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## I. INTRODUCTION

The SOSA program is a competitive yet inclusive grant program as it provides faculty members and librarians with re-assigned time to expand their program of scholarly, creative, or professional activity beyond the level that is already expected and included within workload.

## II. DEFINITIONS

N/A

## III. POLICY

### PROGRAM MISSION AND ENDURING PRINCIPLES

The Support of Scholarly Activities (SOSA) program is designed to support faculty and librarian scholarship, creative activity, and professional activity with exceptional merit and/or promise. The SOSA program reflects the College's commitment to making TCNJ a strong community of teacher-scholars and librarian- scholars. The program provides tenure stream faculty members and librarians with either a) a three faculty-weighted hours alternate assignment within workload in order to have more time to engage in their scholarly, creative, or professional activities or b) funding to directly support these activities. SOSA

awards may also be used for faculty and librarian scholarly, creative, or professional work, which engages students as collaborators or apprentices. The SOSA program is designed to support two equally important groups, both a) new faculty members and librarians in establishing their agenda for scholarship, creative, or professional activity, and b) continuing faculty members and librarians in engaging in scholarship, creative, or professional activity.

The SOSA program is a competitive yet inclusive grant program as it provides faculty members and librarians with direct funding or re-assigned time to expand their program of scholarly, creative, or professional activity beyond the level that is already expected and included within workload. Successful proposals must be high quality and innovative and supported by the candidate's area of expertise, track record, and academic goals. Given that SOSA awards are possible only with budgetary resources, SOSA grants are awarded in accordance with the following enduring principles:

1. The SOSA program is a competitive process that supports prospective scholarly, creative, or professional work. The review process is conducted in a fair, transparent, and efficient manner.
2. The intellectual merit of the proposed scholarly, creative, and/or professional program/project for a SOSA award is given the greatest weight in the evaluation of any SOSA proposal.
3. The scholarly, creative, and/or professional qualifications of the applicant are also given consideration in the review process. The applicant's area of expertise, track record, and academic goals should support the proposed SOSA work and enhance the scholarly culture at the College.
4. The review process takes into consideration the broader impacts on both the applicant's scholarly, creative, or professional program and the overall teacher-scholar and librarian-scholar culture at TCNJ.

All full-time, tenure-line faculty members and librarians, regardless of tenure status or rank, are eligible and encouraged to apply for SOSA awards. The teaching or administrative needs of any Program, Department, or School cannot be used to discourage any applicant from applying.

## **DISTRIBUTION AND DURATION OF AWARDS**

Awards are distributed competitively according to a procedure recommended by the Committee on Faculty Affairs (CFA) and approved through the governance process in consultation with the Union. A campus-wide SOSA Committee, made up of appointed members of the faculty, evaluates applications.

A total of 121 awards are distributed each budget year. This total includes the number of awards that are ongoing from the previous year. The SOSA program uses a system of two-year awards for all successful applicants.

Approximately half of the 121 SOSA slots are awarded each year. A small number of one-year awards may also become available as a result of recipients relinquishing one year of a two-year award. All applicants are assumed to be applying for a two-year award; they need not indicate in the proposal that they are seeking a two-year award.

### **CONDITIONS FOR ALTERNATE ASSIGNMENT IN SOSA**

The following conditions apply to all faculty members/librarians receiving SOSA awards:

1. Recipients of SOSA alternate assignments may not accept overload course assignments during the same academic year that they hold the award. Overload that does not add-up to a course, such as 0.2 or 0.5 faculty-weighted hours (FWH), is permitted. Overloads totaling more than 3 FWH during a SOSA year require Provost's approval.
2. Faculty members and librarians who apply for both a sabbatical and a SOSA award at the same time must choose to accept one or the other if both are awarded. Those who choose a sabbatical forfeit the SOSA award for the sabbatical year. Applicants may not receive both sabbatical leave (whole- or half-year) and a SOSA award during the same academic year. If a faculty member or librarian decides to take a sabbatical (whole- or half-year) during one year of a two-year SOSA award, the SOSA award is forfeited for that year.
3. Applicants who apply unsuccessfully for a SOSA award in one year may reapply in subsequent years.
4. SOSA awards may not be used to reduce any full-time faculty member's teaching load below one course unit per academic year.
5. Faculty members or librarians who are denied reappointment or tenure forfeit any SOSA award for the final year of employment.

## TYPES OF ELIGIBLE SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE/PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following types of scholarly/creative/professional activities are eligible to be supported by the SOSA program:

### 1. Research

Any of the following categories of research are eligible for support as long as they are to be communicated to the academic community beyond TCNJ. Eligible venues for communicating research include a broad range commensurate with practices among the many disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields in which TCNJ teacher-scholars conduct their work. The most common include: articles in professional journals; published books, editions, textbooks, and chapters; original papers for conferences or professional societies; lecture recitals; service as editor or reviewer of scholarly works or proposals; proceedings of conferences, panels, or meetings; published manuals or handbooks to accompany texts, instruments, or equipment; software; and electronic media.

- a. The *Scholarship of Discovery* – The traditional research model in which new content knowledge is acquired.
- b. The *Scholarship of Integration* – The creation of new knowledge by synthesizing and making connections across disciplines or subdisciplines.
- c. The *Scholarship of Application* – The bridging of the gap between theory and practice through both research and action.
- d. The *Scholarship of Pedagogy* – The discovery or evaluative analysis of the ways students learn, and the identification and assessment of methods used to foster learning.

### 2. Creative Endeavors

These include original works of art, creative writing, drama, documentary, music, dance, graphic design, digital arts, and architecture. These creative outcomes are presented to the public through performances, shows, original compositions, sound or visual recordings, publications, displays or exhibits. Dissemination activities may include participation on panels, in discussion groups, seminars, or workshops, or curating exhibitions.

