Research Council Meeting Agenda

Monday, September 16, 2019
Butro 204, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

1. Safety Minute

2. Update on Grants and Contracts Prioritization Plan FY19 (Madnick)
   a. Looking at structure, there have been a lot of changes over the summer and a lot of ups and downs and uncertainty.
   b. Working on is the rehab project, which is all the banner upgrades. Has been going very well with that. They have met with the programmers and developers and they have everything needed. So as far as that’s concerned has been moving forward with that because we’re on a time frame because of the funding.
   c. UAA is a little short staffed. Rosie and Aaron have been working together to make sure that the processes keep moving at all universities and have come up with some similar processes and protocols, for ease of working and collaborating together. Larry would like to thank Rosie for that effort and point out how great it’s been to work with Aaron. The processes are not very different now because there was an entire assessment last year. The problem has been because Aaron has lost a lot of his staffing right now and is in the process of trying to build some of that staffing back up. As of the beginning of July, the entire office of the Sponsored Programs turned over. A new employee started the second week in July. Through this experience there have been several people trained across the University in processes, which be helpful once adequately staffed again.

3. Report on Common Metrics (Madnick)
a. Metrics has been on hold. IR is in flux and are focused on programmatic reviews. Will put this on hold temporarily. If there is feedback on the metrics, please update the shared drive.

4. Federal Update (Bryant)

a. The Senate is finally started to make some moves on some of their appropriations bills this first week back after August recess. The President, Senate leadership and House leadership agreed in principle to sort of a budget deal moving forward. The argument between non-defense discretionary defense discretionary will continue to linger on, but not under the watchful eye of sequestration. Last week, the Senate voted out of the subcommittee and full committee moves their defense appropriations bill, as well as their energy and water appropriations bills. For the projects that were submitted on behalf of the University to the Alaska delegation, so far at least in that principle, we come out pretty well. ARPA E, which I believe you as one of those projects funding was increased for that.

b. There was a Power Generation Technologies and Cold Region, which is a partnership between UAF, ACEP and set and CORREL, which included the name and also the sensing and predicting of Arctic maritime coastline is conditions with the Food there was Aaron for your background and for George if he's on the phone. The Arctic Mobility Research, which was the proposed partnership between the Navitec Corporation and UAA and UAF. This was included in the actual report language to encourage the Navy to evaluate their mobility needs and Arctic region moving forward. They're indicating to the Navy that we want to see more work done in this area, but we're not willing to commit money at this point. There may be a future point based on the funding to they produce that they want to invest more into this.

c. There's a $25 million inclusion for the Department of Energy EPSCoR program. There's some possibility that they'll take up at least three more bills.

d. The labor HHS bill, which is the bill that funds the Department of Education, the NIH, Department of Labor, was put on hold due to some political disagreements with Belknap, so not for sure what the final result is going to be there. The House and Senate will have to do a short term stopgap funding bill which is commonly
referred to as the continuing resolution, as the federal fiscal year ends at the end of this month. Know, I was just looking at my notes in that within the NIH bill, they're proposing to increase spending an NIH by about 3 billion.

e. Church Kee forwarded Paul the announcements on the Arctic Futures Symposium, which is in November. It will occur here at UAF November 13 to 15th.

f. Federal Strategic Initiative process. Dustin had put together a list last year. Is this something we want to do again in terms of coming up with priorities? How do we build upon what we have done this year into a robust process of moving forward? Would like to have a list that has been reviewed internally and by President Johnson, and ready for him to bring it to Washington by mid-January 2020 to be ready before the start of the session.

g. Would like to get started on it now, so that we can have things done by the end of the semester. We can send out an announcement just to solicit ideas. You never can tell where really good ideas are going to come from. We can then have some vetting process to see which ones go forward.

h. A lot of the ideas that were received in the past were not appropriate for strategic initiatives to go to the Feds, but we did find other mechanisms to support them. If we can identify what those issues are and can find issues we can identify what those research projects topics are, then we can find we can identify champions to carry forward. Many can be moved on to fruition.

ACTION: Larry, Tom and Aaron will work together to publicize the opportunities and report back at the November meeting. Larry and Anupma have templates to work with. Anupma will send this out at the same time as the request for the Planning and Budget Committees to allow faculty time to provide thoughtful responses. Miles and Dustin will work together to develop a rough/suggested timeline for the process.

