection of *British Conduct Literature for Women, 1500-1770* (\$2,345). The UC library previously owned bits and pieces of this collection, one Ohio Link library owns the first two volumes, but no Ohio Link library owns the complete set. This proposal was funded in full. The second proposal involved the purchase of the *History Module of the Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Of the requested \$110,000, the committee conditionally approved \$100,000, the condition being linked to the fact that the amount exceeded the committee's available fund by \$16,595, and hence required the approval of the Chair of Taft Faculty Board to supplement the request from the Chair's contingency fund. Reluctant to exceed the committee's budget allocation, the Chair proposed instead that he meet with the library to discuss the proposal, and seek to leverage the granted \$83,405 as far as possible. The result of that meeting was that the library made a commitment of some \$200,000 to purchase the entire Eighteenth Century Modules. Taken together, the committee awarded a total of \$85,750 in library purchases.

Of the four proposals requesting research support, three involved bringing collaborators to the

University of Cincinnati (all from Mathematics). The final proposal requesting research support involved travel for a graduate assistant to accompany a faculty member who submitted the proposal (whose trip was paid for from another source) to a research site in Albania. In approving these four proposals, the committee awarded \$16,050. Total awards granted for proposals involving research support was \$101,800.

### **Summary**

After three years of working with a new Taft program, and after a series of adjustments to the program guidelines over the last few years to clarify requirements and facilitate the application process, the Committee determined at the end of this year that the program works well and no immediate changes are required. In a direct response to the \$100,000 plus library purchase proposal, the committee members briefly discussed the possibility of adjusting the guidelines for library purchases (e.g., by moving from three to one proposal submission deadline per year), but in the end concluded that such an adjustment was not warranted solely on the basis of this particular proposal.

### **C. Major Awards Committee (15.7% of the Fund)**

The Major Awards Committee consisted of Richard Harknett, Chair (Executive Board Chair); Paula Dubeck (Sociology), Wolfgang Mayer (Economics), Richard Schade (German), John Tytus (representing the Trustees). 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 two applications for the Departmental Enhancement Awards:

- *A Program in Security and Governance: Citizens, States, and Technology in an Era of Globalization and Terrorism*, submitted by Political Science.
- A Center for Applied Research in Economics, submitted by Economics.

The committee recommended \$135,000 to support the Security and Governance project and \$146,990 for the Center for Applied Research in Economics (CARE). In 2002, no Departmental Enhancement Award was funded. Therefore, the Board approved the funding of both of these projects, which the committee found worthy of support.

The Security and Governance project seeks to enhance a growing cluster of expertise among Political Science faculty in the area of security studies. The program is a multifaceted project that sets as its objectives: 1) creation of an undergraduate certificate targeted primarily at majors in the natural sciences, engineering, business, and pre-med, who have traditionally not considered security and governance issues as part of their training. This certificate will respond to the increasing attention to homeland security in the United States and attempt to better prepare our graduates to consider issues related to security; 2) conduct a series of research seminars with outside scholars at UC in an attempt to elevate the Political Science department as a lead element on campus in the promotion of multi-disciplinary discussion and research on homeland and international security; 3) publish an edited volume on security and governance; 4) leverage the Taft grant to attract outside money through grant-writing.

The Center for Applied Research in Economics (CARE) will serve three major objectives: 1) enhance the educational experience of the students in the MA program in Applied Economics

and provide a venue to promote faculty scholarship and publication; 2) enhance the Department's linkage and outreach to private and public institutions in the region that need high-quality applied economic analyses to support decision-making; and, 3) develop an institutional research capacity in the Department that can successfully compete for research grants and contracts from public and private firms and agencies at the regional, state and federal levels.

In the case of both proposals, the Major Award Committee's review was iterative in that it required the proposal writers to answer a series of questions and ultimately make adjustments to the proposals' objectives and budgets. This process has worked successfully with past proposals and the committee felt that the process had again produced stronger and clearer proposals in the end.

One final note: the committee took special care to keep the entire process of review transparent. In particular, when final discussion of and vote on each proposal took place, Harknett recused himself in the case of Political Science and Mayer recused himself in the case of Economics due to their department affiliations. Harknett took the additional step of writing to the Faculty Board and noting that he would not receive any Taft money related to activities he might participate in through the Political Science grant. Although the Chair of the Faculty Executive Board is eligible for Taft awards, given the high profile of the Major Award, Harknett insisted on avoiding any notion of a conflict-of-interest in this specific case.

The three ongoing Departmental Enhancement Awards are the Statistical Consulting Center in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, the European Studies Program in the departments of History, Romance Languages and German, and the English Department's new journal, *The Cincinnati Review*.

The Statistical Consulting Laboratory (SCL) in the Department of Mathematical Sciences entered its final year of Taft Funding. The SCL's Statistical Consulting Course for graduate students has now become fully integrated into the Department's program. In 2003-4, twenty-five students took at least one quarter of this highly specialized course, which then enables students to gain practical experience working on consulting projects for clients associated with the SCL. The course is well established and will continue beyond the Taft funding period. The SCL's other major initiative has also become a stable success. The SCL provided statistical consultation for 54 clients, half of which were faculty and the other half graduate students (seven came from outside UC). The clients came mainly from A&S (19), Engineering (14), and Education (7). This consulting supported a successful NIH grant and a number of publications. The Department has allocated a half-time teaching assistant to insure the continuation of the SCL and the Department will continue to secure additional funding for future operations.

