Council of Principal Investigators

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Texas A&M University - Texas A&M Health Science Center - Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station - Texas A&M AgriLife Research – Texas A&M Transportation Institute

CPI Meeting Agenda
February 12, 2014 (11:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.)
Rudder Tower, room 601

(11:30 – 11:45) Lunch

(11:45 – 11:50) Call to order/Opening remarks – Dr. Niall Slowey, CPI Chair

(11:50 – 12:10) Update on PricewaterhouseCoopers Administrative Audit – Mr. Billy Hamilton, Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Financial Officer, The Texas A&M University System

(12:10 – 12:30) Discussion on Research Development Funds – Dr. Glen A. Laine, Interim Vice President for Research

(12:30 – 12:50) The Future of IT at Texas A&M University – Dr. Henrik Schmiediche and Mr. David Sweeney, members of the IT Advisory Committee (ITAC)

(12:50 – 1:15) Other business – Dr. Niall Slowey, CPI Chair

(1:15) Adjournment

Attachments: Research Development Funds (RDF) proposal & PI comments (pp 2 – 7) 
The Future of IT at Texas A&M University (pp. 8 – 9) 
February CPI newsletter (pp. 10 – 16)


The CPI is sponsored annually through funding from Texas A&M University Division of Research, Texas A&M Health Science Center, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station, and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Research Development Funds: A New Model for the Use of Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Earnings for Texas A&M

The Executive Oversight Committee (EOC, see below), with the support of the President, proposes a New Initiative for the collective research enterprise at Texas A&M. The Initiative aims to provide a unified Distribution Plan for Facilities and Administrative (F&A) earnings and to create a framework for a shared Research Development Fund (RDF).

Distribution Plan. F&A Earnings for research projects at Texas A&M University, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station and the Texas A&M University Health Science Center will share a common distribution model:

- Faculty or P.I. for the research grant or contact: 10%
- Department or unit that houses the PI: 15%
- Research Development Fund for Texas A&M: 15%
- System Component or unit (TAMU, TEES, HSC or AgriLife): 60%

Features:
1. The PI of the grant or contract will receive a direct distribution of 10% of the recovered F&A earnings for investments into their research programs.
2. The department, division or other unit of the PI of the grant or contract will receive a direct distribution of 15% of the recovered F&A earnings. The PIs and their Departments or Units are expected to manage the use of these funds to supplement, build and bridge their research programs.
3. The system entities will collectively establish and manage a Research Development Fund (RDF) that will use 15% of the recovered F&A earnings for major projects or initiatives that benefit the Texas A&M research enterprise. The RDF will make large-scale investments that are in general multidisciplinary.
4. The majority (60%) of the F&A earnings will be managed by the system component or entity that sponsored the research. These may be distributed at the discretion of the unit and used to pay the expenses of the research activities and to develop or maintain other research programs.

The Research Development Fund
Executive Oversight Committee – leadership, support and an annual review of the plan.
- Vice Chancellor – Agriculture
- Vice Chancellor – Engineering
- Executive Vice President and Provost – TAMU
- Interim Executive Vice President and CEO of the HSC

Research Development Fund (RDF) Management Committee (indicated person or their designee):
- Director of Texas A&M AgriLife Research
- (Deputy) Director of Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station
- Vice President for Research & Graduate Programs – Texas A&M Health Science Center
- Vice President for Research – Texas A&M University

Draft Guiding Principle for the RDF. The RDF will be used to optimize the utilization of F&A earnings to advance the Texas A&M’s growth in research through the strategic and shared investment of resources. The RDF will be allocated by the Management Committee for investments that will increase the institutional capability and shared capacity to attract, acquire and maintain major research programs at Texas A&M and will ideally address requests that are complex and multidisciplinary in nature.
1. It is good to have a portion of the returned IDC come directly to the PI's, but it is equally important that the total share that comes to the college (college + department + PI) not be reduced. How will that change under the new plan? How much are the system and university planning to take from the colleges, departments, and PIs under the new plan? The draft talks about PIs and departments or units. What happens to the colleges under the new plan? Is that the “unit”? I think skimming 15% for a "Research Development Fund" (that is, a slush fund) is excessive. I see that only Ag, Engineering, and Health Science have any real input into how the RDF is managed. It is clearly an earmark for them. Clearly some units will get a larger share of the IDC than they generate.

