

Strategic Plan Implementation Committee Fall 2017 Summary Report – Part III: Research

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RESEARCH SI 1: ENHANCE SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION.

RESEARCH KPI 1: ENSURE THAT SUPPORT SERVICES ARE SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN THE EFFORTS OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS.

Key parties responsible: VPR, Deans, Department Heads

Progress: OVPRIED has been implementing. Research Coordinators co-location at NIRC, Picard and other centers. Efforts on-going to increase OVPRIED and SPFAC staff and both offices are providing more services, grant seeding, and coordinating. With the hiring of three college-based research coordinators, each of whom will be shared between several colleges beginning in the spring semester, more applicant support prior to proposal submission will be provided. Communication of funding opportunities has increased. Graduate school now providing grant workshops. Purchased DocuSign (integrates with Banner to manage proposal submission and signatures. Have reduced number of signatures. Research travel budget increased from \$100,000 to \$150,000. UG research funding has increased from \$48,000 to \$75,000. Now offering two workshops per semester, early career awards, and grant writing, three this semester. Indirect return formula being modified to include library and research centers.

Action Plans: Implement DocuSign to flag department/college approvers for course release, departmental/college support, etc. Continue to minimize signatures. Expand shared research facilities and equipment (core/shared facilities), and increase communication of value (deans and DHs). Expand shared resources to include expertise (statistics, etc.) and data (would also improve recruiting and enhance grant applications). Expand grant writing support to include proposal development and corporate/ foundation expertise. Include library buying package with startup. Some facilities suffering from demise of College equipment budget. As we discuss facilities allocation and improvement, research should be part of the discussion.

RESEARCH KPI 2 PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND TRAINING TO INCREASE FACULTY AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION.

Key parties responsible: Provost, VPR

Progress: Research salary incentive program in place. Indirect return policy modified to increase incentives. A penultimate draft of the newly revised *Research Re-investment Incentive* policy is currently being vetted wherein the PIs and Co-PIs, as well as their administrative units, will receive a modification/increase in a re-distribution of a percentage of the facilities and administrative costs from their funded grants/contracts. The distributed incentive for PIs/co-PIs increased from 8% to 16% for federal projects, plus an additional 5% for collaborations and/or support of graduate students up to a cap of 20%. This new distribution policy also provides an increase of distributed re-investment funds for administrative units (Centers, Institutes, Academic Departments/Schools, and Colleges); each of these units gets 2% to 8% (depending on a joint or affiliated appointment) of the facilities and administrative costs from their PIs/Co-PIs funded grants/contracts, regardless of whether the administrative units are listed in the grant/contract. This ensures that the administrative units get a percentage without the units competing for these facilities and administrative cost returns. Additionally, salary supplements from research activities count toward regular salary instead of summer salary, so these increases are counted in the grant salary; the new *Institutional Base Salary* policy has been approved by the University Council and is now set.

Action Plans: Continue to incentivize new faculty to submit grants in various ways, consider small stipend and/or course release for intensive research work/grant writing, possible University-wide competition, could include monograph production.

RESEARCH KPI 3: ESTABLISH A MECHANISM FOR TRACKING UNIT-LEVEL PERFORMANCE METRICS.

Key parties responsible: VPR, Assistant VPR, AVPAA-Faculty

Progress: OVPRIED tried to work with Academic Analytics but the system proved inadequate. OVPRIED has compiled faculty research data from workload but this method is labor intensive and the data is difficult to analyze. College level collection is increasing (sciences is a model), but non-standard and labor intensive. VIA explored as faculty research reporting tool, but deemed not ideal.

Action Plans: Committee felt strongly that the solution is to implement a faculty research productivity reporting mechanism that would both allow faculty a simple one-time input process and allow administration real-time access for evaluation for merit, tenure and promotion, honors, grad faculty membership, etc., as well as broad data analytics capability (such as articles published per college, etc.). We are currently reviewing systems with the potential to track unit-level performance metrics. Could have different access profiles for different purposes, privacy levels. System would also help to publicize our research, faculty research profiles. Explore all options for such a reporting system (VIA, Activity Insight, Google Scholar, Vivo (semantic web model), ORBI (free), Banner Talent Management), choose and implement.

RESEARCH SI 2: INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY EXTERNAL FUNDING REVENUE THROUGH GRANTS AND CONTRACTS, ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES, AND FUNDRAISING.

RESEARCH KPI 4: PROVIDE MORE RESOURCES AND ENHANCE ADMINISTRATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT PROCUREMENT OF EXTERNAL FUNDING, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURIAL START-UPS, AND PATENTS.

