

Academic Staff Ad Hoc Committee on the Research Enterprise

White Paper

January 21, 2010

Charge

To assess whether the present UW-Madison Research Enterprise structure is capable of addressing current and future issues, or whether an alternative organizational structure such as that proposed by the Chancellor and the Provost is needed.

Members

Sandra Austin-Phillips (Biotechnology Center)

Richard Brown (Research Animal Resources Center)

Jenny Dahlberg (Neuroscience Training Program)

Deborah Faupel (Genome Center of Wisconsin)

Sarah Mason (Wisconsin Center for Education Research)

Alice Pulvermacher (Center for Health Enhancement Systems Studies)

Noel Radomski (Chair, Wisconsin Center for the Advancement of Postsecondary Education)

Executive Summary

The Academic Staff Ad Hoc Committee on the Research Enterprise (below, referred to as the Committee) met weekly October 2009 through January 2010, conducted interviews with various leaders and stakeholders in the UW-Madison research enterprise (see Appendix A), reviewed numerous documents (see Appendix B), attended the Provost's Town Hall meetings, and polled UW-Madison academic staff for comments on the proposed restructuring (see Appendix B, Item 21). The proposed restructuring evoked constructive conversations among stakeholders.

As a result of these efforts, the Committee has written this report that identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current structure and sets forth recommendations for further analysis and discussion. A Gantt chart, on page six, offers a concise listing and suggested timelines for the recommendations provided in this report.

While the Committee recognizes that there are problematic areas of the research enterprise that are not functioning optimally, namely awards management and compliance, the current consensus of the Committee is that this is not due to the organizational structure per se. The Committee heard no compelling argument for separating research and graduate education into distinct offices. The process by which the proposed restructuring was presented to campus was hurried and lacked specific information and a substantiated rationale. There was limited opportunity for faculty, academic staff, classified staff, students and others to give constructive input to this reconstruction before it was presented.

The Committee recommends that the Chancellor and Provost conduct a thorough, inclusive review of the research enterprise before proposing structural solutions. The Committee advances this recommendation for a system-wide needs analysis with the understanding that the campus has not, and thus needs to, conduct an objective, deliberative and comprehensive analysis of the entire

research enterprise. The campus does not have a research enterprise vision, or strategic plan, or budget, which has contributed to the current environment. Funded through the Provost's office, and following the UW-Madison's campus shared governance tradition, the study group should consist of faculty, academic staff, classified staff and graduate students. The group should take into account all recent studies and reports made by research-related offices, as well as recent findings from external groups. Finally, the Committee recommends that the system analysis and needs assessment involve external evaluators, and it encourages campus-wide distribution and discussion of the final report.

Recommendations

A. Maintain Strengths of the Current Structure

1. Graduate Education

UW-Madison's Graduate Education, led by the Graduate School, has been extremely successful over the past 20 years as evidenced by the quantity and quality of master's and doctoral degrees awarded. All respondents to the Committee's inquiries indicated that the current Graduate Education program is strong, effective and needs no restructuring. The Committee is concerned that altering the Graduate School structure could threaten the quality of the University's currently thriving graduate environment.

2. Integration of the Research Enterprise and Graduate Education In the Graduate School

The Committee heard no compelling argument for separating research and graduate education into distinct offices. In particular, distribution of the WARF funding under the current Graduate School system is viewed by many to be a contributing factor to the success of the UW graduate education experience. Central to this success are the roles played by the associate deans of the Graduate School who represent different UW-Madison divisions, which helps to ensure equitable distribution of funds. These deans also play a key role in supporting and connecting interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research initiatives. The role and relationship between WARF and UW-Madison is unique, which provides the campus flexibility and fosters innovation and creativity.

3. Centers within the Graduate School

Center directors are overwhelmingly in favor of remaining part of the Graduate School. Currently, the centers account for 22% of UW-Madison's federal research funding. With the current federal research funding emphasis on interdisciplinarity and collaboration, it seems prudent to keep these centers within the Graduate School.

B. Address Weaknesses of the Current Structure

1. Strategic Planning, Accountability and Budgeting

The Committee recognizes that there are problematic areas of the research enterprise that are not functioning optimally. The overall impression, however, is that for the most part this is not primarily due to the organizational structure. Based on interviews, and triangulated by reviews of reports and other documents, the Committee finds that shortcomings have arisen primarily due to lack of strategic planning, resulting in a decade of limited investment in the research infrastructure. To that end, the Committee recommends that central administration formalize a clear vision, implement strategic planning, and adopt a dedicated budget for the research enterprise. This planning should include clearly defined deadlines and goals, as well as regular

reports that highlight progress and future challenges. In addition, this planning needs to ensure that responsibility and accountability are appropriately paired with resource allocation. In some cases, especially in recent compliance, animal care, and safety issues, campus resources were allocated to address shortcomings. There was, and continues to be, a lack of accountability and follow-up reporting on if and how these funds were used.

