Report of the Scholarly and Creative Activity Strategic Planning Committee

March 25, 2016

Professor Larry Forney, Co-Chair
Dean Andrew Kersten, Co-Chair

Executive Summary

The Scholarly and Creative Activity Strategic Planning Committee was asked to identify themes of scholarship and creative activities in which the university might invest through faculty hiring and improving infrastructure. As part of this the committee was also asked to identify ways to promote scholarly and creative activity within and among disciplines at the University of Idaho and identify barriers to scholarly excellence. To achieve this the committee first identified high priority areas of scholarship and creative activities. Second, a number of ways to "mesh the gears" between colleges, administrative offices, and researchers were identified. Third, we report issues that affect the ability of faculty members to pursue scholarship and creative activities and how their efforts are recognized and evaluated. Finally, the committee proffers ways to remove hurdles and barriers to scholarly and creative work at the University of Idaho.

We identified twenty specific strengths and opportunities that neatly fell into three major themes that encompass a wide array of topics pertinent to a public, land grant university. These were (1) global stewardship, (2) diversity & opportunity, and (3) health & well-being. The analysis of strengths and opportunities largely focused on existing scholarly and creative activities that exist in some form. However, we feel strongly that our thinking should not be constrained by what currently exists. In addition the committee developed a prioritized list of twenty-two action items for fostering scholarly activity at the University of Idaho. At the top of this list were: (1) provide proposal writing staff in colleges and/or the Office of Research and Economic Development to assist in the preparation and submission of proposals; (2) streamline the submission process for small grants; (3) increase the number of funded graduate student Ph.D. fellowships and earmark a portion for interdisciplinary research teams; (4) harmonize guidelines for performance evaluations so that collaborative papers and grants are valued; and (5) implement strategies to decrease teaching loads for faculty so they have time to focus on research and proposal writing.

The committee contends that the University of Idaho has both the talent and the opportunities needed to significantly increase and enhance scholarship and creative activities on campus. Given this, the critical question becomes what steps should be taken to enable our faculty and student's efforts in these areas. Thus, a number of recommendations focus on making more efficient use of our talents and increasing the time available to individuals to pursue these activities.

As part of implementing a new strategic plan for the university we have an opportunity to fundamentally change the culture on campus to one that embraces and values creative and scholarly activities independent of the number of people and disciplines involved, or the funding that might follow. The committee was not blind to the financial needs of the University or the aspirational goal of achieving the status of a Carnegie Very High Research University. Indeed we think it is important to identify and support large-scale programs that are well-funded and address important societal problems. However we were at the same time sensitive to the fact that many solitary activities that are not resource intensive can nonetheless be impactful. To reconcile this we propose that every researcher, scholar, and performer at the University of Idaho should aspire to become a 'thought leader' in their field and their accomplishments be primarily evaluated on this basis. In doing so, we should develop new metrics for success that are based on assessing the quality and impact of a person's creative and scholarly activities that are more independent of those often used today. By redefining the metrics we use to evaluate scholarly and creative activities we will invent a more inclusive community that values the diversity of scholarly and creative activities on campus and respects all who contribute. At the same time we will create an intellectual environment that will benefit the entire campus community and all we serve through its vibrancy and creativity.

Scholarly and Creative Activity Plan Committee

Committee Charge

On October 16, 2015, Vice President Jack McIver asked Professor Larry Forney and Dean Andrew Kersten to serve as co-chairs of the Scholarly and Creative Activity Planning Committee. The committee was asked to identify themes of scholarship and creative activities in which the university might invest through faculty hiring and improving infrastructure. As part of this the committee was asked to identify ways to promote scholarly and creative activity within and among disciplines at the University of Idaho and identify barriers to scholarly excellence.

The goal of this committee was to create a university-wide strategy for enhancing scholarly and creative activity. Specifically, the co-chairs were responsible for:

1. Developing a list of current and potential high-impact, major, cross-cutting scholarly and creative activity themes for discussion/comparison, and rate the opportunity/impact associated with these themes.
2. Identifying scholarship themes that had the following characteristics:
    a. Transdisciplinary challenges with regional focus and global impact (as demonstrated by significant funding opportunities across several agencies)
    b. Engage multiple colleges
    c. Can grow to 30 or more university investigators in genuine collaboration
    d. Provide opportunities for student involvement (especially at the PhD level)
3. Assessing the current University of Idaho capacity in terms of faculty strength, established external collaborations, sponsor interest, and necessary infrastructure.
4. Placing the themes into High, Medium, and Low categories.
5. Identifying barriers to scholarly excellence and making recommendations for improvement.
6. Developing metrics and other information that could be used to assess progress.
7. Providing a written summary of findings and actionable recommendations by January 29, 2016.