2. The key to understanding the proposal is that "Texas A&M" is undefined. It appears in the title. It appears in the first sentence. It appears in the last sentence. But what is “Texas A&M”? Is it “Texas A&M University”? If so, then any research development fund for Texas A&M "University" should be directly administered by the Texas A&M University Vice President for Research and overseen by the President of Texas A&M University. End of story. Is it “the Texas A&M University System”? If so, then why is the money collected and distributed among only three system agencies? Is it “the Texas A&M System Members in College Station”? If so, where is TTI? TFS? TVMDL? Why should their indirect cost funds be mingled anyway? Is it “the big Texas A&M System Members in College Station”? It seems that way. But there's a problem. Many of the researchers in the big Texas A&M System Members in College Station have joint appointments with Texas A&M University and one of the other System agencies in engineering or agriculture. Are the Texas A&M University representatives on the RDF supposed to represent the University, including engineering or agriculture, or just the non-engineering, non-agriculture components of the University? I don't see how they can be expected to do the latter. If the former, then agriculture and engineering are both represented twice on the RDF, while sciences and other research areas are only represented once. This seems unfair to non-ag, non-eng people and threatens to ensure that any major interdisciplinary targets of the RDF money must include either agriculture, engineering, or medicine by definition.

3. Will information also be provided on what will change if the proposal is implemented? I realize the diversity of schemes for disbursement at the college level, but some indication of who will have to give up what for this new fund would be helpful.

4. There is no justification within the document that explains why the principal investigators should not continue to receive the 15% return that they currently obtain. It seems quite reasonable to me that the principal investigators should retain the 15% that they currently receive and that the various administrative units (departments, colleges, and higher entities) should divide the remaining 85% in any way that they elect to choose. Why should the people who actually write the grants take a 33% cut in our distribution?

5. As a hardworking PI, I would like to voice my absolute opposition to the proposed reduction of incentive return to 10%. This is entirely unacceptable. The PI return must remain at 16%. Yes the PI return rate at TAMU is higher than most other institutions. But this is some consolation/compensation for the lack of shared governance and other glaring deficiencies in our system. In this top-down administrative arrangement, the PI return is one of the very few remaining silver linings. The faculty/PI have been slowly losing ground on a variety of issues. We must take a firm stand on this.

6. It simply does not make sense that the PI, who originates and makes all the effort to bring the funds to the university, gets the lowest fraction of all. PIs need the money to prepare for the next proposal, to be more competitive against other universities that have more fame in research than us; on the other hand,
a higher fraction of the return will encourage candidates to accept offers from our university so we can attract a larger spectrum of what we can now. There are several obvious reasons to show why the PI should have a higher fraction of the return. The money invested in the PI, by far, is the most effective way to bring more research dollars to the university, and more important, it is the best way to advance the quality of research at our university.

For these reasons I propose the following distribution:

- Faculty or P.I. for the research grant or contact – 25%;
- Department or unit that houses the PI – 25%;
- Research Development Fund for Texas A&M – 10%;
- System Component or unit – 40%

7. I must strongly protest against the proposed changes to IDC distribution policies. Specifically section 2 which states “2. The department, division or other unit of the PI of the grant or contract will receive a direct distribution of 15% of the recovered F&A earnings. The PIs and their Departments or Units are expected to manage the use of these funds to supplement, build and bridge their research programs.”

There are several reasons why this is a misguided plan.

a) I currently expected by my college to run all departmental operations using IDC funds. During the past several years we not only run all departmental operations using departmental IDC funds but also cover the salaries for several essential office staff support positions using the departmental IDC funds. Loss of these funds will not allow the department to operate independently and will lead to the loss of essential staff positions. We have already been through this through recent economic reductions.

b) We already return 10% of the IDC funds to the PIs.

c) We already use some of the departmental IDCs to bridge and help improve the research capacity of the PIs, for example, by partnering with the college and agencies for needed equipment.

d) The departmental PIs support using some of the IDC to support the department that they are housed within. They realize that these funds are supporting their own teaching and research abilities. These PIs do not want these funds taken by non-departmentally supportive central administrators to support unrelated projects.

e) The proposed restriction of these IDC funds to 15% will have drastic results. Not only will we not be able to supplement, build and bridge our PI research programs, we will not be able to carry out core operations and will lose essential personnel.

I urge the CPI to oppose these changes, redirecting funding from departments to the discretion of a limited number of central administrators is not a wise decision, and will only weaken current departments that carry out the majority of the research Texas A&M is known for.

