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STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICE
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Strategic Priority Funding Application Form 2007-2008

#11

Project Name Promoting the Rights and Responsibilities of Underserved Students

Applicant's Name Mary Dowd Mailing Address WA-228

Applicant Signature *Mary Dowd*

Email Address mary.dowd@mnsu.edu Phone Number x 2121

Dept. Chair Signature _____ Date _____

Dean Signature _____ Date _____

Vice President Signature *Thomas Kelly* Date 11-30-06

Date Submitted to Office of Institutional Planning: 11-30-06
(Deadline is November 30, 2006)

Priority Number

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MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Minnesota State University, Mankato

FY08 Strategic Priority Funding Request

1. Which Strategic Priority and Objective does this funding request support? See link for Strategic Priority definitions. <http://www.mnsu.edu/president/priorities/definitions/>

Strategic Priority Promote Diversity Innovative Idea: Assistant Director of Student Rights & Responsibilities

Strategic Priority Objective: To better promote and enforce student rights and responsibilities specific to the needs of underrepresented students and to assist the Director with 1B.1 investigations.

2. Provide a brief description of your project. Please attach a one page project narrative:

This project would provide badly needed resources in the area of student conduct. The Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities consistently works many hours beyond the 40-hour work week to try and keep up with the increasing expectations of the position, largely due to complex and diverse student needs.

Research shows more students are entering college with significant mental health issues largely due to advances in medication and treatment. With support, students with psychological disabilities do well in academia. However, there are also situations where a distressed student can become quite disruptive necessitating intervention through the student disciplinary process. This requires both skill and time along with knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Another area of increasing responsibility is the investigation of sexual assault, harassment, and discrimination allegations falling under MnSCU 1B.1 and 1B.3. With the addition of a Sexual Violence Education Coordinator in the Women's Center, students are more aware of reporting procedures. At a recent MnSCU training, the facilitator indicated that sexual assault investigations average 40-60 hours. The Director has spent up to 82% of her work week on 1B.1 investigations in addition to all the other conduct responsibilities. Assistance is much needed.

An increasingly diverse student body also requires more attention to cross cultural communication in promoting and enforcing the "Statement of Student Responsibilities." Students from other countries and cultures are often unfamiliar with behavioral norms and expectations on this campus. The Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities attempts to disseminate information through such things as International Student Orientation programs, but much more could be done to assist underrepresented students acclimate here to avoid unnecessary involvement in the student disciplinary process. Similarly, it is important to find ways of sensitizing all students to cultural differences and how to get along with students whose backgrounds and lifestyles may be quite different from their own.

A conduct officer with cross cultural communication skills and mediation training would be a tremendous asset. This person could also work with other departments, e.g. Residential Life, Greek Affairs, the University Student Conduct Board to increase their knowledge of multicultural considerations in the disciplinary process.

Related to these endeavors, an Assistant Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities would be able to offer more classroom presentations and in-service training. The position would also work to develop ties with offices that serve special populations, e.g. Office of Institutional Diversity, Multicultural Affairs, Student Leadership Development & Service-Learning, Office of Disability Services, Women's Center, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and International Student Office. Other duties would include developing new initiatives to educate off-campus students and Recognized Student Organizations to their rights and responsibilities.

In addition, the position would serve as a liaison with parents, families, and neighborhood groups bringing forward concerns about student behavior, often related to alcohol infractions.

Succinctly, funding would provide an Assistant Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities and a 20-hour week graduate assistant.

3. **How will the funding request support the Strategic Priority?**

- a. Funding is needed for new positions that will contribute to the retention of diverse students.
Funding is needed to provide resources to ensure timely investigation of 1B.1 complaints involving students.

4. **Describe the measurable outcomes:**

- a. Recruiting, selecting, hiring additional staff skilled in mediation and cross cultural communication.
b. Expanded outreach services.
c. More staff trained in 1B.1 investigations

5. **Assessment Measures – Define what methods will be used in assessing the effectiveness of the project.**

- a. A time table outlining hiring and training goals will be developed.
b. Hiring and training goals will have specific deadlines.
c. Outreach education programs will include evaluation handouts.
d. _____

Reports Due:

6. **Mid Year Report due** January 31, 2008

7. **Summary Report due** June 30, 2008

8. **Budget Request:** From Strategic Initiative Funding

	<u>Request</u>	<u>Match</u>
Salary	<u>32,000</u>	_____
Fringe	<u>8,000</u>	_____
Grad Assistant	<u>8,000</u>	_____
Grad Assistant Stipend	_____	_____
Non Salary (Specify)	_____	_____
<u>Programming</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>500</u>
_____	_____	_____
Equipment	<u>2,000</u>	<u>2,500</u>
Total Budget Requested *	<u>53,000</u>	<u>3,000</u>

9. **Special consideration (e.g. room, building, office or any impact on other divisions):**

Additional office space would be needed. It may be possible to house the Assistant Director in a satellite office, at least on a temporary basis.

* Pending funding.