The committee, which is co-chaired by Dean Andy Kersten (CLASS) and Professor Larry Forney (COS), is comprised of about 30 faculty at all ranks and colleges as well as staff from key programs on campus. Working through four subcommittees the Scholarly and Creative Activity Plan Committee sought input from colleagues across campus, as well as from all Deans and other members of University leadership. The committee deliberations centered on this foundational information that forms the basis of their recommendations. These will be submitted to the Vice-President for Research and Economic Development in late-March and made available to the university community soon thereafter.

Committee Approach

To organize the work, the co-chairs assembled a team of faculty and staff and created four work groups. The “Strengths and Opportunities Subcommittee” was in charge investigating and reporting on Items 1, 2, 3, and 4. The “People Matters Subcommittee” also addressed Item 3 as well as Items 5 and 6. The “Hurdles and Barriers Subcommittee” focused on Item 5. Finally, the “Meshing the Gears Subcommittee” focused on Items 3, 5, and 6. The subcommittees worked independently, approached their work in slightly different ways, and reported their findings as they found to be appropriate. The subcommittees’ reports are included below.

Committee Membership (alphabetical)

Lilian Alessa, Research Faculty, Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Art and Architecture

Nilsa Bosque-Perez, Research Faculty, Department of Plant, Soil and Entomological Sciences, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Charles Buck, Associate Vice President for Northern Idaho, Coeur d'Alene Center

Daniel Bukvich, Professor, Lionel Hampton School of Music, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Elizabeth Cassel, Assistant Professor, Department of Geological Sciences, College of Science

Rajal Cohen, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Communication Studies, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Elizabeth Cooper, Research Assistant Professor, College of Art and Architecture

Barbara Cosens, Professor, College of Law

Raymond Dacey, Professor, Department of Business, College of Business and Economics

Sanford Eigenbrode, Professor, Department of Plant, Soil and Entomological Sciences, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Larry Forney, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science

Mathew Foss, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre Arts, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Debbie Hornbuckle, Grants Manager, Office of Development

Daniel Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Science, College of Natural Resources

Susie Johnson, Program Manager, NASA Idaho Space Grant, College of Engineering

Jeremy Kenyon, Research Librarian, University of Idaho Libraries

Andrew Kersten, Dean, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Sarah Koerber, Proposal Development Specialist, Office of Research and Economic Development

Samantha Ramsay, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Consumer Science, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Barrie Robison, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science

Cathy Roheim, Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Deborah Shaver, Director, Office of Research and Economic Development

Scott Slovic, Professor, Department of English, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Alistair Smith, Director of Research and Graduate Studies, Department of Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Science, College of Natural Resources

Vivek Utgikar, Professor, Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering, College of Engineering

Margaret Vaughn, Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education

Lisette Waits, Professor, Department of Fish and Wildlife Sciences, College of Natural Resources

Marty Ytreberg, Professor, Department of Physics, College of Science

Summary Report from Strength and Opportunities Subcommittee

Committee Members: Rajal Cohen, Elizabeth Cooper, Sanford Eigenbrode (chair), Matthew Foss, Dan Johnson, Cathy Roheim, Alistair Smith

The committee met three times from December through January to develop our approach and to generate a list of existing strengths and potential opportunities for enhancing Scholarly and Creative activities at the University of Idaho. Outside of meeting times, we conducted individual investigative conversations with faculty members, dividing the task among us to ensure coverage across the university. We identified 20 Strengths and Opportunities. These have been organized under three major non-mutually-exclusive themes that encompass a wide array of topics pertinent to a public, land grant university: *Theme 1 - Global Stewardship, Theme 2 - Diversity & Opportunity, and Theme 3 - Health & Well-being.*

For each theme we characterized, to the best of our ability, its potential real-world impact; resources available; regional partners; opportunity to involve faculty and students in the humanities, fine arts, and law; potential funding (if applicable); faculty names; disciplines; and departments. Based on this information we scored each activity for its level of actual or potential status with respect to the VPR's four criteria: 1. Transdisciplinary challenges with regional focus and global impact (as demonstrated by significant funding opportunities across several agencies), 2. Engage multiple colleges, 3. Can grow to 30 or more university investigators in genuine collaboration, 4. Provide opportunities for student involvement (especially at the PhD level). Finally, we assigned a priority to each strength and opportunity based on its combined status with respect to these criteria. Below we list each of the identified activities, a description or rationale for each, the theme or themes they address and their priority level assignment (see Table 1). Strengths are listed first in the table and these are followed by opportunities. In this list opportunities have been strictly defined as activities that have great potential but are currently underdeveloped and not classifiable as strengths. Most strengths are also opportunities in that they can potentially grow and expand. Table 1 has been extracted from a more complete table of information gathered about each activity, which is provided as an appendix to this report.

