

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
Excellence in Higher Education Endowment Report
From the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
1 OCTOBER 2008
[Pursuant to W.S. 21-16-1204]

To the Joint Appropriations and Joint Education Interim Committees

1. Background

Created in 2006, the Excellence in Higher Education Endowment is a \$105 million account, two-thirds of which, or \$70 million, was designated to the University of Wyoming. Income from the endowment allows the university to establish endowed faculty positions and to acquire instructional and resource materials, classroom equipment, and other resources necessary to support the work of endowed faculty members. Anticipated distributions to the university are based on a spending policy of 5% of the average of the market value of the corpus for each of the preceding five (5) fiscal years or the fiscal years up to five for which there was a balance.

The statute imposes some constraints on the uses of the endowment earnings. Not less than 2/3 of the amounts must be used to expand university instruction and research in disciplines related to economic and social challenges facing Wyoming. Not less than four (4) endowed faculty positions are to be in the College of Education. The remaining endowed faculty members must have established reputations in other areas of distinction as identified in the university academic plan, including business, arts and humanities, mathematics, cultural studies, economics and law.

Pursuant to Enrolled Act No. 54, Senate, Section 1 (c) (ii), the fifty-eighth Legislature of the State of Wyoming appropriated two million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$2,800,000) in one-time “jump-start” funds to be distributed to the University of Wyoming and expended exclusively for the purposes specified in W.S. 21-16-1202 (b). This one-time appropriation allowed the university to begin filling positions in fiscal years 2007 and 2008, to be funded permanently using earnings from the Excellence in Higher Education Endowment.

2. Summary of authorized positions

Under W.S. 21-16-1204, UW must report annually on faculty positions partially or fully funded through the endowment program, including the name of each faculty member filling an endowed position, their education and experience, their research and instructional activities, and the benefits of their research and instruction.

The \$2.8 million “jump-start” appropriation became effective July 1, 2006. The Vice President for Academic Affairs developed a planning budget for the allocation of positions to be supported with these funds during the 2007-2008 biennium, while the \$70M endowment account began to fill. The planning budget included estimated salaries, employer-paid benefits, ongoing costs to support research and instructional activities of the faculty recruited into the positions, as well as one-time start up expenses essential to recruiting the best possible senior faculty. The planning budget recognized that, at the end of the biennium, “jump-start” funds would no longer be

available, and earnings generated by the higher education endowment account would have to be sufficient to pay all on-going costs associated with filled faculty positions. Uncertainties regarding the time period over which the endowment account would fill and the anticipated payout rate suggested the need for a fiscally cautious approach in allocating positions during the first year of the biennium. Based on the planning budget, three searches were authorized with first-year “jump-start” funds: two in the College of Education (fulfilling one-half of the legislative mandate requiring four positions in the College of Education) and one in the College of Arts and Sciences Creative Writing MFA program. *All three of the initially allocated positions have been filled.* Full descriptions of those faculty hires follow below.

As more information became available during the second year of the biennium about anticipated expendable income flowing to the university from the state-managed endowment account, more searches were authorized in two phases. Seven additional positions were allocated during fiscal year 2008, and five more in July 2008 for a total of fifteen authorized endowed faculty positions. Four of these 15 positions will be funded with earnings combined from both the state account and private endowment gifts to the university, allowing for a greater number of search authorizations and establishing a unique private-public partnership in endowing distinguished professorships.

The 15 authorized positions conform to the legislative mandate. Four positions in Education, as prescribed by the legislation, have been created. The strategy for allocation of the others is to coordinate a set of positions in the life sciences, in agreement with the university’s Academic Plan, and to build greater depth in other selected areas of distinction, including the arts and humanities, and professions critical to the state such as business and law. In addition, positions are selected for allocation based on their potential to address economic and social challenges in the state, such as community economic development, livestock and wildlife disease, and managing natural resource conflicts. The strategy is reflected in the following table, and the 15 allocated positions are described in detail below. Four positions authorized for searches have been filled, and eleven searches are ongoing.

