Minutes from:
Research Affairs Committee meeting, September 13, 2022 (Zoom)
In attendance: Ben Kravitz (Co-chair), Sally Letsinger (Co-chair), Brea Perry (OVPR), Wen Qi, Ashley Clark, Karen Rogers, Jillian Kinzie, Seth Freedman, Dan Tracey, Amangul Hydyrova (undergrad student rep), Lana Spendl (BFC)

Committee files (meeting minutes and other relevant documents) are stored in a Microsoft Teams folder with a very long path – this one is shortened: https://tinyurl.com/t9nxu572

September 13, 2022   1:00pm – 2:15pm

1. Introductions.

2. Updates from Brea Perry on IUB research topics

Vice Provost Perry provided an overview and updates of the ongoing reorganization of research administration at Indiana University (Bloomington and Indianapolis). The update noted that the Vice President for Research (VPR) and Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR, Bloomington) and Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR, Indianapolis) have been merged and will be renamed. Campus centers, institutes, and museums formerly under OVPR or OVCR would also fall under UA-level research administration.

A reflection on the historical roles of OVPR and OVCR was given. These were historically primarily responsible for research development on the campuses, while VPR was intended to focus primarily on administration and compliance. Over time, VPR has taken on greater research development roles. A narrative emerged that there was duplication of efforts. As such, consolidation would achieve increased efficiency and communication. The key element appears to be focus on research development, which President Whitten and VPR Fred Cate assert should happen at the university level, consistent with many other universities.

The new structure will retain Vice President for Research Fred Cate. Kay Connelly (Informatics) will serve as interim associate vice president for research development, replacing Kelly Kish. (see: https://research.impact.iu.edu/for-faculty/leadership-appointments.html) Current plans will have this position replacing many of the functions previously performed by the Bloomington OVPR and Indianapolis OVCR, including internal funding programs and proposal development services. To give each campus a voice, strategic advisors will be appointed, will be discipline-based, and will have their own faculty councils to provide input. Disciplines will likely include arts and humanities, social sciences, natural and physical sciences, and AI/informatics. Strategic advisors will serve on the VPR's research council and will come from both campuses, as will their faculty councils. Moreover, associate vice presidents for research on the Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses will likely remain in VPR to provide campus perspectives. The faculty of each campus will have no formal input with respect to choosing strategic advisors. Indeed, to this point, the faculty have not had formal input into the restructuring other than informal feedback that VPR Cate has solicited from his stakeholders.

Provost Rahul Shrivastav will undertake campus strategic planning related to research. Strategic planning will be driven in part by funding goals (tracking benchmark institutions closely), with an eye on creating and fostering a supportive environment for seeking more extramural grants, including collaborative large center grants, such as from NIH and DoD. It is acknowledged that growth in research funding will likely come from the sciences.

OVPR worked well under Vice Provost Zaleski; however, the office was always underfunded. It is clear that research, especially science/STEM, has not received sufficient investments at IUB. If IU's research budget is compared to other R1 or Big10 peer institutions, the IU investment in research development is small.

An upside to consolidation is more money has been dedicated to investment in research. An example is the research equipment fund is $4M this year, about 10 times the previous amount.

Vice Provost Perry will be in office for 1 year and is focused on returning to her own faculty position and research program. In the interim, her focus is to integrate the functions of OVPR that worked well at the UA level under VPR. In addition, representing the full range of research that occurs at IUB is a focus of Vice Provost Perry – including those in the humanities.

Discussion by the full committee followed Vice Provost Perry's update, noting that many research areas (even in science) do not use large equipment, or they use computing resources only. Others noted that there are factors critical to successful ongoing research that fall under the oversight of other responsibility/administration areas of the university, including computing resources/data storage (UITS), space planning and allocation, capital planning, and facilities. A committee member remarked that it does not appear that strategic planning with respect to research administration at IU intends to extend to any level of integrated planning or decision-making across these administrative silos.

3. Overview of AY 2022-2023 assignments, calls for committee participation

Following these minutes is a list of possible work items/tasks for several topics that the committee could focus on this academic year. Each topic was overviewed and discussed. The committee members were asked to review the list and respond to the co-chairs (Ben and Sally) with topics or tasks for which that they could contribute to task work.

4. Other discussion items, action items, updates.

An addition to the committee work list is to boost the visibility of undergraduate research opportunities across campus and identify (or develop) ways to centralize and advertise opportunities. Discussion included whether incentives for faculty might encourage more opportunities, the frustration of students attempting to seek out projects and make faculty contacts on their own, and potential solution ideas such as creating a "Research Share" app for match-making students/faculty/research. Work will continue on this topic, along with others.

