THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

STANDARD PRACTICE GUIDE

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APPLIES TO:			
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I. Background

Private gifts have provided a significant portion of the University's resources for a number of years and must continue to do so in the future if Michigan is to prosper and fulfill its responsibilities and mission. The success of our efforts to secure large gifts in recent years has been due in large measure to the cooperative participation of the University's central administration, schools, colleges, regional campuses, and volunteer leadership. A key factor in this cooperative process was the decision, made in 1983, to institute a University-wide system for the coordination of activity related to major gift prospects. This group consists of individuals, foundations, and corporations thought to be capable of making a gift of $50,000 or more.

II. Considerations and Assumptions

Prospects for major gifts to the University are a significant institutional resource. To realize the highest benefit from this resource, University development activities involving major gift prospects must be conducted in the most effective way possible within the context of University priorities as they are determined by academic management under the guidance of the Provost and the President and adopted by the executive officers and the Board of Regents.

By avoiding duplication of effort and by equitably resolving competing claims, prospect coordination helps ensure that the greatest possible return in support of the University's foremost priorities is secured from each donor. The policy applies to individuals, foundations, and corporations and to all solicitations other than those which are a part of regular annual giving programs.

III. Guidelines and Procedures

The Vice President for Development is responsible for the operation of the prospect coordination process. This coordination includes consultation with University officers, deans and directors, and fundraising volunteer leadership to determine the most appropriate prospect assignments and solicitation strategies. In making these determinations, factors such as a prospect's giving history, demonstrated areas of interest, degree relationship to the University, and institutional contacts are taken into account. The primary consideration in prospect assignment is the probability of obtaining the largest possible gift in support of one or more University priorities.

Prospect coordination begins with the identification of a person, foundation, or corporation as a major gift prospect and continues as long as that individual or organization is believed to have the capacity for and at least a potential interest in making a gift of $50,000. Within the University Development Office, coordinating major gift prospect activity is the responsibility of the Associate Vice-President for Development, Individual Giving Programs, for individual prospects, certain closely-held companies, and private foundations. The Associate Vice-President of Development, Corporate and Foundation Relations is responsible for solicitation of public corporations and professional foundations. The Major Gift staff area directors have primary staff responsibility for the coordination of activities related to individual prospects within their regions.

Responsibility for University-wide prospect coordination is shared by the development staff of the schools, colleges, regional campuses, and other units to ensure that the Prospect Coordination List, the primary source for information on the status of major gift prospects, is current and useful. This obligation necessarily includes:

1. adding the names of newly identified major gift prospects to the list,

2. reviewing the list for new names to provide information or to register an interest in a particular prospect,

3. requesting assignment of specific prospects for the purpose of strategic planning and solicitation.

The accuracy and usefulness of this list depends upon regular input from all University development officers and others actively engaged in development activity. Updates, changes, and requests for copies of the Prospect Coordination List for individuals, certain closely-held companies, and private foundations should be directed to the Major Gifts Office. Information and requests involving public companies and professional foundations should be directed to the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations.

When differences of opinion exist among the units of the University regarding access for solicitation of a prospect, the area major gift director will convene a discussion which includes the development officers of the interested units. At that time, the primary objective will be to determine which solicitation is most likely to secure the largest gift for the highest institutional priority. If agreement on access is not achieved, the deans and/or directors of the units involved will be asked to resolve the competing claims among themselves. If disagreement on the assignment of a prospect persists, in the case of the Ann Arbor campus, the Provost and the Vice President for Development will be called upon to determine, in consultation with the interested parties, the order of access for solicitation. In the case of unresolved differences involving the regional campuses, the President, in consultation with the Chancellors, the Vice President for Development, and other interested parties, will determine the order of access for solicitation.

IV. Conclusion

Successful fundraising requires shared information, open communication, and cooperative participation by all concerned. The prospect coordination system can help us meet these criteria as well as serve as a stimulus to vigorous additional activity among University faculty, staff, volunteers, and prospective donors.

The system does not eliminate all conflicts among proposed solicitation efforts, but rather serves as a means for managing and sharing information about the University's most significant prospects for private resource acquisition. In its best form, prospect coordination can provide an arena for the constructive give-and-take that is essential to maximizing the returns to all units which participate in the fundraising efforts of the University.