Virtually all of the campus leadership interviewed by the Committee noted that indirect monies need to better support the growing research enterprise, and that any significant change in the research infrastructure would need additional financial support, which would come at least in part from indirect funds. Several commented that the process for distributing funds from indirect monies makes planning and decision-making difficult. Currently, accounting/reporting of financial information is not accessible to many key decision-makers charged with supporting the research infrastructure and operations on campus. The Committee recommends the needs analysis identify clear lines of financial authority and improved transparency in indirect money allocation process. The Committee also recommends educating the research community on how indirect funds are allocated and begin implementing planning processes to avoid crisis situations on campus.

2. Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP)

Since RSP joined the Graduate School in the mid-1990s, it is clear that the growth of federal research expenditures to the UW-Madison has not been matched with an increased investment in the infrastructure required to effectively administer these higher and more complex funding levels. The Committee is impressed by the Administrative Process Redesign (APR) projects currently evaluating and improving specific processes within RSP, which is leading to marked improvements (see Appendix B, Item 1). This inclusive, data-driven process, which is now serving as a model to other universities, should continue. However, understaffing, low morale, and staff turnover issues continue in RSP, and the Committee addresses these concerns below.

Immediate Needs

- A. In 2007, the number of awards managed by one FTE at RSP was 334 proposals compared on average to 148 proposals/FTE in the Big Ten (see Appendix B, Item 5). Currently backlogs exist in some areas such as financial reporting, billing and invoicing, and award closeouts. We recommend an immediate influx of resources to clear these backlogs.
- B. RSP needs dedicated staff to handle the marked increase in auditing activities. Recently, there were seventeen audits underway which required staff redirection and created even more backlog problems.

Long-Term Needs

- A. RSP staff are under high demands with limited career advancement options within RSP, resulting in high staffing turnover. Recently, 50% of the RSP staff were in their positions less than a year (see Appendix B, Item 5). The Committee recommends that the campus review positions and ensure that they are classified appropriately. This action may help to recruit and retain trained staff, and address ongoing staff retention problems. The Committee notes that pre-award positions at UW-Milwaukee are classified as academic staff.

- B. The campus lacks a centralized, consistent process for Industrial Sponsored Contracts and Agreements. Several years ago, the Dean of the Graduate School asked that a study group examine this process, and a report was compiled with several recommendations (see Appendix B, Item 6), including a proposed reorganizational structure; however, it appears adequate resources were not provided. The Committee recommends that this area be looked at critically and the report revisited.

3. Compliance and Safety

The Committee recommends campus strategically address research compliance and safety in a proactive rather than a reactive manner, as outlined below. The Committee is aware that the campus has begun to identify and craft compliance policies through the Research Policy Advisory Committee (RPAC) (see Appendix B, Item 10); however, the continued lack of funding and central authority for compliance issues has limited progress in this area. Current campus compliance infrastructure lacks a culture of service and the necessary capacity in education and compliance/auditing oversight.

UW-Madison has an ad hoc, decentralized compliance and safety structure. The lack of clear reporting lines of authority and responsibility has contributed to a pattern of regulatory citations. While the distributed structure allows for shared governance, it has inherent conflicts of interest that do not meet all required regulatory assurances.

Immediate Needs

- A. The Institutional Official, currently the Director of Office Research Policy, lacks an annual budget. This is a federally mandated role, defined as the “individual who is authorized to legally commit on behalf of the research facility” and required to enforce several University policies related to research compliance, i.e., Animal Welfare, Human Subjects, etc. The Committee recommends that the Institutional Officer be given a dedicated budget and infrastructure to ensure that compliance, safety and research-related policies of the University are met.
- B. The Committee recommends the Office of Research Policy should be given immediate latitude to hire an Export Control Specialist and a Director for Research Compliance.
- C. Environmental health and safety on campus have less than one-third the staff they had twenty years ago, despite research enterprise expenditure growth from 300 to nearly 900 million dollars per year. Currently, a proposal has been submitted to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Administration to fund many positions in Safety, including eight workplace safety and OSHA compliance positions and nine laboratory and safety compliance positions (see Appendix B, Item 2). The Committee recommends that this proposal be revisited and the request be acted upon immediately.
- D. Major staffing problems exist within the Animal Care and Use Veterinary Program. Currently, campus veterinary staff are too few and have been hired to complete jobs beyond the scope of their experience and qualifications. The Committee recommends an immediate comprehensive review of personnel qualifications, hiring practices, and potential structural conflict of interest.

Long-Term Needs

- A. The absence of strategic planning and a dedicated, integrated budgeting approach have contributed to ongoing problems which could seriously jeopardize campus safety, limit or prohibit future research proposals, and lead to significant fines, thus bringing to light the integrity of our research enterprise. The Committee recommends a thorough audit of the current compliance system be conducted with a focus on meeting all regulatory obligations. All findings should be formally reported to the Chancellor and made available to faculty and administrators.