5. Reminder about Faculty Town Hall in Whittenberger Auditorium at 2:30pm, September 13, 2022.

6. Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm

BFC Research Affairs Committee 2022-2023
Ben Kravitz, Co-chair
Sally Letsinger, Co-chair (2021-2022 RAC Chair)
Brea Perry, Vice Provost for Research
Ashley Clark
Wen Qi
Ethan Fridmanski

Karen Rogers
Jillian Kinzie
Seth Freedman
Dan Tracey
Undergrad student rep: Amangul Hydyrova
Grad student rep: TBD

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Bloomington Faculty Council Research Affairs Committee
AY 2022-2023 Work topics (brainstorming, v.1)

1. Research Transparency
   a. New policy needed
   b. Committee participation to:
      i. identify related policies (UFC, BFC, IU Foundation),
      ii. go through existing proposed materials and notes (Sally can provide)
      iii. draft skeleton policy without IUF included
      iv. figure out how to address anonymous IUF funding sources; if possible, include IUF in these discussions
      v. socialize/vet policy with stakeholders
      vi. revise policy draft
   c. Target completion: Work in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023; Vote in Spring 2023 or Fall 2023
2. Research Restructuring
   a. Committee participation to:
      i. Collect information about what exactly is happening and what the plans are. Apparently similar proposals have been floated for nearly a decade - can we get copies of what he intended in the past?
      ii. There was a research consolidation in the past - can we identify pros/cons of that restructuring and how it differs from the current landscape?
      iii. Can we quantify potential outcomes of the proposal? Can we substantiate claims?
      iv. Socialize information with faculty. The research restructuring plan thrives in darkness and secrecy.
      v. Figure out what's going on with Collections, LAR. Are there other certifications or accreditations in danger of being lost? What are the implications for research?
      vi. Future: Develop a policy for faculty oversight of research activities. (Might be the same as a UFC policy.)
   b. Target completion: ASAP
3. Laboratory Animal Research Services (LARS) Accreditation
   a. Committee participation to:
      i. When these issues happened before, what was the result? How is that different from now?
      ii. We should prepare any evidence that could be relevant to a review of UA research administration and stay informed of the review process.
4. Metrics for: Research expenditures
   a. Committee participation to gather, organize, and synthesize data on:
      i. Research expenditures (by department/school and by campus), reputation, and faculty satisfaction. This also needs to be by year so that we can head off arguments like "IUB total grant volume is falling" (it's not true). Utilize previous work of IUB Office of Vice Provost for Research. Some of these metrics have been gathered.
      ii. IU Indianapolis wants an R1 ranking. What exactly does that entail?

5. Metrics for: Faculty retention
    i. Figure out why people are leaving. Start here: https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/faculty-resources/professional-development/faculty-satisfaction-survey.htm
    ii. Conduct review of peer institutions to identify differences in faculty pay, research investments/expenditures, teaching loads, strategic directions of the institution, faculty satisfaction, and peripheral variables such as political climate in host state (e.g., implications of state laws on health care, safety, etc.).
    iii. Tenure: How did they initiate changes in tenure at Georgia? What was the process/timeline, and who supported it?
    iv. Get more information about rumors regarding changing TT pay restructuring based on "merit" (grantsmanship):
        1. Who is implementing it (campus vs university wide).
        2. Are there examples (peer institutions) where this model has been implemented? Use as a template for further quantification (unless original source is found, which likely has accompanying anticipated/projected outcomes).
        3. Look up relevant BFC and UFC policies about TT compensation criteria.
        4. Put together some real numbers for a few sample departments (in different schools and centers) based on actual salaries and grant income.
        5. Figure out how NTTs fit into all of this.
        6. Figure out how non-grant-active departments will be handled.
        7. Did anything like this happen at previous institutions where our President/Provost worked?
        8. If there is any merit to these, socialize with the faculty and figure out how they feel about it.
6. IU Policy on data sharing (as required by many proposals, publications)
    a. Is there a policy?
    b. Are there compliance issues authors should be aware of? Especially regarding privacy/sensitive/confidential data (e.g., biometric/retina data for Optometry studies or data collected with patient confidentiality agreements [e.g., NIH])
    c. Does IU have a compliance officer or contact that authors can work with to respond to journals and to coordinate the details of data sharing?
    d. Are there different policies for data policies in proposals versus
    e. Who is the appropriate contact information for a reader to make an inquiry about receiving data? Some authors state that an institution must execute an agreement with Indiana University to receive the data.
    f. How do these policies agree with or differ from those related to data archiving, and are Libraries the place to go for information on this? Other entities that might have input: BFC Technology Policy Committee, or Ostrom Data Governance Group.
    g. If an author retires or leaves the university, how do these policies apply/persist?