### **3. Professional Activity**

Professional activities as a consultant or practitioner are considered scholarly activity when they involve the creation, rather than the application, of knowledge and impact significantly on one's discipline. These activities demonstrate professional recognition of one's scholarship at least at the local level and may include such work as original research when consulting for an outside organization, creating national standards for an accrediting organization, designing curricula for national or regional use, etc.

Documentation of professional activities may include written evaluations by peers or professional organizations.

### **4. Major Grant Application Preparation**

Preparation of applications for highly competitive, major grants (in support of scholarly, creative, or professional activities as described above) requiring extensive advance research and documentation.

## **INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) AND INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC) APPROVAL**

Faculty members who are planning research involving either human subjects or vertebrate animals must obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), respectively.

- TCNJ's policies and procedures for IRB approval can be found at: <https://irb.tcnj.edu/>
- TCNJ's policies and procedures for IACUC approval can be found at <https://iacuc.tcnj.edu/>

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

### **1. Review Process**

Submitted proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by an interdisciplinary SOSA Committee. After a norming process to standardize approaches to scoring, committee members will split into two panels to evaluate proposals using the review criteria listed below. The full Committee will consist of 11 members, with representatives from the following units:

- One person from each of the following schools: Arts and Communication, Business, Education, Engineering, Nursing and HES (total of 5)
- Two people from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (one from Humanities, one from Social Sciences)
- Two people from the School of Science (one from Math/Computer Science, one from Biology/Chemistry/Physics)
- One person from the Library
- One designee from the Provost (ex officio, non-voting)

Each panel will consist of 6 people, with the Provost's designee sitting on both. The composition of each panel will be determined by the full SOSA Committee itself as it organizes for work each year. Each panel will elect its own chair, who does not necessarily have to be the same person as the chair of the full SOSA Committee.

In order to avoid bias, when proposals are discussed and reviewed by panels and the full SOSA Committee, individual committee members must not introduce any outside evidence or other information that is not included in the submitted proposals. Moreover, individual committee members must not advocate for any of the submitted proposals. This is particularly important for proposals from the same discipline or general area of the SOSA Committee members.

In order to avoid bias for proposals submitted by SOSA Committee members, these proposals will be directed to and reviewed by the panel on which the Committee member does not serve, so that no one reviews his/her own proposal.

## **2. Review Procedures**

The SOSA Committee will follow the major steps listed below in its review of proposals.

- a. The full Committee will initially engage in a proposal norming step. The full Committee will first discuss how to use and apply the evaluation rubric. The full Committee will then review several example proposals, with each individual committee member independently reviewing each example proposal using the evaluation rubric to assign scores. The Chair will then compile the scores, and the full Committee will discuss the proposals, the range of scores, and the use of the rubric. This norming step is designed to standardize approaches to scoring, establish consistency in scoring between and among reviewers, and ensure a fair and transparent evaluation process.
- b. The full Committee will divide into two panels, with each panel reviewing approximately half of the proposals. Individual panel members will assign

preliminary scores to each proposal using the evaluation rubric. Each panel chair will compile a summary spreadsheet of the preliminary scores, and each panel will meet to review and discuss the proposals. Any panel member can nominate any proposal for discussion by the panel. As a result of the discussions, panel members may choose to revise their preliminary scores.

- c. Each panel will then submit their scores to the SOSA Chair, who will compile a summary spreadsheet with the scores standardized separately for each panel and submit all preliminary scores to the full Committee. The scores for the proposals that were submitted by SOSA committee members will be sent to the Provost's designee rather than to the SOSA Chair.
- d. The full Committee will re-convene for a comprehensive review of all preliminary scores before finalizing them. Upon review of the preliminary scores, individual SOSA Committee members can nominate any proposal for review and discussion by the full Committee. The full Committee does not have to review and discuss every proposal.
- e. Upon completion of the full Committee's determination of final scores, the SOSA Chair will provide the final standardized scores (overall and for each category of the rubric) to the Provost's Designee. The Provost's designee will integrate the scores from any individual SOSA Committee members who had submitted proposals. The Provost's designee will then submit the complete summary of final scores to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- f. After the SOSA results are announced, the Office of Academic Affairs informs applicants of their scores for each category of the rubric.

### **3. Review Criteria**

The applicant should keep in mind that non-specialists will be evaluating her/his proposal, so the applicant should be certain to use non-technical language that is accessible to any educated lay person. It is the applicant's responsibility to present the proposal in a clear, well-organized, and coherent manner that effectively communicates the proposed work and its merits. SOSA Committee members will evaluate each proposal on the basis of the criteria outlined in the Request for Proposals (e.g., intellectual merit, expertise of the applicant. The evaluation rubric that will be used by the SOSA Committee can be found on the last page of the Request for Proposals.

### **POST-AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Every supported faculty member and librarian must submit a final report of scholarly/creative/professional activities at the end of the grant period, to be

submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs on the first Monday of October. Reports will be used in the evaluation of subsequent applications. Failure to submit a report will place future SOSA proposals and workload assignments for scholarship in jeopardy.

The report should include a brief description of 1) the nature of the scholarly/creative/professional activities carried out during the SOSA award, 2) the objectives and expected outcomes from the original, funded SOSA proposal, and 3) a short explanation of how they were met or why they were not met. Instructions for the format of the Alternate Assignments Follow-up Report are available online: <https://academicaffairs.tcnj.edu/faculty/research-faculty-development/>

Interim reports at the end of the first year of a two-year award are not necessary.