Although we strove to be comprehensive in generating this list, we strongly suspect that we have overlooked some activities, especially those that are nascent opportunities. We caution the reader that this report should therefore be seen as a framework that can be used to identify strengths and opportunities, rather than the final word. A hallmark of the institution's success will be it's nimbleness in identifying and supporting opportunities as they present themselves because of our dynamic faculty, changing societal needs, and potential sources of financial support.

Our analysis has been based strictly on the four criteria provided to the Scholarly and Creative Activity Committee. We noted that a number of exciting, cross-cutting, collaborative opportunities exist that may not meet these criteria, especially expectations for significant funding or in terms of the potential to include more than 30 faculty members in "genuine collaboration." Across the university there is appreciation for and interest in broad interdisciplinary collaboration between and among the sciences and humanities that is not always explicitly required, but have immense potential to enrich our scholarship and enhance its relevance. These sentiments are summarized in Appendix VII to this report.

Table 1. Strengths and Opportunities for Enhancing Scholarly and Creative Endeavors

Strengths: Ongoing, funded activities involving multiple faculty members and disciplines contributing substantively to the University's Scholarly and Creative Activities portfolio			
Activity and brief description or rationale	Theme(s)*	Priority**	

Institute for Bioinformatics and Evolutionary Studies (IBEST): Involves 35 faculty members in ≥ 3 colleges in interdisciplinary collaborations on fundamental and applied aspects emphasizing evolutionary biology; good prospects for continuing funding (NIH).	H, GS	High	
Center for Modeling Complex Interactions (CMCI): Brings together empirical scientists and modelers to address problems across all levels of biological organization; 18 faculty involved directly; some overlap with IBEST, good prospects for continuing funding (NIH).	H, GS	High	
Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) Program: Leadership is at UI for this statewide program that delivers unique, innovative, state-of-the-art biomedical research; strong undergraduate educational component.	H	High	
Regional Approaches to Climate Change (REACCH): Transdisciplinary, research, education and outreach effort spanning disciplines (biophysical to social), colleges and universities. Funding ends in 2017; much infrastructure remains (see NW REAP).	GS	Medium	
Opportunities: Smaller, ongoing or nascent activities with potential to grow into significant components of the University's Scholarly and Creative Activities portfolio			
Activity and brief description or rationale	Theme(s)*	Priority**	
Center for Research and Promotion of Healthy Behavior: Eighteen faculty members in three colleges; needs and potential impacts substantial in Idaho; potential funding from NIH, CDC (NIOSH).	H, DO	High	
Water Resources Research and Education Program (WRREP): Outlined in the 2016 report produced by the Water Resources Task Force (60 faculty members, 8 colleges); pressing state, regional and global needs, transdisciplinary, extensive funding opportunities.	GS	High	
Gender and Diversity Issues: Addresses pressing societal issues; builds on ongoing activities involving at least 30 faculty members in 4 colleges; strong linkages to citizens.	DO	High	
University-wide Program in Ecology and Ecological Applications: Potentially unites faculty working on ecology somewhat in isolation in 3 colleges; several subthemes evident (e.g. invasion ecology); with others working on social dimensions in other colleges. Foundations include the two successful IGERT projects led by CALS and CNR faculty, the second of which is terminating this year. These projects developed a widely recognized approach to cross-disciplinary research and graduate education that could be integrated into a part of this program.	GS	High	
Western Initiative for the Dairy Environment: Serves largest agricultural sector in Idaho; multifaceted issues pertaining to dairy, environmental and social sciences; 14 UI faculty members have been involved in planning;	GS, H	High	

