

# Panel to review Marching Band

by [Daniel J. Fitzgibbons](#), *Chronicle* staff

A 16-member task force has been appointed by Chancellor David Scott to study the future of the Minuteman Marching Band. The panel, which will consider a range of issues, including funding, facilities, and admissions and recruitment, will submit its recommendations by the end of the semester.

Since the band's activities cut across several executive areas, said Scott, Deputy Chancellor Marcellette Williams is organizing the review. Associate provost Susan Pearson is chairing the task force.

Two years ago, noted the chancellor, the band was recognized with the Sudler Trophy, an award that in past years went to schools such as Michigan, Illinois, Ohio State, Florida A&M, Texas, Oklahoma, Michigan State, Kansas, Iowa, Arizona State, Northwestern and UCLA.

"Many of these bands have a much larger number of scholarships and other support," he said. "The band was recently invited to march in the presidential inaugural parade, another indication of the extraordinarily high regard the band enjoys locally and nationally."

Scott said the band is important not only to the Department of Music and Dance and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, but also for Athletics and "an array of outreach and ambassadorial activities for the entire University."

But the chancellor acknowledged that collegiate bands are often challenged to balance academic, athletic and outreach demands.

"In the light of the past and recent successes and of the visibility of the Marching Band under the leadership of director George Parks and his staff, this is an appropriate time to conduct a study on the future," he said.

Scott said the task force is not expected to focus on academic issues because those concerns are under the aegis of Academic Affairs. He did outline several issues that require further study. Those issues include funding needs and appropriate sources of funding; facilities, including uniform storage; scholarships; admissions and recruiting; the band's role at athletic events; equipment repair and purchasing; and balancing academic and outreach demands, including band practice time.

"Realistically the discussion of the other issues will involve the academic experiences," said Scott, adding that he expects the task force to seek broad input from the department, college and other constituencies.

Scott said the task force can divide its recommendations on short, medium and long-term bases.

Other panel members include Nancy Cullen, former Alumni Board member and member of Marching Band Alumni; Theater student Matt Dunphy; Robert Goodhue, special assistant to the president; Fine Arts Center director Willie Hill; John Jenkins, Music professor and FAC deputy director; Computer Science major Robin Johnson; Jim MacRostie, associate director of FAC Operations; Management professor Robert Marx; Daniel Melley, former vice chancellor for University Advancement; Music Education majors Amanda Roeder and Adam Sawyer; associate athletic director Elaine Sortino; Fred Tillis, professor emeritus of Music and former FAC director; William Venman, former director of Continuing

Education; and Psychology professor Susan Whitbourne.

Parks and Roger Rideout, interim chair of Music and Dance, will provide input and support, said Scott.