8. I would like to express my disappointment and disapproval with the proposed distribution plan for F&A earnings. We have a serious retention problem in our college, and reducing distribution to the PI will only exacerbate this issue. I would like to also point out some additional key considerations:

a) I can remember several instances in the past 3-5 years where we have been assured by university administration that the F&A distribution to faculty would not change.

b) The College of Engineering has already shifted the burden of facilities cost out of the F&A expenses to the departments and PIs, thus effectively reducing the distribution to PI incentives.
c) Faculty already face strong competition to win grants. These funds are critical resources to prepare for future proposals. By taking these funds away, faculty will now be required to compete again just to receive their own F&A distribution back. Decreasing our capability to do preliminary experiments and write competitive proposals will only undercut our ability to obtain the funds that provide the basis for the new proposed distribution model. In essence, you are killing the golden goose to get a one-time golden egg.

d) You are taking funds from research that has been proven to be valuable (through proposal selection) and transferring them to research areas that top administrators believe are "in vogue." This is fundamentally a poorer way to determine appropriate and fruitful research areas. In essence, administrators are saying "we know better than our PIs what the important research areas are." I find this both insulting, and a claim without evidence.

9. Define what “Texas A&M” is being defined as in the proposal and explain the different policies and IDC return percentages among the various System units currently?

10. How will this proposal affect the IDC amounts that are currently distributed to colleges, departments and centers?

11. Does this proposal guarantee PIs will receive a minimum of 10% IDC return through Texas A&M, AgriLife, TEES, etc. or is there a possibility the PIs share could be reduced further at the college/department level?

12. I currently get zero IDC return for my program. It is up to the discretion of each center director to distribute IDC funds as they see fit. 10% would be very beneficial to my program and I would then have funds for equipment, etc…that are not currently covered by grant dollars in my program. I fully support this initiative.

13. I suspect my comments will echo those of other PIs, but here they are for what they are worth:

   a) Lacking further background information regarding a needs analysis (i.e., the demonstrated need to revise the allocation) and a concrete plan for how the re-allocated funds would be spent, I am 100% opposed to this plan. I cannot stress this enough.

   b) Quite frankly, I don't trust the administration to get the same value out of my F&A return (vis a vis our mission of teaching, research and service) as do I. My F&A return goes to support students and research activities. These are of direct educational impact (the education may be about how to do research, but it still is educational). If it goes into some large centrally-managed fund for large multidisciplinary projects, we'll incur a significant administrative cost that was not there before. I understand the principle of "you've got to spend a dollar to make two," but the value proposition is not being articulated by the administrators insofar as I can see.

   c) It is unclear that the administration is aware of the significant competitive advantage we have at A&M based on our faculty funding model and the potential negative impact of eroding this model. I realize it is not standardized throughout the university, so I am speaking mainly from the perspective of engineering / TEES. In the simplest terms, our current PI incentive model is what tipped the decision in favor of coming to A&M and/or not leaving A&M for other opportunities. Although the proposed 10% PI return still his higher than at many other institutions, current and prospective faculty look at the trends like these when making career decisions.

   d) The administration possibly could gain my support if the need and details of the plan were articulated more clearly. But to be frank, I and many colleagues are skeptical that a centrally-
14. Concern 1: Office computer systems for my research team. Currently I am asked to pay for the office computer systems for my research team out of the PI portion of the grant (communicated when writing my grant and SPO told me that I cannot charge NSF for computers, they should come from the PI portion of the IDC). The drastic reduction of PI portion of IDC makes that quite harder.

Concern 2: NSF and other federal agencies expect administrative support to be paid by the IDC. While we have some support in the pre-award phase of the proposal (SPO, budget writing), there is very little post-award support.

By receiving a large percentage of the funding, we need to have in writing what TEES or any other system component is actually providing for the individual project.

As examples, I have drafted the following: If the proposal gets approved as it stands right now, I expect the following in writing:

a) System component (aka TEES) will pay for computer systems for the research team to off-set the cost otherwise carried by the PI. Number of computer systems will be determined by a key using size of project, staff and staff months dedicated to the project. At a minimum, for every 2 staff (Faculty, Staff, Post-Doc, GRA and Undergrad), 1 computer system will be provided.

b) System component will provide dedicated post-award services in terms of project managers who help with HR issues, financial report management, etc.

c) System component will provide dedicated research office space for projects going beyond the space allocated to departments. Allocation of research space will be determined by number of staff and months dedicated to the research project.

15. As I have mentioned multiples times in different meetings and conversations with other faculty and administrators, I make extensive use of IDC to support my research enterprise. I use the funds when the projects funds are exhausted but requirements still have to be met because of cost overruns. In fact, I have never bothered administrators with budget overruns, and simply use my PI incentive account funds to make any difference between proposed budget costs and true expenditures. Furthermore, I use the PI incentive accounts to invest in any research areas and to generate preliminary research results necessary for competitive proposal competitions. I use the funds to attend important international conferences to make sure my research program is known around the world. In a nutshell, I use the funds to support the core mission of the university without asking for hands out or help from administrators.

