

Research & Scholarship World Café INPUT – Feb 8, 2018

Session Summary

The session was attended by approximately 32 participants. Ed Feser provided a kickoff that again set the tone. Participants were more varied across colleges than the teaching session was. Again people were engaged. We had six questions, instead of five, which took longer. This caused us to run a little over, but most people stayed the entire time. There were several clarifications after each monitor summarization. Ten participants rated the session with an average of 4.2 on a scale of 1-5, where five was the best.

Themes and supporting ideas

These points came from the monitor summaries, the group debrief and were cross checked quickly with items in the suggestion box and other session notes.

Better infrastructure is an imperative

- Our research infrastructure is neglected and crumbling; roofs are leaking on multi-million dollar equipment!
- Better balance between renovation with new construction
- Facilities are the foundation we build research capability upon

More research support is needed – including grad student support

- It all comes down to creating more time for doing actual research
- New faculty conclude there is no research support structure
- Better spousal support is critical (*to recruiting / retaining talent*)
- More responsive support; strike a better balance between centralized/ decentralized support staff; add more research coordinators/program managers; greatly improve post-award support; get a more agile HR function
- Lack of seed money; e.g. cessation of incentive programs is a flag and a limiter
- Less regulatory overhead – its killing us in some places
- Minimize data loss – improve accessibility to data; shared access etc.
- Higher awareness of what is already available on campus
- Use of incentives to drive collaborative endeavors – so less people go it alone
- Improve our grad student environment; with better models for recruitment and support
- Improve the equity of research support across the colleges

OSU does not value research enough

- OSU brags about being an R1 university but does not prioritize funding that way
- R1 status feeds everything; attracts talent, supports high quality teaching and creates a virtuous cycle for supporting university excellence
- Leadership fails to consistently reinforce the message that creating knowledge is important
- The new budget model may have unfavorable, unintended consequences to research and grad student programs; it implies that enrollments and student success are the priority.
- Is there a plan to replace the retiring faculty (research capital) we are going lose soon?

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Marketing, Marketing, Marketing and more bragging too!

- We do not brag enough (captured multiple times in multiple ways)
- Massive investment in marketing is required to get us out of the “best kept secret” category
- We need a coherent, well-articulated research ‘drive’ message
- Enhance our visibility! Who knew NASA is on our campus – move it to the 6th floor in Kerr.
- OSU leadership does not emphasize basic research; or highlight research stars enough.
- Increase our visibility with industry, DC, foundations etc. Maybe with Boards of Advocates.
- E-campus invested in marketing itself and look where it is.
- If we are to compete with Stanford (which our research does) then we have to increase that awareness

What does ‘adequate funding’ mean?

This phrase was used in one of the questions and sparked robust discussions around what that term was getting at – key points follow but also show up in other themes.

- All depends on what we want; what we are shooting for – are we clear on that?
- Not if we want/need and research park in Portland?
- More aggressive, less risk averse pursuit of patent/IP commercialization will help
- What do we want to be known for? In general, or better yet, specifically?
- The current model depends too much on finding funding vs. doing the research
- What does OSU mean by research leadership? We should have clear metrics for success.
- Are we striving for excellence or funding?

What does inclusiveness excellence mean for research?

- Seeking a diverse set of research subject, students, size and sources of funding (state, private, other), diversity of impact (where and how we publish) etc.
- We need to include diverse populations in our work and in our results; e.g. public health
- Need clear metrics for what success looks like
- Improved diversity recruitment and retention training.
- Its about making the C and B students successful

Thoughts on the ‘three healthies’

- Current ‘Healthies’ are good and offer more clarity than many institutions; they have been a deal maker for attracting good faculty in some cases
- Consider creating a fourth – “healthy cultures”
- We still need better consolidation/collaboration across the three healthies.

Other ideas that could impact OSU’s research enterprise over the next five years

- If we do not pursue rankings, then we will be at a disadvantage in competing for federal funds
- Create a Board of Advocacy in Washington DC

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- Research should not compete with student success; academic and research priorities should mesh better; data used to publish should leverage our teaching – let's change the conversation
- Sponsor a topic of the year; UO example
- Greatly improve the transparency of finances
- Share credit for graduating interdisciplinary programs (both admitting and graduating departments)
- Build a research park in Portland, near the airport, for easy access to VCs. collaborators!
- Fund cross college research centers
- Work out a model of central and decentralized support – avoid the philosophic and agree on where things work best