5. Juneau update (Baker)

a. Senator Shower has noticed a state affairs committee hearing for this Friday in Anchorage at UAA. This was not something that they coordinated with Miles. This was a result of the UAA faculty looking for another public venue to raise concerns about some of the consolidation efforts.

b. Larry and Miles have been discussing doing a Research showcase this year.
c. Miles will be working with Teri Cothren on TVEP and coordinating to get funding through the Department of Labor. Fred had authored the packet of material previously, and Teri will work on putting that together this year. Ideally the governor’s office would introduce the legislation to extend the TVEP program. This should be a big part of our legislative agenda this year.

d. Mia Costello, who is running the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee, really wanted a much shorter period because there were a lot of programs, not TVEP specifically and not University, but some of the recipients that were getting a lot of scrutiny and questions about how they were using those dollars. They hoped to use the intervening years to do more research into that and so they decided to give it a shorter reauthorization.

6. Annual legislative update on research (Hinzman)

a. Do we want to do a road show again this year, or just do something in Juneau? It has been hard to inform people of Alaska and the legislators about all of the cool stuff that is going on. We can send people information, but they just don't read it. For the folks that come and take it seriously and for the, for the invited guests that come, it does have value. It's one of those things that you're never just going to get it communicated.

b. Spending time getting them on campus on more of a one on one basis and engaging with what we are doing and tailoring it to their specific interest is a good way. We could be better about just picking a few things to touch on, and given them a very high level. These are our capabilities, but then focusing more on a couple areas and maybe the next time we focus on different areas. That way we do not tie up all of the senior people in one meeting. Possibly inviting the Regents. Consider who we want to articulate the message of economic benefit to the state of Alaska for research.

c. Consider a broader message on how employers rely on the University. Possibly having an orientation for the policymakers. Consider the overall relationship with the policymakers and the time we have with them. Show where the opportunities are and how many of them there are, along with how many campuses we have and
how do you manage all that and their time and do it in a way where you get a quality connection.

7. Research Security (Bryant/Kamberov)
   a. The things that come to mind right now as we think about research security is foreign influence. There hasn't been any additional information, but we've been keeping track of it to see if there's anything we need to be aware of.

   ACTION: Move Research Security to October agenda.

8. Developing strategic research priorities – state goals/SCoR
   a. Federal Strategic Initiative process (Larry)
      i. The delegation has appreciated the clarity of programs/projects defined last year. In terms of a process this year, keeping in mind the timeline, we would like to have a list that has been reviewed internally and have President Johnsen transferring the list in mid-January. Get into DC before the rush of people in February. Follow up in the period following, but getting the priorities discussed early is a
      ii. Take a look at last year’s list and make recommendations on changes and updates. Start now to be prepared by the end of the semester. Larry, Tom and Aaron to take the lead at each campus to gather project ideas.

         1. Send out an announcement to solicit ideas
         2. Have a vetting process to move the ideas forward
         3. Identify the research projects and find champions to move them forward
         4. Identify programs to continue to support in a maintenance mode
         5. Identify projects for appropriations
         6. Identify multi-year strategic initiatives
         7. Keep Dustin and Miles involved throughout the process for situational awareness to move projects up or down based on interests in legislature.

         8. Use a template for criteria

   ACTION: Strategic projects – Miles and Dustin will create a timeline for gathering the projects with the goal of the president presenting these ideas to the delegation and agencies in January
2020. Larry will work with Tom and Aaron to gather project ideas. Anupma and Larry will provide a template to keep the criteria consistent.