16. I appreciate the efforts of the CPI. However, I am underwhelmed by the return of indirects to the PI and his/her department. I suggest that these numbers be revisited and recommend the following breakdown:

PI 20%; Department 25%; Research Development Fund 15%; System Component 40%

I believe in empowering the PI and the Department. The system tends to lose sight of those who generate the resources. The Departments are less likely to do so.

17. I would like to register my strong disagreement with the proposal to decrease the PI's share of the indirect return. No convincing argument has been made for why this will be better for Texas A&M, the College of Engineering, my department (Computer Science and Engineering) or me. Instead, it will greatly decrease the flexibility that I currently have in running my research program. I use this money for supporting my students, for bringing in visitors, and doing some travel, all items for which often no other funding is available. Thank you for raising my concerns at the CPI meeting.
18. I strongly object to the proposed IDC change. This represents a 37.5% cut to the PI incentive return. PIs use this money to pay for many items that cannot be directly expensed on research contracts (e.g. graduate student computers) and that are not paid for by the department. I am not aware of any proposal to make up this loss to the PIs. Instead, the money will go into a university-level slush fund, where some faculty will win and the rest will lose. There has been some discussion of funding shared research facilities. But the faculty who will not use these facilities will lose. Essentially this scheme is proposing that central administrators know better how to administer research funds than the individual PIs.

The same issue applies to TEES and the College of Engineering. Currently all of the IDC stays within TEES (TEES, divisions, centers, PIs), and TEES pays assessments for research space, compliance, etc. The VPR also does not contribute to COE startup packages. It is critical that any IDC loss to TEES be made up for by academic budget increases to the College of Engineering.
The Future of IT at Texas A&M University

Introduction
Public universities face significant challenges in today's society. The cost of higher education, its perceived effectiveness for all students who enroll, the lack of a strong narrative about the role of research in education and the larger community are just three of the challenges we need to find ways to overcome. Simultaneously, changes in our culture have fundamentally altered the technological landscape in which universities operate. The rise of mobile computing, social media, cloud computing, and the digitization of information have permanently changed our society and the nature of education. Consumerization of technology has ratcheted expectations of our faculty and students to an unprecedented level. In this new environment, innovative technological solutions are needed to help address the challenges public universities face. An engaged, integrated information technology (IT) strategy must enable Texas A&M to create a competitive advantage in teaching, research, and outreach. Innovative IT can augment existing research, enable new types of research, attract superstar faculty, allow new forms of student engagement, enhance student success, increase public access to common goods, and help the university impact the local community, state, nation, and world.

As stated in the Action 2015 strategic plan:

[We must] make new, original decisions and investments that will knit together the traditional elements of Education First [teaching, research and service] and enable the innovations required to take Texas A&M to new levels of performance, productivity and impact.1

The External Landscape
Radical changes have greatly affected the external IT landscape. These changes include:

- **An explosion in mobile devices:** Smartphones and tablets were uncommon devices just ten years ago; today students and employees frequently carry multiple wireless devices with them regularly.2 3
- **The ubiquity of online information:** A decade ago, research for a student meant a trip to the library. Today, a student is more likely to hop on Google or Wikipedia and the library is seen as a place to hangout and work on group projects.4 5
- **The changing social landscape:** The rapid growth of social networks like Facebook and Twitter have dramatically changed how students engage with others -- leading to dramatically changed expectations regarding classroom interaction.6 7 8
- **The consumerization of technology:** IT services like storage, email, or video conferencing no longer require permission or assistance from IT support staff. Students and faculty can simply create a free account with Dropbox, Gmail, Skype, or many other cloud services to fulfill their needs.9

The Organizational Landscape
Currently, Texas A&M University has a highly distributed model of IT which has led to a proliferation of self-sustaining silos of service. These silos have historically been characterized by valuing:

- Local unit, budget, and resources
- Local management of infrastructure and commodity services
- Stability and status quo over rapid change and flexibility
- Communication within the local unit over inter-unit communication

These values have resulted in a culture with many duplicated services and little incentive to cooperate. Efforts to provide centralized services are viewed with skepticism, distrust, and lack of mutual respect. Distributed IT resources make the coordination of services at the university level difficult. Although some commodity services have been successfully moved to central operations, many centralized services have low adoption rates (e.g. email, virtual machines) or poorly defined operational boundaries (e.g. NetID vs. SSO identity models). The distributed nature of our operations is more expensive to maintain, and inhibits a unified IT vision. This reduces our ability to devote a greater portion of our capacity to innovation at a time when our users and the environment demand it.