substantial INL and CAES involvement.			
Environmental Writing and Ecocriticism: The English Department is currently a national leader in the field; 11 faculty members in CLASS are active; opportunities to link substantively with the sciences and manifest.	GS	High	
Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (BCB) Graduate Program: An interdisciplinary graduate program involving biology and mathematics, bridging three colleges. Complementary to IBEST and CMCI.	GS, H	Medium	
Water Resources Graduate Program: Cross-cutting graduate program involving multiple college and disciplines with various funding sources, including IGERT; potentially can expand the research dimension (see WRREP).	GS	Medium	
Fire and Fire Sciences: Significant issue for the region; existing small but strong programs and national reputation; involves 4 colleges and at least 10 faculty members; connection with Urban-Wildland interface theme.	GS, H	Medium	
Rural Community Development: Critical for Idaho's future; many faculty members across at least 3 colleges currently involved in efforts related to this theme.	H, DO	Medium	
NW Regional Agricultural Project for Wheat (NWREAP): Extends REACCH model with a more Idaho-centered emphasis to address long term sustainability of a critical production system to ensure resilience and innovation in response to drivers of change.	GS	Medium	
Data Management, Modeling and Visualization: Multiple faculty members across UI working on micro to nano-scale 3D imaging.	unclear	Medium	
Aquaculture and Agriculture: ongoing programs in aquaculture, water resources, fisheries, agriculture, economics, two colleges; links to WWREP.	GS	Low	
"Smart" Energy: Builds on successful program in energy grid technology, but extends to encompass various green energy sources, hydropower, technical, social aspects; potential to involve 5 colleges.	GS	Low	
Joint Doctoral Program between UI and CATIE: Small program (10 faculty members) supports research and education in the American Tropics; IGERT funding ending; model potentially extendible to other institutional partners to involve faculty in at least 3 colleges	GS, DO	Low	

* Themes: PS = Global Stewardship; DO = Diversity and Opportunity; H = Health & Well-being
** High - Essential for UI to pursue; Medium - Important to pursue; Low - Pursue if resources available

Summary Report from the Meshing the Gears Subcommittee

Committee Members: Lil Alessa, Charles Buck, Nilsa Bosque-Perez, Debbie Hornbuckle, Samantha Ramsay, Lisette Waits (chair), Marty Ytreberg

Overview

The committee met four times from December to January to discuss actions and changes that could improve and foster scholarly and creative activity at the University of Idaho. We developed a list of 22 action items that were grouped into 3 tiers based on committee members' ranking of the relative importance of each action item for fostering scholarly activity at the University of Idaho. These recommendations are provided in Table 2 and include nine Tier 1 top priority actions, ten Tier 2 priority actions, and three Tier 3 priority actions. Within each tier, actions are not ranked but are instead grouped by theme. However, we do indicate our top 4 ranked action items in Tier 1 with an asterisk. The main themes that emerged included the need to free up faculty time, streamline processes, provide more support from the Office of Sponsored Programs, foster interdisciplinary research, and increase faculty training opportunities. Many recommended actions are interrelated and synergistic. For example, *1.06 Increase number of funded graduate student Ph.D. fellowships and allocate a portion for interdisciplinary research teams* and *1.07 Establish broad Ph.D. degree/training options for those departments that do not have one.*

We emphasize that all actions would be beneficial for fostering scholarly and creative activities but in ranking the recommended actions we provide information on the actions viewed most important and influential by the committee members. When ranking items, we did not consider the cost or time required to implement the actions; thus, there may be Tier 2 and Tier 3 actions which would be more time and cost effective to implement. One example of this is action *2.07 Invite speakers from other programs/colleges into the standard departmental seminar series to foster cross campus collaboration*.

Table 2. Recommended actions for fostering scholarly and creative activity organized by priority: Tier 1 (top), Tier 2 (medium), Tier 3 (bottom). Asterisks indicate top four recommended actions.

TIER 1	
1.01	Free up faculty time by providing proposal writing staff in colleges and/or the research office. Staff would provide a full range of duties (technical editing, graphics, budgets, waivers, EIPRS entries, etc.); everything except writing proposal text. *
1.02	Streamline the submission process for small grants. They take as long or longer to get through the UI system as large grants because they often require many waivers. Allow them to postpone the EIPRS process until after they've been funded. *
1.03	Increase the number of funded graduate student Ph.D. fellowships and earmark a portion for interdisciplinary research teams. *
1.04	Improve and unify guidelines on the value of collaborative papers and grants. Provide equal or greater weight in annual faculty evaluations for collaborative contributions. May require changes to college bylaws and tenure and promotion guidelines. Consider STEM proposals to be STEM +: by adding $10-20,000 to a grant for collaboration with faculty from law, design, humanities, extension, education, or business to extend the impact of the research. *
1.05	Implement strategies to decrease teaching loads for faculty so they have time to focus on research and proposal writing. Strategies could include grants for teaching buy out, more funding for

