

4 \$1.3 MILLION AIDP GRANT BOOSTS OU PROGRAMS

In July of this year Ottawa University was awarded a \$1.3 million Advanced Institutional Development Program grant by the U. S. Office of Education. This is the largest single grant in Ottawa's history.

In this article President Armacost responds to questions concerning its significance for the University.

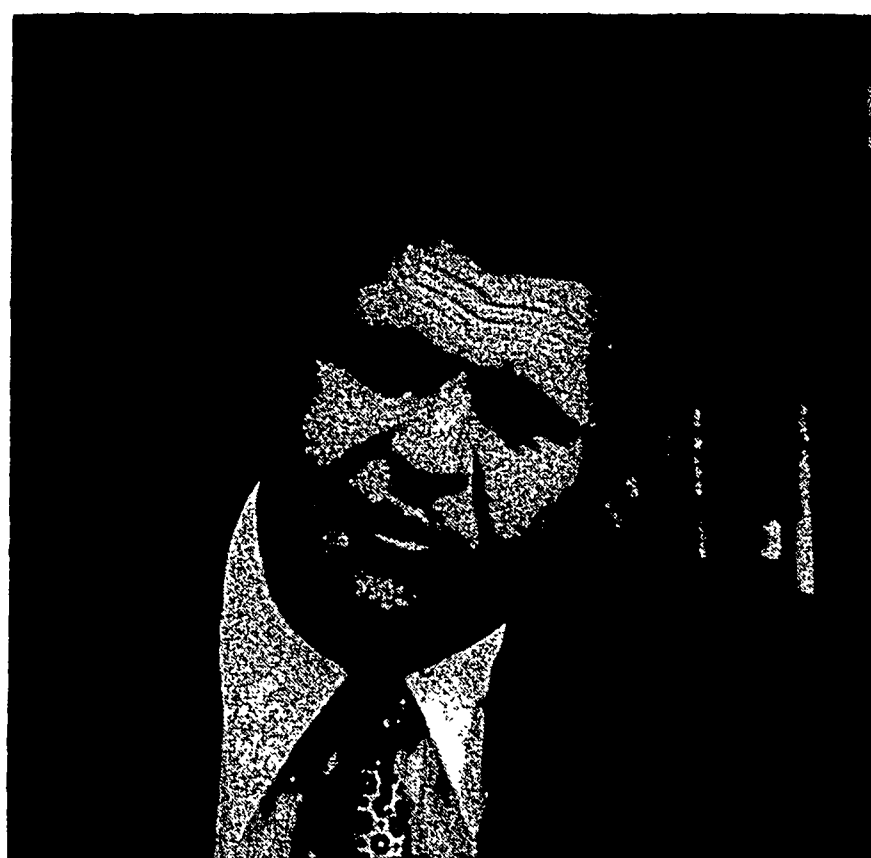
What is the purpose of the AIDP grant program, and upon what basis are the grants awarded?

The purpose of the AIDP grant program is to select a very small number of institutions which have been called by the government "developing institutions," and to provide a major input of capital sufficient to put the institutions in what the government calls the mainstream of American higher education. That is, the U. S. Office of Education seeks to get these institutions to the point where they will have sufficient academic, management, and financial strength to have long-term viability even in the midst of the difficult times we are facing right now in higher education. The grants are awarded on the basis of the "track record" of the college. The Office of Education people are trying to pick the schools where they think the management capability and other basic ingredients presently exist so that just a small influx of money will result in this final push to long-term stability and vitality.

Would you describe some of the principal goals which this funding will enable the University to achieve?

Clearly, the over-all goal is to contribute to the long-term strength, both academically and financially, of Ottawa University. More particularly, this means that our AIDP-funded activities must give us a more solid basis for the recruitment of students to be sure that we gain the enrollment which we will need

to be fiscally viable over the next ten years. The grant gives us an opportunity for some major advances in terms of curriculum development. We have tried to identify a number of different areas where there are unusually fine job opportunities for graduates of liberal arts colleges as we consider the needs of the labor market over the next few decades. We have tried further to analyze these findings in light of those things which a small liberal arts college



could do particularly well, and we stand on the conviction that a liberal education is truly the most practical kind of education available today. Thus, the focus on career opportunities in no way modifies our basic commitment to liberal education.

As a result of that analysis, we identified a number of areas. First, management science. There are going to be job opportunities there and the grant gives us a chance to develop our curriculum in that area. Second, we looked at the growing number of opportunities in government-related occupations. We will develop a public administration program which has at its heart a depth study in management sciences. Third, we identified social welfare occupations. Fourth, we became increasingly aware of the opportuni-

ties for students in environment-related occupations. Fifth, there seems to be real opportunities for our students in the field of communications. The grant enables us to do a good job in developing and strengthening the curriculum in each of these areas.

Now in addition to that, there are two other ways in which the grant will enable us to strengthen our academic program. First of all, it makes available a computer which will be of benefit to us for instruction as well as for management purposes. Secondly, the grant makes possible some additional cooperative activities with other institutions, most notably Baker University, so that we can do together some things that neither of us can do as well separately.

In addition to curriculum development, there is another set of goals related to what might be called academic support. We'll be able to do a better job of developing the skills of students related to the freshman core program. Basically what this does is give us an opportunity to develop curriculum materials that will take students (at their own pace) from where they are to where they need to be, developing the basic skills that are so essential in a liberal education program. Also in what I would call academic support would be our career planning and placement activities. The grant does enable us to do a good job of developing additional material which will help our students deal with the career planning decisions that must be made early in the academic career and to tie that planning to the placement activities which will characterize their senior year as they look to their experiences beyond college. We hope as a result of this to build networks of associations with people in industry

Also as an academic support, we have some goals related in particular to the needs of our minority group students to make up for the often poor start they have had in preparing for science disciplines. A portion of the funding is earmarked for program development at our College Without Campus in Kansas City. The grant also provides for certain programs within student services, including enhancement of counseling, health services, and women's sports.

Finally, the AIDP grant makes possible further professional development of our administrative staff and our management systems as well as development and support of our public relations program.