

Minutes: Research Committee meeting 15 February 2013, 1270 FAB

Attended: Lisa Alexander; David Cinabro; Randall Commissaris; Nabanita Datta; Maik Huttemann; Patrick Mueller; Alexey Petrov; Joseph Dunbar, Administration Liaison

Absent with notice: Abhijit Biswas; Maria Ferriera; Li Hsieh; Jason Mateika; Robert Reynolds; Harley Tse; Stephanie Brock, AAUP-AFT Liaison

Absent: Judith Fry-McComish; Senthil Sundaram; Derek Wildman; Lexie McGillis, Student Senate Liaison

Guest: Hilary Ratner

Vice President for Research Hilary Ratner presented an outline of both challenges and opportunities for the research effort over the coming years at the February meeting of the Research Committee. The overall objective is to develop the potential for WSU to be an example of a successful urban public research University. This involves enhancing our quality of research, academic expectations, stability of research support and retention and graduation of undergraduate students. Show below is a summary of the major points of this presentation.

There are external and internal problems that impair our ability to be more successful. External challenges include the instability of federal and state funding, global competition, and pressures on universities to streamline and become more efficient. Internal challenges include lack of funds for faculty recruitment and retention. In addition, we have some 'points of excellence', but not the 'centers of excellence' needed to be competitive in the present era of reduced scientific support. The School of Medicine is responsible for 73% of our total research support, but one member of the committee noted that the school currently is emphasizing clinical income to make up for reduced support. Another member of the committee commented that development efforts to encourage more philanthropy could be expanded.

While total research expenditures for WSU have increased by approximately 11% during the past 5 years and our ranking among public universities has remained relatively stable, we have lost ground when compared to all universities, public and private. The private institutions in particular have increased their expenditures because of their ability to increase tuition without penalties and their very successful programs for raising endowment funds. Even when funding does increase at WSU, expenditures sometimes do not. This may be related to the reluctance of some investigators to fully utilize available funds, since they are not certain of continued support from Federal agencies.

A current emphasis within the university is multi-disciplinary research and steps are being taken to strengthen infrastructure for support of multi-disciplinary initiatives and identify patterns for success. Strengthening areas where we already have considerable

expertise and a record of accomplishment is a reasonable approach. The three areas selected for this are cardiovascular studies, imaging and nanotechnology.

We briefly discussed the potential upcoming change in the Procard policy (i.e. limiting purchases from non-WayneBuy vendors to \$200) and we told by Dr. Dunbar that exceptions could be granted by from Purchasing.

David Kessel
Chair