

STRATEGIZING RESEARCH SUPPORT TO MEET FAU'S GOAL MAY 22, 2018

ATTENDEES: Research Leadership: pillar directors, associate deans for research, representatives of the colleges as well as executive staff from the division of research¹.

PURPOSE: To discuss ongoing and future research infrastructure needs that are aligned with FAU's strategic plan and its vision, in order to propel FAU toward research excellence and preeminence.

OUTCOME: Herein is a summary of the challenges that were identified that may impede the research mission:

1. Facility/Building maintenance and repair - One of the biggest challenges that was identified by the group is building maintenance. The group agreed that there was a general lack of maintenance/repair across the campuses. There was a lack of point people for each campus to work with to address repairs, ongoing or preventative maintenance in a timely fashion and acceptable quality. It appears that there are only enough resources to put out fires and not sufficient to provide a stable environment necessary for high quality research leading to introduction of variables into the research studies. It was unclear to the group if there were renovation or expansion plans for facilities that would meet future research needs.

Proposed Solution

The group suggested the creation of a Research Facility Oversight Committee that oversees and makes recommendations on the need for research facility and building improvements. In addition, each campus should have a facilities/building point of contact.

Solution: DOR will form a facility oversight committee comprised of one faculty representative per campus and the group will meet virtually, each quarter. DOR representative will be the head of Core Facilities who will lead the group. The group will identify ongoing maintenance and repair issues and prioritize these issues. DOR will set up a fund from F&A to address maintenance and repair of research facilities in FY19. Over time DOR will have enough experience to know what the actual budget for this program should be. The fund will be small at first, but grow each year as IDC recoveries increase. The fund will support external and internal maintenance and repairs including fixed equipment. The fund is not designated for unfixed equipment. The DOR will hire a facilities point person in FY20 who can receive maintenance and repairs requests from faculty representatives on each campus and will in turn identify a team to affect repairs (either internal or external). This person will have a co-reporting line to both Facilities and DOR and also serve on this committee, ultimately replacing the core facility director as chair of this committee.

2. Recognition of Intellectual Property and collaborative research - It was noted that neither multi-disciplinary collaboration nor intellectual property is included in tenure and promotion guidelines, which limit participation in these areas.

Proposed Solution

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A discussion with the deans and Provost Danilowicz should advocate for the inclusion of research-collaboration and Intellectual Property for tenure and promotion requirements at FAU.

Solution: Novelutions pre-award grant software can identify and annotate the contribution of co-PI's on grants and will be applied in FY19 for the purposes of noting credit for grants to colleges and reinvestment of research funds back to the colleges. Their percent contribution to the project will be noted in the submitted grant application and the return of research re-investment dollars and PR associated with the project will be pro-rated. The process for credit for the grant will be developed by OSP in FY19. DOR will meet with the Provost and Dean's counsel in Fall FY19 to determine if the colleges will include IP in the annual review of faculty and in Promotion and Tenure decisions, and how that will count toward review and P&T. The goal is for colleges and departments to have a plan to incorporate intellectual property in P&T reviews beginning FY20.

3. Major capital requests - FAU is currently missing some of the infrastructure typically associated with very high research institutions, such as major core facility equipment (e.g. MRI) or larger animal quarters. These gaps would need to be filled as we are moving toward our goal.

Proposed Solution

As the first step, major gaps need to be identified and prioritized. The Core Facility unit under DoR should develop a faculty survey to determine technology priorities. Plans should be developed to expand the capacity of animal quarters.

Solution: The core facility unit of DOR will establish steering committees for each core facility along with a chair of each steering committee. The steering committee will be given a survey in FY19 to share with faculty and users of the core to determine what type of technology is required by faculty and what type of technical expertise. DOR will work with faculty on the preparation of equipment grants where applicable. DOR will develop a budget to support core facility technology acquisition in FY20. This budget will grow over time and will be reviewed semi-annually by an oversight committee comprised of steering committee chairs and DOR representatives. DoR will develop a budget to send core facility staff to workshops to acquire technical skills that assist the advancement of FAU research. DOR will also identify nearby, regional core facilities to expand access to technology. DOR will also develop a voucher system to promote access to the cores for unfunded faculty, students and staff in FY19.

4. IT infrastructure/Data security & management - Continued improvements to the IT infrastructure are needed to be compliant with several new federal regulations, such as compliance on data security (NIST, GDPR) and data sharing and management rules.

Proposed Solution

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A Research IT subcommittee and/or a Research IT coordinator could mitigate the requirements and function as a liaison in understanding the research site on many of these new requirements.

Solution: DOR will survey faculty in FY19 to determine what types of research related datasets require security and what type of security is required. DOR will work with IEA and Jason Ball's group to implement a data security plan in the end of FY19, and will prioritize this based on number of investigators who require this security and the impact of the research programs (i.e., how many grants require this data security).

5. Recruitment/payment of graduate students and postdocs - Talented graduate students and post docs do the vast majority of the work in research labs. Emphasis should be put on the recruitment of quality graduate students and postdocs to work on faculty research projects. Currently, the recruitment and support for graduate students and postdocs and their involvement in research is underdeveloped (e.g. no policy to pay for recruiting visits to campus) and salaries are not competitive.

