

Criterion B.7 Institutional Support and Financial Resources

The Engineering Physics program is offered through the NMSU College of Engineering as a joint venture of the Department of Physics in the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) and the Electrical and Computer Engineering and the Mechanical Engineering Departments in the Engineering College. The program is managed by Physics and, therefore, funded through the College of Arts and Sciences. Engineering Physics is one of the five degree programs offered in the Department of Physics, and it does not have a separate budget. Discussed below and detailed in Table 7.1 is the combined educational budget of the Department for all undergraduate and graduate programs.

The State funding for operations is provided through the Instructional and General Funds (I&G) appropriation, these include faculty, staff, and teaching assistant salaries, and a base operating budget to cover work-study salaries, instructional supplies, travel, and services. Additional I&G funding is provided for laboratory supplies and instructional equipment. Generally the I&G funds have covered only about half of the Department's non-salary operating costs. Funds from research overhead return State-University Research Funds (SURF) and private contributions (Endowments) supplement the State funding.

Departmental I&G budgets in A&S are submitted by the Dean of A&S to the Provost and the Vice President for Finance. These budgets have a historical basis. The base department Administration and Instruction budget of about \$76,000 has not changed substantially in more than 8 years. Faculty and staff salaries received cost of living increases but lagged behind those of our peer institutions, which has led to difficulties retaining high quality mid-career faculty.

The Department of Physics receives partial return of the overhead generated by research expenditures (SURF). For the past five years, the department's annual externally funded research expenditures have averaged approximately \$2M generating approximately \$370K in overhead. From the generated overhead was deducted the department contributions to faculty startup packages and other commitments. Prior to AY2004-05 the department received a 24.5% return of the overhead it generated, amounting to about \$34,000 per year after all deductions. This made it possible to adequately invest in research (faculty startup, cost sharing of grants, and research facilities) while also supplementing the operating budget. The current policy is to return only 16% of overhead generated, which greatly reduced the department's ability to sustain both research investment and operations.

Requests for Equipment and Laboratory Supplies are made annually by the departments. These funds are generated from student fees and I&G appropriations. They are distributed to the Colleges and reallocated to the departments on the basis of College priorities. Generally only a fraction of the request is funded. These funds have been supplemented by SURF - particularly in areas which benefit both the undergraduate and graduate programs, such as the department computer laboratory.

Faculty development funds, mainly as "startup" funds for new faculty, are also provided. These funds are provided from a variety of sources. Indicated in Table 7.1 are the budgeted

amounts from the College and Department, which are shared on a 2:1 basis. Additional startup funds from external grants are not shown. Startup funds are aimed primarily to help new faculty establish competitive research programs, which contribute to the department's education mission by providing opportunities for undergraduate and graduate research and by generating overhead funds.

The Department has an endowment of approximately \$1.5M which generates approximately \$60K per year of expendable funds. These funds are used for undergraduate and graduate fellowships and awards, a distinguished lecture series, an endowed professorship, lecture demonstration equipment, and expenditures which contribute to the department quality of life such as activities of the Society of Physics Students, departmental social functions, and costs of departmental advisory board meetings.

Buildings and physical plant facilities are maintained by the Office of Facilities Services (OFS) under the Vice-President for Human and Physical Resources. These costs do not generally come from departmental budgets.

Table 7.1 details the Department of Physics expendable funds from all sources.

Table 7.1: NMSU Department of Physics budget.

Category	Fiscal Year				
	<i>2001-02</i>	<i>2002-03</i>	<i>2003-04</i>	<i>2004-05</i>	<i>2005-06</i>
<i>Institutional & General Funds</i>	\$76,270	\$83,897	\$76,270	\$82,270	\$76,270
<i>Lab Supplies</i>	\$5,000	\$3,900	\$3,500	\$5,000	\$2,700
<i>Equipment & Materials</i>	\$53,000	\$25,000	\$24,000	\$21,600	\$19,000
<i>Faculty/Staff Salaries</i>	\$992,947	\$992,947	\$1,019,978	\$1,065,289	\$1,088,768
<i>Graduate Assistants</i>	\$242,607	\$248,960	\$246,347	\$257,803	\$265,728
<i>SURF</i>	\$30,499	\$33,570	\$38,673	\$18,087	\$20,000
<i>Startup Funds</i>	\$75,000	\$110,000	\$70,000	\$260,000	\$75,000
<i>Endowments</i>	\$59,300	\$59,500	\$59,700	\$59,750	\$61,830
Total	\$1,534,623	\$1,557,774	\$1,538,468	\$1,769,799	\$1,609,296