Allocation strategy	Number of positions	College/Academic Unit
Education	4	Education
UW Areas of Distinction		
Arts & Humanities	3	Arts & Sciences Art Museum
Life Sciences	4	Arts & Sciences Agriculture Engineering Haub School & Ruckelshaus Institute
Professions Critical to Wyoming	2	Business Law
Other Economic and Social Challenges	2	Agriculture Haub School & Ruckelshaus Institute

Position descriptions

College of Education (four searches authorized; two completed to date)

Four of the fifteen positions currently allocated will reside in the College of Education with focuses on literacy, science education, reading education, and mathematics education. The individuals selected for these positions will develop and lead nationally recognized programs in these fields and are expected to be magnets for attracting the best and brightest junior faculty and students into these critical areas of teaching need in Wyoming. These positions represent the four endowed faculty positions that must, by law, be in the College of Education.

- **Literacy. Dr. James F. Baumann** joined the UW College of Education, as the first Wyoming Excellence Chair in Literacy Education. A professor of language and literacy education most recently at the University of Georgia, Baumann earned a B.A. degree in psychology (1971) at the University of Notre Dame, and received his M.S. (1973) and Ph.D. (1980) degrees in curriculum and instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was associate director of the National Reading Research Center for five years, was elected in 1998 as a fellow of the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy, and was a member of the board of directors of the International Reading Association from 1995-1998. Literacy education in Wyoming will be bolstered by the addition of Dr. Baumann to the faculty, who is a recognized expert in reading education. He not only will teach UW students, but will conduct in-service workshops for teachers throughout the state. Other activities of interest include federal grant proposal development, development of the white paper proposing a Literacy Center at UW and purchasing materials for the Center, teaching graduate level literacy courses, and collaboration and leadership related to early childhood curriculum and the summer 2008 UW Early Childhood Leadership institute.
- **Science Education. Dr. Tim Slater** will join the university faculty in the fall of 2008 as the first Wyoming Excellence in Higher Education Endowed Chair in Science Education. Dr. Slater earned a B.S in Physical Science and a B.S in Secondary Science Education at Kansas State University, a M.S in Physics at Clemson University, and his Ph.D. in Geological Science Education at the University of South Carolina. Slater is associate professor of astronomy at the University of Arizona, where he founded and directs the internationally recognized Conceptual Astronomy and Physics Education Research (CAPER) team. Slater has seven years' experience as faculty and senior specialist with the International Fulbright Senior Specialist Program at the University of Arizona. He anticipates focusing on two early goals upon arriving in Wyoming. One high priority will be creating and delivering new workshops for high school science teachers that complement existing professional development programs offered by the UW Science-Mathematics Teaching Center. Professor Slater will also begin to explore opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across campus on grant proposals that support common science education research, policy, and programming goals.

- Searches to fill the endowed chair positions in **Mathematics Education** and **Reading Education** are currently in progress.

Arts and Humanities (3 searches authorized; one completed)

- **Eminent Writer in Residence (one permanent visiting position, to be filled each year)** One of three positions allocated in the first year of the biennium was for an Eminent Writer in Residence, a permanent visiting position to reside in the English Department's Creative Writing Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program. By allowing the university to bring in a new, well-known creative writer each year, this endowed position will help cement the reputation of the MFA as a nationally competitive program in creative writing and will also significantly enhance UW's curriculum in English composition more generally. **Ms. Terry Tempest Williams**, a nationally and internationally known nature and environmental writer, held the Eminent Writer-in-Residence position for the 2007-2008 academic year. Williams is the author of the famous memoir, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*, as well as other well-known nonfiction books that focus on nature, the environment, art and politics. Among her many honors are the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the Lannan Literary Fellowship, the 2005 Wallace Stegner Award by the Center for the American West, and the Wilderness Society's highest honor for a private citizen.