	instructors, etc.
1.06	Increase faculty awareness of grant opportunities by employing people in the Office of Research and Economic Development to match faculty expertise with targeted funding opportunities.
1.07	Increase number of seed grants and funding initiatives for faculty to form interdisciplinary grant teams. Include criteria to involve early career faculty.
1.08	Establish broad Ph.D. degree/training options for those departments that do not have one.
1.09	Implement a transparent indirect cost recovery model that provides sustainable financial incentives and fosters faculty research success, with a unified policy on the percent of overhead that is returned to faculty.
TIER 2	
2.01	Develop approaches to ensure that faculty members possess or can receive training for the skill sets needed to compete for new grants. Fund targeted hires when gaps are identified.
2.02	Expand the Interdisciplinary Toolbox project and create an interdisciplinary proposal writing training program that includes panels of faculty successful at bringing in large interdisciplinary grants.
2.03	Create an intensive summer proposal writing boot camp for early career faculty, including a stipend to encourage participation.
2.04	Provide additional training and funding to faculty "on the edge" with respect to proposal writing success to help them improve preliminary datasets and quality of proposals.
2.05	Create and sustain an environment that supports submitting international partnership grants because they can be transformational for students, faculty, postdocs.
2.06	Develop a toolkit of standardized proposal language including institutional resources such as descriptions of facilities, equipment, etc.
2.07	Invite speakers from other programs/colleges into normal departmental seminar series to foster cross campus collaboration.
2.08	Track future funding trends and share information with faculty. Convening a group of interdisciplinary faculty from multiple ranks to assist with brainstorming ideas would be valuable.
2.09	Discontinue the 2% administrative salary requirement on grants. It is cumbersome to calculate, leads to inequities in amount of salary that must be requested by individual faculty, is offensive to some funders, and completing waivers slow down the submission process.
2.10	Expand the IBEST model of technology access grants in the form of financial credits to use specialized technology.
TIER 3	
3.01	Provide support for faculty to visit agency program officers to strengthen future grant proposals.

3.02	Create internal grant program to help researchers purchase equipment.
3.03	Encourage peer reviews of draft grant proposals by providing financial incentives to reviewers.

Summary Report from the People Matters Subcommittee

The People Matters Subcommittee examined the question: Do faculty members feel supported in their research and creative activities? Committee members informally solicited input from their peers, Department Chairs, and Deans. We compiled the following information, organized along these lines: direct support of research; time and workload, including administrative burden; and the incentives (reward and retention) structure.

Findings concerning support for Research and Creative Activity:

- Facilities and campus-wide instrumentation are not adequate for a research-intensive institution, especially not to achieve the goal of being classified as a Carnegie Research Very High institution. The IRIC Building might compensate for this somewhat, and many people are excited about its potential to support and advance interdisciplinary work at the University. However, some people believe the Integrated Research and Innovations Center (IRIC) territory is already designated for certain groups, and they won't benefit from it. They are also concerned that groups will be billed for use of the facility, which may leave out non-STEM collaborations.
- The college structure impedes interdisciplinary research of the type necessary to address current issues and areas of major funding support.
- Funding for professional development expenses such as travel to conferences, research-related equipment (including computers), research travel, etc., is inadequate.
- Faculty like the internal grant programs such as the Kurt Olsson Early Career Research Fellowship, the College of Letters Arts and Social Science (CLASS) Summer Research Grant, and Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) Seed Grants.
- The institution does not have a plan or process for faculty career development, especially to prepare early and mid-career faculty to lead research and/or scholarly activity groups. Research center leaders must have the skill, personality, and combination of internal and external focus to bring faculty together for collaborative research and connect them to opportunities.
- The degree to which early career faculty members are mentored to be successful in achieving research independence is variable. Some young faculty members feel they are too busy interacting with students and colleagues and dealing with departmental issues to have enough time for their own research and creative work. Some older faculty members have the opposite feeling, that young faculty spend too much time on research, don't interact with students and colleagues enough, and don't ask for help.
- The university does not have an adequate partner hiring program. This is especially important for hiring and retaining faculty members whose partners also have terminal degrees, given our location in a rural area with few alternative career opportunities for highly educated people. This places financial and emotional strain on these couples, reducing morale and increasing motivation to seek employment elsewhere. The lack of a university-level solution also leads to an informal practice of "back-room deals" which are subject to bias, perceived unfairness, and possible resentment, and to "word-of-mouth" agreements which expire with turnover in the administration. Many of our peer and aspirational institutions have instituted programs (including no-search hires) to address this problem.
- Some academic programs do not have graduate level degree programs. This can limit the productivity of faculty and their ability to compete for external funding because they cannot delegate some of the work to graduate students.