C. Recommend Further Analysis and Discussion

National Presence for the UW-Madison Research Enterprise. UW-Madison currently has a distributed approach to UW's national presence that capitalizes on the expertise of faculty, PIs, center directors, central campus leaders, Graduate School associate deans, and many others. It is critical that the campus does not create a structure that would hinder principal investigators' current mobility to be proactive in their fields, which likely has been a key contributing factor in the University's overall successful research and graduate education rankings for more than 20 years. Campus leadership needs to first better frame the questions regarding UW-Madison's national presence and influence. Subsequently, the Committee recommends the campus to begin a meaningful discussion about future opportunities and UW-Madison's contribution to shaping agendas.

D. Timelines

As given earlier, the Committee recommends the immediate formation of a committee to conduct an overarching system-wide needs analysis. This committee should consist of faculty, academic staff, classified staff and students charged with thoroughly evaluating the current UW-Madison research enterprise. The Committee strongly recommends a formal report be submitted to the Provost and Chancellor for review by October 31, 2010. The Committee recommends that any resource requests stemming from these reports be presented to the Chancellor, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Administration within three weeks time from the completion.

The accompanying Gantt chart offers suggested timelines for the recommendations provided in this report.

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Associate Dean Diane Barrett, School of Human Ecology
Vice Chancellor Darrell Bazzell
Associate Dean Mary Behan, School of Veterinary Medicine
Dean and Vice Chancellor Martin Cadwallader, Graduate School
Provost and Vice Chancellor Paul DeLuca
Associate Vice Chancellor Alan Fish, Facilities Planning and Management
Associate Dean Adam Gamoran, Director, Wisconsin Center for Education Research
Carl Gulbrandsen, Managing Director, WARF
Alice Gustafson, Project Leader, Administrative Process Redesign
Timothy Kamp, Director, Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center, Graduate School
Joseph Kemnitz, Director of the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center
Associate Dean James Knickmeyer, Graduate School
Senior Associate Dean Judith Kornblatt, Graduate School
Richard Lane, Associate Director, Research Animal Resources Center
Chancellor Carolyn A. Biddy Martin
Associate Dean William Mellon, Graduate School
Associate Dean Terrence Millar, Graduate School
Associate Vice Chancellor Kim Moreland, Director, Research and Sponsored Programs
Ann Palmenberg, Director, Institute for Molecular Virology, Graduate School
Carol Ryff, Director, Institute on Aging, Graduate School
Eric Sandgren, Director, Research Animal Resources Center
Michael Sussman, Director, Biotechnology Center, Graduate School

Appendix B: List of Documents Reviewed

1	Administrative Process Redesign	http://www.vc.wisc.edu/apr/
2	Environment, Health and Safety Resource Needs, 11/4/09	http://www2.fpm.wisc.edu/safety/
3	Environment, Health and Safety Existing Structure, 3/26/09	
4	Graduate School Organizational Chart	http://www.grad.wisc.edu/admin/gradschoolorgchart.pdf
5	RSP: A Time of Transition, 11/10/09	http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/aboutrsp.html
6	Industry Agreement Study Group: Final Report, October 2005	
7	Overview of Research Policy and Compliance, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 4/19/06	
8	Office of Research Policy, August 2007	
9	Organizing for Success: Research and Graduate Education, October 2009	http://www.news.wisc.edu/research-and-graduate-ed/
10	Research Policy Advisory Committee Organizational Chart, October 2003	http://www.grad.wisc.edu/research/policyrp/rpac/index.html
11	Research Policy and Compliance Office Proposed Structure, 5/2/06	
12	Research Policy and Compliance Office, Proposed Staff, Duties Summary	
13	Research Animal Program Organization Chart	
14	Research Animal Program, Veterinary Organization Chart	
15	Animal Care Information System—Draft, Version 2, 10/11/05	
16	UW-Madison Animal Care and Use Program Needs	
17	U.S. Sentencing Commission, Guidelines Manual, 3E1.1, November 2005	
18	UW-Madison Research Policy & Compliance Organizational Structure, January 2009	
19	UW-Madison Researcher's Guide to Animal Care & Use	http://www.rarc.wisc.edu/guide/obligations.html
20	UW-Madison Research Animal Resources Center	http://www.rarc.wisc.edu/index.html
21	Academic Staff Survey Responses	
22	USDA Animal Care Inspection Report, 12/9/09	
23	Irwin Goldman Letter of 12/7/09	
24	Graduate Faculty Executive Committee Letter of 12/11/09	
25	UW Madison Data Digest 2008-2009	http://apa.wisc.edu/DataDigest/DATA_DIGEST_09.pdf
26	NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) Inspection Report 12/18/09	
27	Letter from 11 Campus Deans	
28	Letter from Gary Sandefur, Dean of L&S	