Ms. Williams taught the MFA's non-fiction writing workshop and held a series of well-attended brown bag lunches, in which she invited attendees to talk about a range of topics, from writing to environmental concerns to the Wyoming energy boom. She, joined by seven MFA students, visited six Wyoming communities to "gauge their weather" and take the pulse of Wyoming life and the issues we face as a state today. Each Weather Report visit lasted two to three days, and included readings by Williams and the students, conversation among the community members about pressing social and political issues, and writing workshops. Weather Report visits were made to Rawlins (partnered with the Carbon County Center for Education), Cheyenne (partnered with the Laramie County Library), Pinedale (partnered with Pinedale Fine Art Center), Casper (partnered with UW/CC), Riverton-Ethete (partnered with UW Riverton), and Gillette (partnered with Campbell County Library). The Weather Reports were widely and favorably covered in both local and state media, as well as in the New York Times ("Recovering from Wyoming's Energy Bender, A. Fuller, 4/20/2008). The Weather Reports culminated with a "Weather Map" discussion on the UW Laramie campus, reporting back to faculty, staff, students and administrators what they had learned about Wyoming's needs and strengths during the site visits.

The Wyoming Excellence endowment also allowed the MFA program to bring in six extraordinary contemporary writers: Dorothy Allison, Richard Bausch, Sigrid Nunez, Michael Ondaatje, graphic novelist Art Spiegelman, and Joy Williams. The writers gave public readings, met in intimate settings with graduate and undergraduate students, and created enduring connections between the MFA program and the most powerful currents in contemporary American literature.

Ms. Joy Williams will serve as the MFA program's Eminent Writer in Residence during the 2008-2009 academic year. Her most recent collection of stories is entitled *Honored Guest* (2004). Ms. Williams, whose novels, short stories, and essays have been nominated for some of the nation's most prestigious literary awards, earned a B.A. from Marietta College and an M.F.A. from the University of Iowa.

- **Fine Arts Visiting Artist-in-Residence (one permanent visiting position allocated, search initiated).** The endowed artist-in-residence is a rotating position that will offer students in the disciplines of art, music, and theatre and dance the opportunity to work with professionals with national and international reputations. The visiting artists are expected to work with students and faculty in a variety of ways, including: teaching master classes, mentoring and employing students as assistants in the studio, delivering public workshops, giving lectures and seminars in related areas, and collaborating with students and faculty on performances. This program will create an enriched educational and artistic experience not only by broadening UW students' opportunities for exposure to the world of performing and fine arts, but also could provide for exhibitions and performances that would be offered to the public.
- **Art Museum Master Teacher (one position funded temporarily).** A five-year commitment has been made to fund the Master Teacher project with state endowment funds, after which the Art Museum will continue support with private donations. The Master Teacher bridges the dialogue between art and intellectual inquiry. The person in this position will provide regular teaching and professional development opportunities for pre-service students and enriched teaching and research opportunities for graduate students, and leadership in developing and implementing pre-K through 16 educational models which are anchored by the Art Museum's collections and exhibitions. Using the museum's exhibitions, elementary and secondary education students will be able to learn teaching practices first-hand, and how original can material enliven the learning experience.

Life Sciences (four searches authorized; one completed, three on-going)

- **Ecology. Dr. Ingrid Burke** has joined the university faculty as the first Wyoming Excellence Chair in Ecology, a tenured faculty member in the departments of Botany and Renewable Resources, and serving as the director of the Haub School and Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources. Dr. Burke earned a B.S. in Biology from Middlebury College and a Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Wyoming. She was most recently a Professor and Co-Director of the Graduate Degree Program in Ecology at Colorado State University. Professor Burke has conducted internationally recognized research on shortgrass and sagebrush steppes, and brings a keen sensitivity to the natural resource issues facing the Rocky Mountain region, a deep understanding of the scientific aspects of these issues, and the ability to craft a compelling vision of the teaching and policy-support missions of the Haub School and Ruckelshaus Institute. Burke oversees the Haub School and directs the Ruckelshaus Institute's applied research efforts, with an emphasis on Wyoming's open space, and water and energy resources.

She also oversees the institute's outreach program designed to engage stakeholders and the public in collaborative processes for natural resource issues.