Recommendations to Enhance Support

1. Do not charge for use of space intended to incubate research and creative activity.
2. Increase internal grant funding to support research initiatives.
3. Add personnel to help connect people across colleges and reduce the "transaction costs" of engaging in interdisciplinary research across Colleges. College consolidation is an alternative solution.
4. Provide institutional guidelines regarding mentoring of early career faculty.
5. Use existing research groups (including interdisciplinary groups) that groom and mentor early career faculty for success and leadership in research and creative activity as models for success.
6. Encouraging faculty buy-in on emerging issues such as open access and open educational resources could help the UI Library address issues related to textbook affordability and access to information.
7. The UI Library is understaffed (approximately 65% of staffing per student FTE compared to our peers). More faculty librarian positions would increase Library capacity to support faculty, and more money for collections would expand resources for the UI community.
8. Develop a University-wide partner accommodation policy.
9. Raise the profile of the Northwest Knowledge Network (NKN), a partnership between the research office and the library, which provides data management and curation for our scientific community, and the Library partners with CLASS on the Center for Digital Inquiry and Learning (CDIL).

Findings concerning incentive and reward structure for research and creative activity

The following combined result in difficulty in recruitment and retention, flight of intellectual capital, low morale, and high turnover among staff and faculty.

- In general, the UI offers low, non-competitive salaries for faculty and staff, and has a burdensome hiring process, so it is difficult to recruit and retain talent, and to hire support staff for faculty.
- Start-up packages are low in science, engineering, and other disciplines. This makes it difficult for new faculty to establish a career trajectory at a research-intensive university.
- Lack of University recognition for scholarship accomplishments in non-STEM fields contributes to low morale and loss of productivity. Many early career faculty are excited about and open to the potential to collaborate with other faculty and groups across campus. These collaborations can be intellectually stimulating, and give faculty a breadth of experience and engagement that they may not acquire if working alone. However, they also face the requirements of promotion and tenure, which might limit their ability to engage in collaborations.

Recommendations

10. University-wide metrics for evaluation of contribution to research and creative activities must include methods that capture non-STEM productivity (e.g. SSRN, Research Gate). Colleges with non-STEM research should be consulted on how to do this.

11. The mission of the Office of Economic Development should be re-interpreted to extend to non-STEM fields.
12. The expectations for conduct of research and creative activity should be flexible, depending on a person's discipline and aptitude. Research and teaching could be allocated accordingly. The activity should be supported and recognized accordingly.
13. Criteria for promotion and tenure must include interdisciplinary criteria.
14. Promotion and Tenure committees at the College and Departmental level must include appropriate outside members when reviewing a faculty member who engages in interdisciplinary research.

Findings concerning barriers to research and creative activity:

Two specific areas identified as detracting from research and creative activity: (1) administrative tasks and (2) teaching.

Administrative load:

- Administrative tasks related to management, assessment, governance, and finance are perceived as consuming time and disrupting workflow. Organizationally, faculty point to Human Resources and the Office of Sponsored Programs as especially demanding.
- Many departments do not have staff available to assist with administrative tasks associated with research, proposal submission, and award management. As a result, faculty level salaries are being spent on data gathering, data entry, budget administration, student advising, recruiting, career counseling, web and brochure design – activities that could be done at a lower cost by people with training in the specific area.
- Some faculty feel bogged down by requirements such as on-line surveys, university-mandated courses, self-evaluations, rules and regulations, work-load reports, redundant emails and meetings, student recruitment and retention, TravelWeb, etc.
- The new classification structure makes it nearly impossible to offer competitive wages, and the procedures and protocols of Human Resources make it difficult add staff, postdocs, and research assistants in a timely manner. Competent support staff are readily hired away and then can't be replaced.

Recommendations to address administrative load:

15. Increase hiring of support staff with particular attention to the fact that the type of support needed has changed as the digital age has unfolded.
16. Create an expedited process for submitting proposals for small grants.
17. Define meeting times for University, College, and Departmental committees into blocks with either a MWF or a T/Th focus so that faculty can create gaps in their schedules to focus on research and creative activity.

Findings concerning teaching:

- Many faculty say they have learned to balance research and teaching, and that teaching informs their research and research informs their teaching. At the same time, teaching loads are very uneven across campus and are very high in many departments, particularly non-STEM fields. Faculty in some departments/disciplines are at a particular disadvantage when trying to engage in team-based research, since they can't off-load teaching responsibilities.

- Teaching assistantships are too few and have non-competitive stipends, so it's difficult to attract graduate assistants who can relieve faculty, freeing them up to engage in research at the level necessary for a research-intensive university. If faculty are teaching an upper-level or specialized class, there may not be someone else to take on the class, even if they could be "bought out."