Key parties responsible: VPR, VPAF

Progress: We are still dead last among 17 peer institutions in research staff. Patents and licenses and entrepreneurial projects have increased tremendously over past five years. NSF officer brought to campus and gave workshop for entire faculty. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs has hired a research grants developmental specialist to assist with pre-award work load and to assist researchers (especially new researchers) in the development of competitive grants. Additionally, three college research coordinators, who will work on pre-award activities while embedded in the academic colleges, have been hired and will begin college-level activities in the spring semester.

Action Plans: Provide more training on patents and industry engagement. Create more opportunities for faculty to meet with OIM staff. Recruit center directors/faculty with federal research portfolios. Provide opportunities for greater interaction with federal program directors. Offer more training for federal grant writing. Need to promote our success, and create awareness and knowledge in patents/IP/licenses.

RESEARCH KPI 5: INVEST IN RESEARCH MENTORING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AIMED AT INCREASING RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY

Key parties responsible: VPR, Deans, Department Heads

Progress: Some mentoring has been developed as part of training sessions (two per semester). With the hiring of a research grants developmental specialist, a dual-track proposal application management system—fast track for experienced researchers and slower track with more support for beginning researchers—has been established.

Action Plans: Consider forming group of retired researchers to help mentor younger scholars. Increase number of grant writing workshops. Deans and Department heads develop peer mentoring systems at department/college level. Make use of endowed chairs to mentor other faculty members.

RESEARCH KPI 6: COLLABORATE WITH UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS AND EXPLORE VARIOUS OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUND-RAISING AND GIFTS TO SUPPORT RESEARCH, GRADUATE EDUCATION, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES.

Key parties responsible: AVPAA-Faculty Affairs, VPA, Development Director, Deans, Department Heads.

Progress: VPR is working on a joint hire with VP Advancement to secure funding and enhance relationships with corporations, foundations and other entities. Now funding new endowed chair salaries from general funds so that chair funds can be used for research enhancement. Development has met with Colleges and departments to spearhead new and revive existing corporate relations. A research communications specialist has been hired in the Office of the Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development to establish and enhance effective communications regarding the activities and needs of the university research community, such as precise costs and deliverables, and specific real costs of recurring items such as GAships. Communication and news will be disseminated to university faculty, staff, and students, as well as members of our extended community including donors, alumni, and corporate partners. These communications and contacts may be employed for awareness raising, fundraising, and entrepreneurial ventures

Action Plans: Create menu of research items in each area to be ready for presentation to potential donors. Need to establish a mechanism for tracking/following up with corporate relationships. Consider the possibility of separate research foundation, proposed heretofore as the *Ragin Research and Economic Development (RED)* Foundation.

RESEARCH SI 3: EXPAND RESEARCH PROGRAMS BEYOND OUR EXISTING STRENGTHS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING FOR RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY PURPOSES.

RESEARCH KPI 7: DEVELOP INTERDISCIPLINARY INITIATIVES LEADING TO THE GROWTH AND CREATION OF RESEARCH CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

Key parties responsible: VPR, AVPAA-Faculty (re joint appointment policy), Deans, Department Heads

Progress: Many centers have recently expanded their reach: 8 new research center directors in past 18 months; NIRC (new director, open houses, working with biology, chemistry); Picard (new director and associate director with faculty appointments, RDC underway, collaborations with social science departments underway); Louisiana Center for Health Informatics being revived in Informatics Research Institute; IRI (faculty appointments); Center on Social Entrepreneurship; Interdisciplinary Research seminars created in COS and COLA; public policy institute under development in Dupre/COLA; joint chair appointment made in COLA (ENGL/MODL); establishment of collaboration indirect return bonus;

Action Plans: Pursue and develop policies and incentives for joint appointments between academic units and research centers, with academic units offering resources such as tenure/tenure track faculty positions, endowed chairs, professorships, while OVPRIED offers financial support, research infrastructure, startup funds, and other such resources, where appropriate. Develop and grow incentives to encourage existing and new interdisciplinary initiatives such as increasing indirect returns. Prioritize interdisciplinary grant projects. OVPRIED and the academic college deans will collaborate in establishing various new research centers—typically embedded within the colleges—aligned with cultural, historical, and geographical settings unique and important to the university.

RESEARCH KPI 8: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES FOR COLLABORATIONS ACROSS DISCIPLINES, INCLUDING ON-GOING RESEARCH NETWORKS (COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST) THAT REGULARLY PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESEARCHERS TO EXTEND THEIR ACTIVITY OUTSIDE OF THEIR DISCIPLINES AND COLLEGES.

Key parties responsible: VPR, Deans

Progress: Community of Interest program underway: past programs include Diversity, Equity, and Poverty; Global Sustainability; Louisiana Studies; and The Brain. Each includes a website and blog. Picard RDC proposal under development for NSF.

Action Plans: Increase frequency of COIs to 2 per semester. Increase follow up mechanisms to cement ongoing collaborations.