- **Biomedical physiology.** The College of Arts and Sciences Department of Zoology and Physiology has begun a search for a distinguished biomedical physiologist to train students in physiology and health sciences, and to conduct innovative research to build the university's distinction in the life sciences. The endowment for this position is partially private, and the Wyoming Excellence professor selected to fill it will also hold the title "Hank Gardner and Marilyn Fiske Chair of Physiology".
- **Prion biology.** The College of Agriculture Veterinary Sciences program is searching for a Wyoming Excellence Chair in veterinary neurosciences with a focus on teaching, research, and service in prion biology. Prion diseases, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle, scrapie in sheep, and chronic wasting disease (CWD) in elk, affect both livestock and wildlife, and as such are of particular importance to Wyoming's livestock and tourism sectors, its economy, landscape, and lifestyle. In some cases, prion diseases have been known to affect humans, as well. With the establishment of the excellence chair in prion biology, University of Wyoming has the potential to build national and international recognition as a center of excellence for animal disease and prion research.
- **Atmosphere-Biosphere Interaction.** The Colleges of Engineering and Agriculture are searching for a distinguished scholar focused on processes controlling atmosphere-biosphere interactions. To reside in the departments of Atmospheric Sciences and Renewable Resources, the faculty member to hold this Wyoming Excellence chair will study the relationships between changes in climate and terrestrial ecosystems, with an emphasis on the complex, semi-arid terrains of Wyoming. The position will have a critical role as well in developing the newly formed research partnership between the University of Wyoming and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). Jump-start funds were used to purchase an Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectroscopy system, which enables the existing scanning electron microscope to rapidly determine elemental compositions of particles simultaneously with measurements of sizes and shapes of particles. The new system constitutes a major addition to our capabilities to meet the needs of researchers, and should be very attractive to a scientist interested in working on studies involving particulates from the atmosphere.

Professions Critical to the State (two searches authorized in the Colleges of Business and Law, both under way)

The Excellence in Higher Education endowment has afforded UW the opportunity to complete several partially funded, privately endowed chairs, creating unique state-private partnerships in building excellence in areas of distinction at UW. Two such positions are in the Colleges of Business and Law:

- **Accounting.** The College of Business is searching for a distinguished professor to fill the Toppan Chair in Accounting. Clara Raab Toppan, the private donor, was the first

woman CPA in the state of Wyoming. The goals for the Toppan professorship are to recruit accounting students into the profession by connecting with high schools and community colleges throughout the state and region, and to enhance the effectiveness and impact of UW's accounting education program in supporting business development and sustainability in Wyoming.

- **Law.** A second such partner position will be located in the College of Law, which is now conducting a search for a permanent faculty member to fill the Kepler Chair in Law and Leadership. The scholar chosen for this position is expected to bring critical expertise in energy or natural resource law to University of Wyoming, and to create and build linkages between the College of Law and the new School of Energy Resources.

During the 2008-2009 academic year on a visiting professorship funded jointly by the Excellence Endowment and College of Law, **Mr. Dennis Stickley** will be teaching insurance law, oil and gas law, and energy law and policy. Professor Stickley received a B.S. and M.S. in resource economics and a J.D. degree from the University of Wyoming, and a Master of Laws degree in energy law from the University of Utah. He is recognized as an international expert in energy law, and has been listed in the *Guide to the World's Leading Energy and Natural Resources Lawyers*. Stickley will offer symposia on pipelines and carbon sequestration in conjunction with the UW School of Energy Resources and the Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute.

Other Economic and Social Challenges (two positions allocated, searches initiated)