Recommendations to Address Teaching Load

18. Expand the model of aligning teaching packages with faculty research interests to the extent possible.
19. When faculty collaborate on grant proposals and are successful in obtaining grant funding, then efforts should be made to create a level playing field through reduction in teaching or service load of those participating in the grant.
20. Department chairs can be flexible with teaching assignments to allow faculty to have more opportunity to pursue their research.

Summary Report from Hurdles and Barriers Subcommittee

Committee Members: **Barrie Robison (Chair), Deb Shaver, Jeremy Kenyon, Elizabeth Cassell, Susie Johnson, Vivek Utgikar.**

The committee met twice, with the objective of identifying barriers to research and creative activity. We identified 15 areas or activities that impede scholarship, and have grouped them into four categories: (1) erosion of faculty time; (2) physical infrastructure; (3) personnel; and (4) evaluation.

The erosion of faculty time for creative activity and scholarship

- Compliance and Monitoring: Streamline training and compliance procedures so they do not consume so much faculty time.
- Proposal Energy: Uniform application of procedures to "low risk" activities wastes time. Example: The same amount of paperwork is required to submit a $1,000 grant proposal as for a $1,000,000 grant proposal. The process for submitting small grants needs to be streamlined.
- Teaching: Many faculty have very high teaching assignments, which reduces their ability to engage in research and creative activities. Perhaps in some cases teaching and scholarship could be harmonized through project-based senior classes? Interactions with students place additional demands on time beyond the classroom (for example writing letters of recommendation, advising, and mentoring).
- Service: Committee assignments, meetings, and reports all consume time. Perhaps meetings could be streamlined, reporting reduced, and certain committees could be eliminated?

Each of these have a relatively small effect on scholarship, but when taken together they suppress research and creative activity.

Lack of physical infrastructure and resources

- Availability: We need the infrastructure necessary to conduct research relevant to the next century (rather than the past century). Example: High Performance Computing.
- Support and Sustainability: This critical infrastructure needs to be supported (e.g., through technical staff) so that it is sustainable and current. Example: Core Facilities
- Start Up: New hires (especially, tenure-track Assistant Professors) need to have adequate research start-up funding.

Personnel

- Graduate Students: It is difficult to impossible to recruit superior graduate students with non-competitive stipends. Our stipends are not compatible with those of other Carnegie Research Very High institutions.
- Staff: Recruiting and retaining superior staff is impeded with the current Human Resources classification system.
- Support staff: Some units on campus do not have adequate staff support (such as IT, or grant support staff).
- Salaries: Faculty salaries are not competitive with Carnegie Research Very High institutions which adversely impacts faculty recruitment and retention.
- Training: Many faculty are unaware of the resources available for locating potential funding.

- Identifying Collaborators and Resources: Creative ways are needed to help faculty find potential collaborators and campus resources. One example might be mini-rotations in which faculty have temporary offices (6 months?) in another department.

Evaluation and Motivation:

- Interdisciplinarity: Chairs and Deans must encourage and value interdisciplinary collaborations and the latter should be reflected in faculty performance evaluations.
- Evaluation: Performance evaluations and position descriptions for faculty are needlessly prescriptive, which impedes the emergence and evaluation of nascent scholarly and creative activities.

Back Matter

Appendix I: Charge to the committee as outlined in the memorandum of October 16, 2015 from Vice-president McIver

University of Idaho

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Date: October 16, 2015

To: Dr. Larry Forney, Distinguished Professor; Dr. Andy Kersten, Dean of CLASS

From: Dr. Jack McIver, Vice President, Office of Research and Economic Development

Subject: Ideas That Matter - Scholarly and Creative Activity Planning Themes

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The University of Idaho under the auspices of the Office of Research and Economic Development is undertaking the creation of a university-wide scholarly and creative activity plan. Thank you for agreeing to provide leadership to this effort by serving as co-chairs of the committee supporting the development of this plan. This scholarly and creative planning activity will be conducted in parallel with and supplement the preparation of the University strategic plan by developing an inventory of current (themes) and potential (initiatives) cross-cutting areas of scholarly activity, and assessing the University's capacity (including faculty strength, collaborators and sponsor interest, and infrastructure) to address these areas. To ensure effective integration and final merger, there will need to be ongoing collaboration between the groups developing these plans.

The first responsibility of the co-chairs is to assemble a committee from the list of nominees that will be available to you following the October 28 closing date for nominations. Although the size of the committee is at your discretion, it is expected that there will be opportunities for input to the committee from the broader University community. In addition, Brad Fenwick of Elsevier Research Intelligence has agreed to work with the committee by providing research-capabilities data and intelligence.