9. Organized research programmatic review (Paul)
   a. The BOR approved a motion directing the universities to conduct some reviews of some academic programs and other support programs. One of those is in the area of organized research. Chancellor White was assigned to chair that review process. Today in a meeting with the Chancellor's, we talked about what the focus will be with Organized Research as opposed to individual research or research on workloads. It is looking at the investment that we do in the organized research side. Both with the general fund and other university resources to fund those. Paul is working on a charge to that group to look at both research administration, which we've already taken a big step on in terms of under a centralized one UA or lead campus model versus more of a distributed model. We've already made big strides and collaborating working across the system. One of the issues that comes up is in any sort of centralization or coordination is that you don’t know if there are implications for accreditation, for control, who is looking at the budgets, etc. It would be nice to have uniform policies and that's one of the things the group may be looking at.
   b. They will also look at research structure. Program review is also really looking at some of these units in terms of their return on investment. There are some units, with our investment, whether that's the state appropriation or unrestricted funds, are returning a lot of money back either as restricted or ICR coming back, and other units are not. One question is to look at those units to see whether those investments are being used appropriately. We are going to be reducing our budgets or state appropriation in all areas. How do we optimize our research allocation? In addition, there are areas of growth as well. Do we want to invest in new areas of research?
   c. Another area of discussion is public service or organized service. There are units which cross those lines, such as the museum. Is it a service organization or as a research organization? The Chancellors have been requested to come up with a list of the scope of kind of their research, and service organizations and decide which
will be under the public service umbrella in terms of discussions and some will be under the researcher. There will be some crossovers with those two groups. Each of the groups, led by a Chancellor or Dean, will be looking at those areas. We are going to be looking at those from a number of criteria and then from the bigger picture, looking at them in terms of how we coordinate those across the system, whether we are three universities or one university. Identifying barriers in the current structure. It is a review of how we do research across the system and how we can do it better.

d. The New UA website, which is on the university's homepage, is a place we will be archiving and recording the schedules, meetings and minutes. It's going to be a very public process. Paul appreciates the faculty and the staff that are on this Council, but will have a different role and will be looking at those recommendations as well.

10. Goals for the next year (All)
   a. SCoR meeting on Wednesday. Paul has asked the Lt. Governor for the administrations goals and priorities. We will put forth our strategic plan – To Build a Fire. It is a broad agenda.
   b. Larry and John W - Ky Holand has asked if we want to try to influence our researchers to take on more high priority projects that are of high value to the state of Alaska. We may want to revise the document to encourage that direction. UA Community Challenges initiative. The priorities do change and could be updated. Faculty may not be aware that there are areas of focus.

11. Implementation Group – Contract – TIG –
   a. Larry and Paul have talked about the ITAR contract, an implementation group called TIG. It's a coalition group of other companies, we've been working with DC for the last several years. They're expensive, but they've really helped us a lot on a lot of big projects. After contracting with them, we've gotten several big research programs funded that we had struggled with previously. We've done remarkably well in the last four years, and received six early career awardees. They assist in how you prepare your proposal how they vet the proposal. Primarily, what they do is they review it themselves, hold you to a timeline. Every item that has to be
addressed is addressed. It costs us a little bit extra to set it up for external review. Those external reviews are really helpful. Our success rate has gone up since we've employed them. UAF has employed them for several years, at about $80,000 a year. We have a proposal from them that they would be willing to look statewide and entertain programs or proposals from all three universities for an extra about $28,000 well for year one, an extra $108,000 total. Larry did a cost analysis last year on both successes and failures and had decided it was worth renewing for another year.

b. Procurement office can help and with some of the negotiations. There is a question of how much volume we can send through them. Is it every single proposal? Larry does not think so for that price. The only ones he sends are the large institutional proposals capacity building large, major programs, multi-year. We do send some limited solicitation proposals to them, but it is something we need to get back to them on fairly soon.

c. The committee agrees to go forward and receive a bid or their estimate. Larry will share that with everybody.

Additional Items (All)

d. Larry  –  None

e. Andrew  –  None

f. Anupma  –  To let everyone know that the impact of USDA headquarters NIFA headquarters is moving from DC to another regional center. We can already see the impact of it. We were due for a compliance review. They're losing a majority of their folks. So OGCA has been encouraging people with USDA grants to document everything because by regulations there is a deadline. If we send in a request to the feds for an extension, they have to get back to us within 30 days. The agency is just in chaos right now.

g. Cheryl  –  None

h. Aaron  –  None

i. Myron  –  None

j. Rosie  –  None
k. Eran – It would be nice if Larry could send down that contract with the GI so he can mention that for people that are thinking about career or certain larger scale grants down there that it is an option to get some help. We can look at the pricing structure.

l. John – None

m. Dustin – None

n. John W. – None

12. Next Meeting – October 21, 2019