In 2013, The Texas A&M University System contracted with Deloitte to assess IT across all universities and agencies. In their 29 recommendations Deloitte consistently advised the consolidation of commodity IT services, and a shift to cloud services where appropriate. The System has implemented a number of these recommendations already, and is moving forward with others.

Our Vision: A Culture of IT Innovation
Our vision is to create a competitive advantage for Texas A&M through a culture of collaborative IT innovation. We believe innovative IT can provide the university with a distinct competitive advantage in many of its key priorities, such as recruitment, student engagement, graduation rates, and research that impacts the state, nation and world.

The level of innovation we envision requires a genuine strategic partnership between IT and our customers. By working with the entire community to create effective solutions, we leverage IT to create a world-class institution.

References

3 Mobile growth is about to be staggering. By Kevin Kelleher. (20 Feb 2013). In CNN Money.
4 Students’ Use of Research Content in Teaching and Learning: A report for the Joint Information Systems Council (JISC). (September 2009).
5 The digital age is forcing libraries to change. By Andrea Peterson. (7 Aug 2013). In The Washington Post.
The Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) at Texas A&M

Overview

The IT Advisory Committee was initiated by Dr. Pierce Cantrell, Vice President and Associate Provost for IT. The committee is charged to:

• Increase communication across the campus IT community
• Collect input from members’ departments and collaborate to identify common IT issues on campus
• Review and evaluate solutions and methods to help mitigate specific risks.
• Provide recommendations to help form security policy and operational decisions.
• Relay information to their represented areas and to the IT Forum.

You may send questions or comments to the committee at itac@tamu.edu

FY 2014 Goals

1. Create a strategic plan for IT at Texas A&M University that is aligned with the university priorities of teaching, research and service.
2. Create and implement an IT communications plan.
3. Create and recommend an IT Governance model for Texas A&M University.
4. Create a common Tier 1 service desk for campus using new service desk software and VoIP.

ITAC Members

ITAC members are appointed by their units, and represent every academic college and major administrative division. Additionally, Texas A&M IT is represented by four ex-officio members.

Colleges

Bush School of Government and Public Service
Ron Szabo

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Tom Lyster

College of Architecture
Adam Mikeal (Vice-Chair)

College of Education and Human Development
Becky Carr

College of Geosciences
Jim Rosser

College of Veterinary Medicine
Rick Young

Dwight Look College of Engineering
Mike Nelson

Health Science Center
Scott Honea

Mays Business School
John Norton

School of Law
Chad Ballenger

University Libraries
Bill Chollett (Secretary)

Campuses

TAMU at Qatar
Kevin Davis

TAMU at Galveston
John Kovacevic

Administrative Divisions

Department of Athletics
Mark Harris

Division of Administration
Jim Culver

Division of Finance
Andy Bland

Division of Marketing & Communications
Erick Beck

Division of Research
Aaron Brender

Division of Student Affairs
David Sweeney (Chair)

Office of the Provost
Juan Garza

Ex officio

Texas A&M IT Computing & Information Services
Cheryl Cato

Texas A&M IT Networking & Information Security
Willis Marti

Texas A&M IT Computing & Information Services
Allison Oslund

Texas A&M IT Instructional Technology Services
Jim Snell
Included in this issue:

- Summary of CPI EC meetings with administration
- Draft Research Development Funds Proposal
- Revised/New Policies 15-01, 15-04, and 16-01 for distribution
- Sponsored Research Services (SRS) Customer Service Liaison
- Update from the Texas A&M Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS)
- SAVE THE DATE – 2014 Undergraduate Research Mini-Symposium
- Council for Strategic Budgeting
- SAVE THE DATE for an NSF CAREER meeting
- Climate Science Workshop
- Open Researcher and Contributor IDs (ORCIDs)
- Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for graduate students
- Pending reports from CPI members serving on external committees
- Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities
Summary of CPI EC meetings with administration
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The CPI Executive Committee (EC) met with the Interim Texas A&M President and Provost on January 31st. Items discussed included an update regarding Vision 2020; the status of increasing the federally negotiated (F&A) indirect cost rate; and the position of the Vice President for Research.

On February 5th, the CPI EC held its monthly coordination meeting with invited research administration representatives from AgriLife, HSC, Texas A&M, TEES and TTI (see agenda at goo.gl/SJxw9x). Attendees discussed the current status of the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) administrative audit and SRS services with Mr. Billy Hamilton, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer of The Texas A&M University System. Mr. Hamilton accepted an invitation to provide an update and overview of the PwC administrative audit at the February 12th CPI meeting. As detailed in the next section of this newsletter, Dr. Laine brought forward a draft proposal for “Research Development Funds” and will also provide an overview and update on the draft proposal at the February 12th CPI meeting.