Once assembled the committee is charged as follows:

- Develop a list of current and potential high-impact major cross-cutting scholarly and creative activity themes for discussion/comparison, and rate the opportunity/impact associated with these themes. These themes should have the following characteristics:
    - Transdisciplinary challenges with regional focus and global impact (as demonstrated by significant funding opportunities across several agencies)
    - Engage multiple colleges
    - Can grow to 30 or more university investigators in genuine collaboration
    - Provide opportunities for student involvement (especially at the Ph.D. level)
- For each theme, asses the current University of Idaho capacity in terms faculty strength; established external collaborators and sponsor interest; and infrastructure.
- Bin the scholarly and creative activity themes into the following categories:
    - ***High*** – Essential for UI to pursue; "must do"
    - ***Medium*** – Important for UI to pursue; current or emerging area in which realigning resources to pursue should be considered
    - ***Low*** – Areas UI should pursue if resources are available; not a priority for resource realignment
- Identify barriers (including processes) to scholarly excellence and develop specific recommendations to improve the scholarly and creative milieu.
- Develop metrics and other information needed to enable ongoing assessment of progress.
- Provide a written summary of findings and actionable recommendations.

The committee should be prepared to submit a draft of their report to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development on or before January 29, 2016.

Appendix II: Subcommittee on Strengths and Opportunities I

Attached

Appendix III: Subcommittee on Strengths and Opportunities II

S and O Subcommittee Appendix – Abstracted from Matt Foss's Reflections upon networking with CLASS faculty

Dr. Foss initially struggled to align the criteria outlined in the charge from the VPR, with the broader set of programmatic metrics he expected would be relevant to transdisciplinary collaboration across units and colleges and disciplines. As a new faculty member, he was reluctant to question the charge, but when he began discussions with CLASS and LAW faculty members he realized his concerns were real, and furthermore potentially paradigmatic in nature, given the context in which the humanities, social sciences and the arts participate in scholarship and creative activities.

He provided a narrative based on his conversations with faculty members from these units and intended to constructively address the challenge of broadening the criteria applicable to our S and O task. This effort was intended to reveal unique strengths and opportunities that are idiosyncratic to the resources of the culture, community and individuals at UI.

Points raised in discussions with faculty:

- We may "need to look beyond the Carnegie approach in thinking about research and creative activity." As both a land-grant institution and the flagship university in Idaho, the impact of our research activities might be increased if we more successfully incorporated more perspectives, including legal, social science, arts and humanities perspectives. This will also ensure that particular colleges such as the College of Law and the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences, are not left out of the conversations and developments.
- There seemed to be a persistent feeling that the metrics used by the university to evaluate institutional research and creative activity were unable to assess (encompass?) or even perceive the efforts outside of the sciences.
- Yet, there was a willingness to seize this opportunity to truly wrestle with the model for how those in the social sciences and arts engage in scholarly and creative activity and how it might be better appreciated or promoted.
- For example, rather than securing grants to build infrastructure and initiate projects, the funding in these fields occurs or is triggered later in the process. This was described as a "client model" in which creative endeavor is pursued either as speculation, with a belief it will attract funding, or on a commission basis that is paid on delivery – a sort of "gig economy" for project initiation, funding, culmination.
- Work in these fields (arts, humanities, law) has the potential to reach incredibly diverse audiences and engage the University's stakeholders but is excluded from "more traditional models of research", more often included in an ad hoc or post hoc basis (not necessarily built into proposals, e.g.)
- Our core document's (table) criteria: institutes, majors, journals, studies and projects, etc. are impressive in their scope, impact, size of participation across the university, but, did not easily populate based on input from faculty Matt interviewed. But there does seem to be unique opportunities at UI for synthetic work, due to something not quite tangible, but often articulated: the University of Idaho is unique for its "spirit of generosity" in how faculty members work and engage and support one another.

Directions for Action

- There is a willingness among interviewed faculty to create, and enthusiasm and curiosity to participate in any collaborative role in other models of research.
- This may be a great institutional strength of the University in terms of Research and Creative Activity: the collaborative, generous and empathetic scholarly/creative curiosity of our

teaching/learning community, which requires investment of intention, not an infusion of cash.

- There may be an opportunity to create language and context to better articulate this [and cultivate it?] as part of the Scholarly and Creative Activity Committee's work, consistent with Dr. Forney's interpretation of the charge.

Appendix IV: Elsevier Data

Attached