Overview of Task Force to Enhance the University’s Research Mission
February 6, 2009

The primary goal of this task force will be to create an actionable strategic plan that will help advance the research mission of Saint Louis University. This planning will occur in four phases:

1. **Fact finding** through focus groups, review of former research committee findings, and study of activities at other research-based academic institutions;
2. **Development of specific goals and intended outcomes** in support of research growth at SLU;
3. **Development of appropriate metrics** for verifying success with respect to the proposed goals and outcomes, along with a process for reviewing established goals to determine their continuing viability and to generate new goals as the internal and external environments that support research evolve; and
4. **Production of a strategic action plan** which assimilates and incorporates all of the key findings from the first three phases.

When completed, the strategic plan should serve as a roadmap that will help:

- Mitigate situations restricting research activity at SLU;
- Enhance mentoring for junior faculty, in particular, as they work to develop strong research programs and obtain funding in support of their research;
- Develop viable methods for determining the success of specific research strategies;
- Assure better communication of individual and group research efforts with the goal of making the best use of University resources and also of collaborating across departmental, School/College, and even university lines (possibly via an online clearinghouse of faculty research activities and proposals);
- Ensure that resources and incentives necessary to promote and enhance research are more readily available for faculty;
- Identify a wider range of potential resources for the generation of research funding, including activities carried out in collaboration with the Office of Development & University Relations;
- Identify and build upon existing and prospective areas of research strength;
- Assess the services provided through the Office of Research Innovation and Intellectual Property;
- Identify evolving research compliance needs; and
- Suggest an ongoing committee structure that will allow us to better monitor the University’s progress in meeting the abovementioned goals, and help ensure that progress

The research opportunities the task force seeks to advance should not be narrowly defined but must be broad-based, including not only traditional studies funded by the government, charities, and foundations, but also:

- Industry collaborations in product and/or process development;
- Engagement with local, regional, national, and international communities;
- Non-traditional approaches to research fostered through intra- and extra-institutional collaborations;
- Research in the visual and performing arts; and
- Digital publishing (e.g., online journals, sophisticated teaching aids, online exhibition catalogs, digital collections, and the like)