Lastly, Dr. Becky Carr and Dr. Henrik Schmiediche provided an overview of the IT Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the presentation they will also provide at the full CPI meeting on February 12th. It was also noted that the next full CPI meeting was moved to the first Wednesday of the month (March 5th) since the 2nd Wednesday of March will fall during spring break.

On February 7th, the CPI EC met with Chancellor Sharp, Mr. Billy Hamilton, and Dr. Jon Mogford, Vice Chancellor for Research and discussed SRS services and the progress of new hires; the current PwC administrative audit; updates on the Texas A&M President search; and the upcoming budget review by the Board of Regents.

Draft Research Development Funds (RDF) Proposal
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A draft proposal (available here) entitled “Research Development Funds: A New Model for the Use of Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Earnings for Texas A&M” was brought to the attention of the CPI Executive Committee (EC) at our February 5th meeting, by Dr. Glen A. Laine, Interim Vice President for Research.

The EC had previously been asked for feedback about potential changes to the fraction of IDC that is returned to PIs. The CPI EC repeatedly insisted that the current portion being returned to PIs is effectively used to meet important research needs and therefore should remain unchanged. In addition, the CPI EC has continued to insist that any pool of funds created using IDC funds from investigators should have significant PI representation on any committee charged with the oversight and approval of the distribution of the funds.

Please note in the draft proposal, the percentage of IDC being returned to PIs is 10%. It is our understanding that initial drafts had a much lower percentage being returned to PIs. This current draft proposal is being distributed to the CPI and other faculty groups for comment and feedback.

Dr. Laine is scheduled to come and discuss this draft proposal at the February 12th CPI meeting. If you have comments we can provide to Dr. Laine in advance of Wednesday’s meeting, please send those to CPI@tamu.edu before 4 p.m. on Tuesday, February 11th.

Contact:
Dr. Niall Slowey – cpi@tamu.edu

Revised/New Policies 15-01, 15-04, 16-01 for distribution
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New System Policy 15.04, Sponsored Research Services, and revisions to System Policies 15.01, Research Agreements (available online here), and 16.01, System Ethics and Compliance Program (available online here), were approved by the Board of Regents at its meeting on January 30, 2014. Below is a summary of the revisions, as well as a content summary of the new policy.
15.01, Research Agreements

Section 1: The role of the Vice Chancellor for Research is included in the approval and reporting of research processes and activities.

Former Section 5: This section which discussed the use of the Texas A&M Research Foundation is deleted because of the implementation of shared services for research administration.

15.04, Sponsored Research Services

This new policy describes the organizational responsibilities and authority of Texas A&M System Sponsored Research Services (SRS). It delineates the responsibilities of SRS and the system members under a shared service environment for research administration.

The three advisory groups that provide input into the operations of SRS are formally recognized:

- SRS CEO Advisory Board
- SRS Continuous Research Operations Improvement Committee (CROI)
- Principle Investigator/Faculty Advisory Committee (PIFAC)

16.01, System Ethics and Compliance Program

Section 1(i): The designation of Empowered Official for system export control matters is transferred from the System Ethics and Compliance Officer to the Vice Chancellor for Research.

Other changes made throughout the two revised policies include sentence restructuring to conform to system style guidelines, updating references and links, and adding the new Member Rule Requirements section.

Sponsored Research Services (SRS) Customer Service Liaison

Sponsored Research Services (SRS) has established a Customer Service Liaison (see full announcement here). SRS Associate Executive Director, Dr. Jim Joyce, will fill this new role and will be responsible for meeting and communicating with faculty researchers, departmental administrators, and The Texas A&M University System member leadership on a regular basis. SRS Communications Manager Stacey Rugh will report to the new Customer Service Liaison.

If you have any feedback regarding how SRS can provide improved service, you may contact Jim at jjoyce@tamu.edu or Stacey at srugh@tamu.edu. Also feel free to invite Jim and Stacey to attend departmental faculty or administrative meetings.

SAVE THE DATE – 2014 Undergraduate Research Mini-Symposium

Interested in increasing your research and scholarly activity? Thinking of moving in a new direction or adding a new dimension to your projects?

On Wednesday, March 19, 2014 (2 – 4 p.m.) in the Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building Auditorium, come hear eminent faculty in Humanities, Social Science, Engineering and Science discuss their strategies and priorities for integrating undergraduates into their scholarship team. Discover how experienced undergraduate scholars view their experiences. Please register for this free event at ers.tamu.edu. For questions, contact Ms. Sandra Chavarria – schavarria@tamu.edu.