- **Community economic development.** The focus of the Wyoming Excellence endowed chair in Community Economic Development will be on building the relationship between community economic development and the region's natural resource base, particularly in Wyoming, with a goal of assisting communities to manage and plan for growth and change. In addition to the Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics, Economics, or equivalent degree with documented experience in regional economics, community development, and natural resource policy, other desirable qualifications include working experience with GIS and geospatial analysis, the economics of industry location and site analysis, and/or community development implementation processes. The academic home of the endowed chair in Community Development will be the College of Agriculture.
- **Collaborative natural resource management.** The Haub School and Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources is searching to fill the Eldon and Beverly Spicer Chair of Environment and Natural Resources. The faculty member to hold this distinguished professorship, to be funded jointly by the Spicer family and Higher Education Endowment, will have established expertise in environment and natural resources conflict resolution and collaborative processes. Formal coursework and/or collaborative process training will be available to students from the wide variety of disciplines with interests in collaborative decision-making, including law, economics, geography, sociology, psychology, energy resources, wildlife management, watershed management, and others. The position will also benefit the myriad of industries, agencies, non-profits, and other participants in collaborative natural resource

management by providing research expertise to evaluate the successes and challenges of collaborative decision-making. The disciplinary home for this position may be in one of several colleges and departments, depending on the specific area of scholarship or discipline of the person selected.

3. Core Facilities Equipment Purchases

In January 2008 Academic Affairs authorized the expenditure of up to \$500,000 in one-time funds from the Wyoming Excellence in Higher Education Endowment for purchases of equipment that will enhance success in recruiting for and filling the allocated Wyoming Excellence chair positions. The items provide basic infrastructure necessary to the research of the Endowed Chairs to be hired in Prion Biology, Biomedical Physiology, and Ecological Climatology and to support Professor Baumann's work as an Endowed Chair in Literacy, and related student and faculty research generally. In order to achieve maximum use, where appropriate these items have been housed in core facilities that will be accessible to other faculty members in related areas, including UW's Macromolecular Core, the Nuclei Acid Exploration Facility, Stable Isotope Facility, and Microbeam/Solid Materials Characterization Facility.

Nine items ranging in value from \$25,000 to \$70,000 were purchased. Several items are fundamental pieces of equipment, such as an autoclave and fermentor. Others are more specialized, including immunostainer, genetic analyzer for sequence and basic DNA fragment analysis, and high performance liquid chromatograph/amino acid analyzer. Purchases that provide additional capabilities for existing equipment include a laser sample introduction system for our stable isotope mass spectrometers and energy dispersive x-ray detector for our scanning electron microscope. Funds were also expended for assessment and literacy materials for the Literacy Center in the College of Education to support the Endowed Chair in Literacy.

4. Fiscal Summary

In total, Academic Affairs has authorized fifteen fully or partially state-funded endowed chair positions for searches during the 2007, 2008, and 2009 academic years. The costs associated with each position include salaries commensurate with the market for top academics, employer paid benefits, ongoing budgets to support research and instructional activities, as well as one-time start up expenses which are especially critical to recruiting distinguished scholars with large established laboratory research programs.

The balance in the Excellence in Higher Education Endowment expenditure account held at the university as of June 30, 2008 is \$3,913,384.74. Expenditures for the 2009 fiscal year are currently budgeted at \$1.88 million, plus an additional \$600,000 to \$750,000 (estimate) in start up expenses for chairs hired as a result of on-going searches, who are expected to report in the fall semester, 2009.

The following tables summarize the uses and expenditures of the "jump-start" funding authorized by the 2006 Legislature, budgets for filled positions, and the total estimated initial cost of the program when all 15 allocated positions are filled. Not shown are projected costs as the program continues. Costs are anticipated to increase at the rate of approximately four (4)

percent a year, in conjunction with anticipated salary raises and increases in benefit and support costs.

**Use and Expenditure of “Jump-Start” Funds
July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008**

State Appropriation – “Jump-Start” Funds	\$2,800,000.00
Less expenses in 2006-2007	\$210,666.67
Balance July 1, 2007	\$2,589,333.93
Advertising and Recruitment	\$200,335.02
Salaries and Benefits	\$391,482.30
Support	\$138,387.43
Equipment/facilities	\$695,204.34
Reduction (returned to State)	\$1,000,000.00
Balance June 30, 2008	\$163,924.84

Estimated Expenses for All Fifteen Positions, when filled

Salaries	Employer Paid Benefits	Support for Research and Instructional Activities	Total Annual Expenses	Start Up Costs
\$1,797,000	\$628,950	\$745,000	\$3,170,950	\$1,746,000