The European Studies Program entered its final year of Taft Funding with two major goals: to continue to improve the graduate program and to begin planning for an undergraduate certificate. The Graduate program has now become well established and regarded. Enrollments increased and attendance in related events, such as open seminars and the Graduate Student Conference also grew. The Graduate program consists of an Autumn series of workshops, a Winter seminar on a specific topic, and a Spring Writing Workshop and Academic Conference. This activity is supplemented through a study abroad trip to St. Petersburg and Berlin as well as visiting lectures.

The success of the program in attracting students parallels success in expanding the interaction among European-focused faculty. This year faculty from political science joined the original three departments and will likely play a role in the development of the undergraduate certificate. It is this increased interdisciplinary faculty interaction that has provided the basis to move forward with plans for an undergraduate degree.

The European Studies program was successful in leveraging its original Taft grant to secure outside support in the form of a \$25,000 National Endowment for Humanities award and an Ohio Humanities Council grant of \$15,000. The University of Cincinnati VP for Graduate Studies also contributed \$5,000 to the program. The program's fourth year report clearly indicates a Taft Major Award success. Taft money has created a sustainable graduate program, created new avenues for sustained faculty interaction, and laid the foundation for growth into undergraduate curriculum. While such expansion will require new funding, faculty associated with the program, have established a track record raising outside money.

The third major enhancement award program receiving funds in 2003-4 is the Department of English and Comparative Literature's semi-annual journal, the *Cincinnati Review*, which features poetry, fiction, and essays. The inaugural issue of the journal was published in the Spring and Department Head Lee Person noted that it was "truly stunning from cover to cover." The next issue is on-schedule to be released in November 2004. One of the key aspects of the journal is the editorial experience it provides graduate students. The department has named two editorial assistants, but many students focusing in creative writing have volunteered to serve as initial reviewers. The editors expect thousands of submissions when the journal opens its process to accept unsolicited work beginning in 2005. Taft funding has served its main purpose of launching the journal and will support its start-up costs over the remaining two years of funding.

The reports from our three funded Major Awards improved this year and provided substantive background on progress. The Major Award Committee will examine whether additional guidelines for the annual reports are necessary, particularly as funding ends. We have not determined to what extent we want to keep track of programs after Taft Funding has been allocated completely. The Committee will also examine the relationship of the award to our expected Center configuration.

#### **IV. The Budget**

Each year the number of applications fluctuates across our many award programs. Our budgetary practice over the past decade has been flexible enough to adjust to these fluctuations as few programs show consistent application rates. For example, in the past two years Undergraduate Enrichment received applications that totaled just around \$20,000 and nearly \$40,000, while Faculty Awards fluctuated in the opposite direction with Travel and Conference grants declining from \$66,500 to \$48,000. The only budgetary change instituted was to discontinue use of the Chair's contingency fund to support projects that fall outside the scope and timelines of our committees, thus preserving the fund to support the start-up costs associated with our plans for the Taft Center. Finally, since we carried over a Major Department Award from 2002-3 and thus awarded two this past year, our 2003-4 overall awards total stood at \$1,172,333.

## **V. The Charles Phelps Taft Research Center**

At the November 2003 Taft Trustees meeting, the Faculty Executive Board presented its proposal to re-configure our existing programs along with several new initiatives into the Taft Research Center. The stated main objective of the Taft Center proposal was to create an intellectual community across the Taft disciplines that could enhance faculty and student research synergies and provide national and international profile to our programs. The proposal hinged on the University of Cincinnati's new president's, Nancy Zimpher, commitment to provide the base funding for a residential building to house the Taft Center and the launching of new high profile programs through an increase in the annual distribution. In response to the University of Cincinnati's new financial support, the Taft Trustees accepted the proposal to re-configure into a research center and authorized an additional \$180,000 to the annual distribution (approximately half of the proposed Center's budget) beginning in 2005-6. The Faculty Executive Board was charged with formally approving guidelines and criteria for the new programs scheduled to launch for 2005 and with presenting a 2005-6 budget that right-sized existing programs and positioned new programs for success. All Executive Board action will be presented to the Trustees for their formal approval at the November 2004 Trustee meeting.

## **VI. Conclusion**

This past year will be recognized as a critical step in the history of the Taft Memorial Fund. The Executive Board provided excellent oversight. It continued to insure that our programs provided critical support to our faculty and students and it moved forward years of discussions concerning a Taft Center into the actual planning stages. In early 2004-5, the Board will finalize plans and present the Taft Trustees with all formal action necessary to open the Taft Center in 2005. (Those actions will be sent under separate cover for action at the November 2004 Trustee meeting.) Thus, this annual report summarizes another solid year of faculty and student accomplishments and notes the significant foundations that were put in place to launch a new level of support for the disciplines of the Taft Memorial Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Harknett, PhD.  
Chair, Faculty Executive Board  
Charles Phelps Taft Memorial Fund