Council for Strategic Budgeting

The Council for Strategic Budgeting met on Friday January 17, 2014. The council membership discussed scenarios related to consolidation of student fees and budgeting options regarding the Flat Rate Tuition
Proposal. The Council voted to recommend the consolidation of student fees and the Flat Rate Tuition Proposal to the Interim President, Dr. Mark Hussey. The Flat Rate Tuition and fee consolidation proposals were presented to and approved by the Board of Regents in their January meeting at TAMU Galveston.

Contact:
Dr. Mary Bryk – bryk@tamu.edu

SAVE THE DATE for an NSF CAREER meeting – February 26th

The morning of January 24th an NSF CAREER workshop was held that was sponsored by TEES and the College of Engineering. However, the weather and shut-down of the Texas A&M campus that a.m. impacted full attendance. If you were unable to attend the January 24 meeting, the Division of Research is offering a session on Wednesday, February 26 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. in Room 110 of the Donald Houston Building in Research Park (west campus at the corner of University and Discovery Drive). Parking is free.

The tentative agenda includes an initial overview of the NSF CAREER RFP process and proposal tips, follow by breakouts by discipline clusters. In addition to new materials, full handouts from January 24th meeting will be provided thanks to Dr. Laurie Garton of TEES and the College of Engineering. Breakout sessions will be led by Dr. John Ivy and Dr. Jim Izat of Research Development Services. They will be the contacts and provide follow up service to you during the development of your NSF CAREER proposal that is due in mid-July 2014.

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Update from the Texas A&M Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS)

On Friday, February 7, the Texas A&M Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS) officially inducted its second class of Faculty Fellows, who are visiting at A&M for up to twelve months to collaborate on research with A&M faculty and students. Representing disciplines across the university’s colleges and schools, the 2013-14 TIAS Faculty Fellows are:

- Leif Andersson, Professor of Functional Genomics, Uppsala University, Wolf Prize, National Academy of Sciences; Royal Swedish Academy of Science
- Satya N. Atluri, Distinguished Professor of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, The University of California-Irvine, National Academy of Engineering
- Claude A. Bouchard, Professor of Genetics and Nutrition, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Albert Creff Prize, French National Academy of Engineering; Belgium Royal Academy of Medicine
- Christodoulos A. Floudas, Professor of Engineering and Applied Science, Princeton University, National Academy of Engineering
- Roy G. Glauber, Professor of Physics, Harvard University, Nobel Prize in Physics; National Academy of Sciences
- Roger E. Howe, Professor of Mathematics, Yale University, National Academy of Science; American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Robert S. Levine, Professor of English and Distinguished Scholar, University of Maryland, Hubbell Medal, National Endowment for the Humanities; Outstanding Book Award (Choice Magazine)
- Wolfgang Schleich, Professor of Theoretical Physics, University of Ulm, Academia Europaea; Austrian Academy of Sciences; Danish Royal Academy
- Peter J. Stang, Professor of Chemistry, University of Utah, National Academy of Sciences; American Academy of Arts & Sciences; National Medal of Science.

The new inductees will join with the six members of the 2012-13 class:

- Jay Dunlap, Nathan Smith Professor and Chair of the Department of Genetics at Dartmouth Medical School, National Academy of Science
- Peter Liss, Professorial Fellow in the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, The Royal Society
- Alan Needleman, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering in the College of Engineering, University of North Texas; National Academy of Engineering
- Aleda Roth, Burlington Industries Distinguished Professor in Supply Chain Management, College of Business and Behavioral Science, Clemson University
- K.R. Sreenivasan, University Professor, Department of Physics and the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, New York University, National Academy of Science, National Academy of Engineering
- Vernon Smith, Professor of Economics and Law, George L. Argyros Endowed Chair in Finance and Economics, Economic Science Institute, Chapman University, Nobel Prize in Economics, National Academy of Science.

Faculty Fellows are annually selected through a process led by an electorate of acclaimed current faculty at Texas A&M, consisting of Nobel Laureates, Wolf Prize recipients, National Academies members and distinguished professors, among others. TIAS was established with the help of Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp, who made possible a $5 million endowment for TIAS through The Texas A&M University System’s Academic Enhancement Program.

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Climate Science Workshop

The department of Atmospheric Sciences at A&M is the home of several climate science researchers and we are teaching the science in various classes. In order to enable others on campus to learn about the scientific consensus on global warming, we would like to invite you to a workshop on campus around the time of the 2014 spring semester break. Before fixing a date and time, we would like to get feedback from interested faculty, PIs, researchers, etc. on which date would be most convenient.

Access a doodle poll (http://www.doodle.com/3rgdyggc9h3367q5) to let us know your interest and choose convenient dates, if any.