Proposed Solution

DoR should work with the Provost's office to develop postdoc guidelines, as well as create a formal postdoc category in our system that clarifies and assists in the recruitment of postdocs. An Office for Postdoctoral Affairs should be created to support recruiting and career development. DoR should actively collaborate with the College for Graduate Studies to improve the recruitment and support for graduate students and their involvement in research projects.

Solution: DOR will work with the Provost office and Graduate School Dean in FY19 to develop a process to collect the necessary data and tables required to support training grant applications. Research programs and pillars will be assessed for competitiveness for training grants. The most competitive research programs will be selected for support and a budget to created to provide competitive stipends to recruit talented graduate students. A budget will be prepared for FY20 to recruit 1-2 students and then grow each year, focusing on the most competitive programs first. By this, I mean that if Program A is more competitive than program B (more people federally funded in program A), then we would seed a graduate program to grow to 50% above the number of student typically supported by a training grant application and DOR would expect that over an 8 year period, sufficient data and success would be evident to support a competitive training grant application. This program has already been developed for Neuroscience. The program will assess whether to next invest in iSENSE, HBOI or IHEALTH.

6. Faculty Mentoring - There is no formal junior faculty mentoring available that would assist new assistant professors in career development.

Proposed Solution

Formal faculty mentoring programs should be developed by each department and college, in collaboration with the Provost office.

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Solution: DOR will continue to support grant writing workshops, development of intellectual property, and other workshops that support career development. DOR will work with the Provost office and Dean's to develop a mentoring program that is customized for each college. This will be reviewed in Dean's counsel with a goal that each college can implement a mentoring program by the beginning of FY20.

7. Industry Partnerships - FAU should expand its ability to collaborate and work with the private sector on research projects of mutual interest.

Proposed Solution

DoR needs to develop a plan to promote corporate collaborations, including a point person to lead the effort. This effort should be aligned with Tech Transfer (IP sharing) and Development (corporate philanthropy for Research), as well as the Career Center (student internships, workforce development).

Solution: An economic development team has been developed that connects entrepreneurship to Tech Runway to the Research Park to corporate partnerships. A director for corporate relations has been named (Anton Post) with an initial focus on collaborations between FAU and U.S. companies, as well as Israeli companies. Corporate partnerships are being pursued with hospitals, companies in the classified research sector and sensor technology. Plans are being developed to host biotech companies on the FAU campus. Improved partnerships with Research park companies will be developed by co-habiting space in the park (FAU researchers and corporate partners). By the end of FY19, at least 3 significant corporate partnerships will be evident.

8. Information dissemination to colleges - DoR primarily relies on the research deans' quarterly meetings, as a mechanism to disseminate information throughout the colleges. This mechanism is viewed as less than successful. Better communication with the colleges and alignment with initiatives in the colleges and DoR should be sought.

Proposed Solution

The Research Deans will be asked to provide suggestions on how to better reach faculty directly. In addition, participation of the VPR in Deans Council could provide another avenue to improve communication between the units. Expansion of research stakeholders in regular meetings with DoR will insure greater dissemination of information.

Solution: DOR added a meeting with chairs of research-intensive departments to share information on the Research enterprise. DOR will continue to meet with Deans and Research Deans and forward publications about research. In FY19 DOR will host a semi-annual town hall meeting that will be cross-broadcast across the campuses where a report will be give To the faculty and questions answered.

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9. Pilot/Bridge/Travel funding - The need for pilot funding, in particular to support multi-disciplinary team efforts in preparation for larger grant applications was noted. In addition, bridge and travel funds should be made available. A research tech program could be developed in support of innovative technological contributions.

Proposed Solution

When IDC will exceed DoR expenses, the division should develop a program for pilot/bridge/Travel funding. In the meantime, a discussion with colleges and pillar directors could involve a discussion on how to best pool funds in support of such efforts.

Solution: There are 3 pilot project programs in place (iSENSE, iBRAIN and IHEALTH). There is hope that upon settlement of the HBOIF dispute, a pilot project program can be set up for HBOI pillar. DOR will develop a budget to support bridge funding and travel grants for all faculty, beginning in FY20. Bridge funding will be focused on renewable federal grants where re-competition resulted in a good score that did not hit the funding line. Travel grants will focus on faculty who wish to present research results at national meetings and who do not have budgeted funds in their grants or lack grant support. Travel grant funds for students will also be developed. DOR will also work with development to identify a philanthropy opportunity to support graduate student travel grants. The overall fund will be small at first and grow as IDC collections grow.

ⁱ Attendees (Alpha): Aimee Arias, Lynn Asseff, Randy Blakely, Miriam Campo, Donna Chamely-Wiik, Angela Clear, Jerry Clinton, Rafael Cruz, Ken Dawson-Scully, Greg DelSesto, Gregg Fields, Dan Flynn, Elisa Gaucher, Sylvia Gografe, Jason Hallstrom, Paul Hart, Javad Hashemi, Michele Hawkins, Pat Liehr, Greg MacLeod, Gina Niemi, Luis Perez, Anton Post, Janet Robishaw, Karin Scarpinato, Jim Sullivan, Don Torok, Teresa Wilcox, Rhys Williams, Paul Wills.