

Addressing “Growing Sponsored Research at RIT Consolidated Recommendations”

**DRAFT v1.0
25 October 2010**

Prelude: The recommendations of the Research Advisory Council and the faculty as a whole are extraordinarily helpful and well received. This document maps out an action plan to respond to these recommendations and to continue to dialogue about advancing RIT’s sponsored research direction.

Issue #1: Articulate a vision for research, scholarship, and creative work at RIT.

The President, Provost, and the Research Council (deans, GIS director, VPR) will draft a concept paper that will be vetted with the faculty. Specifically, the paper will address the following:

1. Define what constitutes RIT research, scholarship, creative work and innovation and articulate where it fits in the RIT long term plans and goals.
 - a. The definition should provide clarity for what constitutes this work uniquely at RIT.
 - b. The definition should identify what must result in published, peer-reviewed and disseminated work.
 - c. The definition should clarify the role of innovation and commercialization of new discoveries at RIT.
2. The vision must capture the unique dynamic and symbiotic relationship between research/scholarship/creative work and the teaching enterprise at RIT. In particular, it should answer
 - a. Do research and teaching receive equal status and recognition through promotion and plan-of-work development?
 - b. What incentives are in place or should be in place that will insure the desired balance between research and teaching?

Issue #2: Develop a strategic plan with milestones for reaching the research goals and the above vision articulated by the senior administration.

Beginning in academic year 2011-2012, the VPR, working with the Research Advisory Council and the Research Council, will develop a research strategic plan. This plan will include the following:

1. Establish the characteristics of a “RIT research focus area.”
2. Develop / refine and identify the RIT research focus areas where RIT is or could become the recognized leader.

3. Develop a faculty hiring strategy and plans that include rank, salary and start-up-packages, for multidisciplinary teams and RIT focus areas. Insure that such strategies meet the needs of both supporting research and teaching excellence.
4. Acquire and support the necessary resources to conduct research including laboratories, equipment, and personnel.
5. Increase research oriented MS/MA & PhD programs targeted toward the focus areas.

Issue #3: Deliver and achieve support for research throughout the university, paying particular attention to the research needs of the faculty.

While noting that the strategic planning process above may determine new deliverables for faculty support, the President and the Provost, working with the Senior VP for Finance and Administration, Deans and the VPR, will address many of the recommendations below.

1. Recognize and reward faculty and student research/scholarship/creative work successes, particularly those that have external funding.
2. Develop a portfolio approach to plans-of-work across the University.
3. Provide faculty teaching relief for this awarded external funded research.
4. Define an internal investment request procedure and the funding sources (“Multi-year Research Budget Hearings”) that align with RIT research goals – salaries & seed funding for new faculty, start-up packages, bridge funding, proposal preparation, laboratory development & support, travel & publication costs....
5. Provide mentoring, training and other forms of assistants for new faculty.
6. Provide administrative support for each PI.
7. Deepen internal networks that promote collaboration across disciplines, create multidisciplinary networks, and improve faculty mentoring.
8. Define and develop appropriate Institute Research Centers and College Research Centers
 - a. Create research centers that achieve critical mass of faculty, researchers, post-docs, graduate students, technicians....
 - b. Define the criteria for institute centers (focus areas, external funding levels, multidisciplinary ...) as well as college centers.
 - c. Develop criteria for center leadership. For example see Northwestern University’s Office for Research <http://research.northwestern.edu/policies/center-proposal-evaluation-guidelines.html> .
 - d. Identify office(s) with a point of contact to promote sponsored research and initiate research in focus areas.
 - e. Define center reporting relationship (Provost, OVPR, Colleges?).
 - f. Focus on creating centers that could become national centers.

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Consolidated Recommendations
DRAFT #2

1. President, Provost, SVP of F&A, VPR and Deans define what constitutes RIT research and articulate where it fits in the RIT long term plans and goals (5, 10, 15 years out).
 - a. Define what we mean by research. Need a definition for research and scholarship that reflects the unique nature of RIT - creativity, innovation, pedagogy, prototype/application development, problem solving, consulting, basic research, book publishing, and journal articles ...?)
 - b. Capture and recognize both externally and internally sponsored research and scholarship?
 - c. Identify what must result in
 - i. Published
 - ii. Peer reviewed
 - iii. Disseminated
 - iv. Tech Transfer
2. Articulate a complementary, team oriented relationship between research and teaching at RIT
 - a. Do research and teaching receive equal status and recognition through promotion and plan-of-work development?
 - b. Define recruiting and hiring strategies that meet the needs for establishing research excellence as well as for teaching requirements.
 - c. Provide incentives for excellence in teaching and excellence in research?
3. Develop a strategic plan with milestones for reaching the research goals articulated by the senior administration.
 - a. Establish the characteristics of a “RIT research focus area.”
 - b. Develop / refine and identify the RIT research focus areas where RIT is or could become the recognized leader.
 - c. Develop a faculty hiring strategy and plans that include rank, salary and start-up-packages, for multidisciplinary teams and RIT focus areas.
 - d. Acquire and support the necessary resources to conduct research including laboratories, equipment, and personnel.
 - e. Increase research oriented MS/MA & PhD programs targeted toward the focus areas.

4. **Achieve support for research throughout the university (faculty, staff, department/center heads, deans, provost, VP's, President).**
 - a. **Recognize and reward successes.**
 - b. **Develop a portfolio approach to plans-of-work across the University? Provide faculty teaching relief for this awarded external funded research.**
 - c. **Define an internal investment request procedure and the funding sources ("Multi-year Research Budget Hearings") that align with RIT research goals – salaries & seed funding for new faculty, start-up packages, bridge funding, proposal preparation, laboratory development & support, travel & publication costs....**
 - d. **Provide mentoring, training and other forms of assistants for new faculty.**
 - e. **Provide administrative support for each PI**
 - f. **Deepen internal networks that promote collaboration across disciplines, create multidisciplinary networks, and improve faculty mentoring.**

5. **Define and develop appropriate Institute Research Centers and College Research Centers**
 - a. **Create research centers that achieve critical mass of faculty, researchers, post-docs, graduate students, technicians....**
 - b. **Define the criteria for institute centers (focus areas, external funding levels, multidisciplinary ...) as well as college centers.**
 - c. **Develop criteria for center leadership. For example see Northwestern University's Office for Research <http://research.northwestern.edu/policies/center-proposal-evaluation-guidelines.html> .**
 - d. **Identify Office(s) with a point of contact to promote sponsored research and initiate research in focus areas?**
 - e. **Define center reporting relationship (Provost, OVPR, Colleges?).**
 - f. **Focus on creating centers that could become national centers.**