Details will be disseminated through this and the PI-DISCUSS listserv, and on the ATMO webpage, latest by the third week of February. As this list does not reach everybody who might be interested, we would be grateful if you forwarded this information to potentially interested colleagues. Why are we offering this?

One motivation to offer this workshop is that social science research has shown that the public as a whole still perceives that there is little scientific consensus on human-caused global warming. The origins of this misperception probably lie in both (i) concerted media campaigns by contrarian voices that began in the early 1990s, and which have led to widespread misinformation (“information deficit model”), fabrication of “doubt”, and associated discreditation of climate science and scientists, and (ii) a person’s filtering of (climate science) information through cultural, faith-based, and political opinion lenses (“cultural cognition model”), at times leading to rejection of credible information for unrelated reasons.

What have a situation in which an overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that Global Warming is happening, man-made, and potentially dangerous, but a society in which barely half the population is aware of
that consensus, only a tiny minority is concerned, and a growing number of people are dismissive. No better time for A&M then now, after the most recent IPCC report of the physical science of climate change (pdf) and its imminent report on impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability.

For any questions, contact Gunnar Schade at gws@geos.tamu.edu.

Open Researcher and Contributor IDs (ORCIDs)

You may have heard through your professional association or publisher of ORCIDs (pronounced orchids), Open Researcher and Contributor IDs. ORCIDs are persistent digital identifiers that distinguish a researcher from every other researcher with the same or a similar name. Additionally, ORCIDs support automated linkages between an author and her/his research outputs and professional activities through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission.

Texas A&M scholars will soon receive ORCIDs, thanks to an Adoption and Integration grant awarded to the University Libraries by ORCID and funded by the Sloan Foundation, one of 9 grants awarded nationally. Texas A&M’s program involves assigning ORCIDs first to new scholars, that is, current graduate students and post-doctoral researchers, allowing them to create a scholarly identity at the beginning of their careers. Libraries programmers will add a field for ORCIDs to the Vireo ETD submission and management system to link ORCIDs with theses and dissertations. They will also integrate a field for ORCIDs into the OAK Trust, the digital repository for campus scholarship.

After the first effort of assigning ORCIDs to graduate students, the Libraries will mint ORCIDs for faculty members and other researchers – sometime in the spring. If you would like to register for an ORCID sooner, visit the page Register for an ORCID iD. For more information see the Libraries’ guide, Researcher Identifiers.

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Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for graduate students

The Graduate Student Council is currently crafting a Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for graduate students in the same manner as several of our Vision 2020 peers. After meetings with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Provost, Director of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, the President of GSC, Brittany Bounds, is taking the Bill in a more supported direction by relying on existing policies and procedures that involve graduate students. An extensive Task Force is currently investigating these policies in the HR manuals, Graduate Catalog, Faculty policies, and system policies. It will serve essentially as a handbook for graduate students, providing easy access to policies on which they can reference and rely on in times of need. An important section of the Bill will require, in accordance with OGAPS, a document of understanding drafted by the graduate student and his or her advisor to clarify the expectations of both parties, which will result in a better culture of communication at Texas A&M. A working draft of the Bill will be presented to the CPI Executive Committee at an upcoming meeting."

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Pending reports from CPI representatives serving on external committees (CPI representative)

- Council for the Built Environment (Paul Hardin)
- Council for the Strategic Budgeting and Strategic Reallocation Sub-Council (Mary Bryk)
- Email Selection Advisory Committee (Terry Thomas)
- EPIK-Maestro Working Group (Beverly Kuhn, Terry Thomas, Victor Ugaz)
• Federal Demonstration Partnership (Wolfgang Bangerth)
• Graduate Student Copyright/IP Policies Review Task Force (Jean Luc-Guermond, Sandy Tucker)
• Intellectual Property Constituent Committee (Wolfgang Bangerth)
• PricewaterhouseCoopers Administrative Review Advisory Committee (Lawrence Rauchwerger, Eva Shipp, Heather Wilkinson)
• SRS PI/Faculty Advisory Committee (Terry Thomas, Lawrence Rauchwerger, Niall Slowey)
• Texas A&M University Research Administration Committee (Terry Thomas)
• Texas A&M University Multidisciplinary Accounting Committee (Steve DiMarco)
• University Research Council (Clint Allred)

See the full list of CPI members serving on external committees and committee descriptions at goo.gl/rP41nF.

Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities

Up-to-date limited submission proposal opportunities, including deadlines for required letters of intent, are available on the website of the Division of Research at vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/lsp/lsp/#limited-submission-proposal-opportunities.