

Research and Economic Development Committee Minutes

March 23, 2022

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Gateway Center

Attendance: Trustee David Fall, Trustee Brad Bonner, Trustee Brad LaCroix, Trustee Elizabeth Greenwood, Ed Seidel, Diana Hulme, Steve Farkas, Victoria Bryant, Josh Brackett, Gabrielle Allen, Penelope Shihab, James Pru, Jami Miller, Farrell Rapp, Carolyn Brandt, Liudmila Mainzer, Tara Evans, Kevin Carman, Mandy Gifford, Margarita Rovani, Raymond Gable, Karyn Bercheni

Overview of Technology Transfer Office – Research Products Center and Express Licensing Draft Discussion – Victoria Bryant, Director, and Josh Brackett, Licensing Manager.

- Introduction of Staff and future hires
 - Current Staff includes Victoria Bryant, Director; Tiffany Bishop, Tech Transfer Manager; Josh Brackett, Licensing, Manager
 - Future hires to include: Office Assistant, Business Development Manager, position title TBD
- Current office activities include direct IP management, contractual work, education and outreach.
- Office Goals include:
 - Review and streamline internal processes
 - Evaluate patent portfolio for new commercial opportunities and cull out technologies that are no longer commercially viable.
 - Identify and pursue additional resources to assist with marketing and licensing.
 - Identify additional ways to make UW IP accessible for strengthening UW economic development goals while balancing against UW and state resources invested in protecting and maintaining UW IP
 - EXPRESS LICENSE FOR UW IP to UW-SPINOUTS (supplemental licensing process)
 - Express License goals include: Fairness to all parties, reduce entry barriers, reduction in time and resources spent on licensing (both parties)
 - These goals will be met by automating parts of the process with **standardized term RANGES** supported by real tech transfer industry data

Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Proposal – Dr. Jim Pru, Professor and Rochelle Chair, Department of Animal Science **Jim Pru, Ph.D.**

- This presentation will discuss Dr. Pru's proposal to apply for applying for a COBRE award.
- COBRE program is part of the NIH's Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program. It is an institutional award, developed by PI's to build research infrastructure in three phases over a five-year period. It must have institutional commitments (space, replenish faculty with new hires, ORED support, part of the universities strategic plan, and leverage other COBRE or INBRE grants).
- Framework of the Reproductive and Regenerative Biology Center (RRB)-COBRE grant
 - The RRB would house Research Project Leaders (RPL) that would bring in new research dollars, conduct research, and offer mentor support, seminars/symposiums/expert lectures, as well as internships.
 - The RRB is an institutional grant opportunity that will provide campus-Wide investment from multiple colleges, departments, AES, ORED, and the foundation. It will be directed through the Department of Animal Science in conjunction with internal and external advisory committees. It will create an institutional core that will serve the UW research community as well as other COBRE schools.
- The COBRE theme is reproductive and regenerative biology
- Expected outcomes include:
 - Increase intellectual capacity (*i.e.*, research project leaders) at UW by hiring and retaining world-class research scientists in focused areas (reproductive and regenerative biology)
 - Increase grant funding/expenditures (independent and multi-investigator) and corporate/industry-sponsored research
 - Increase publications (number and scientific merit)
 - Increase intellectual property and licensing agreements (excellent opportunities in agriculture)
 - Enhance research infrastructure through the development of core facilities and the recruitment of technical personnel for implementing functional genomics and systems biology

- New instrumentation
- Enhance small animal facilities
- Strengthen research programs by providing small grant opportunities that foster collaborative research across the UW campus and other COBRE schools (UN-Reno -- Mountain West Clinical Translational Research Infrastructure Network)
- Enhance research infrastructure through the development of core facilities and the recruitment of technical personnel for implementing functional genomics and systems biology
- Increase student recruitment/retention, strengthen ties with Wyoming's community colleges, and offer cutting-edge research and training opportunities
- Enhance UW engagement with students, stakeholders, and Wyoming residents through education on the applications of functional genomics and systems biology (nursing program and Extension)
- Mechanism to interface with existing and new initiatives on campus (SoC, CEI, RMAL, WIP)
- Will place UW in a leadership position to help shape policy about the uses of gene-editing technologies in health sciences and agriculture at the national and international levels
- The RRB-COBRE can serve as a beacon for external support through the UW Foundation
- Help elevate UW to Carnegie R1 classification
- What is needed for grant success
 - Investigator research lab and technical core spaces (request has been made through Space Allocations for space at the east end of AS/MOLB Building as MOLB transitions into the new SI Building), \$300K for renovations (COBRE), but this is insufficient, Funding support to hire a Functional Genomics/Systems Biology Core co-Director (salary and benefits)
 - Institutional commitment to hiring world-class research scientists
 - Currently developing a plan for facilities grants and to engage with private donors. CANR, AES, and Department of Animal Science have contributed ~\$250K for instrumentation, agreed to waive some indirect costs
- Proposal due end of January 2023. The funding timeframe would be fall, 2023.

School of Computing Update – Gabrielle Allen, Director

- Dr. Gabrielle Allen has been named the Director of the School of Computing (SoC)
- Vision: Make UW a national leader in computing research, education, and engagement; create a hub of innovation and knowledge exchange for faculty, students, industry, and citizens; a champion for broader UW efforts to provide digital skills for all.
- Goals: Contribute to excellence in research, teaching, and engagement; better able to address grand challenges issues important to WY, better prepare students for their careers; grow student body in computing and data science, support state in building a new, diverse, economic sector.
- Hiring plans currently in progress include a co-director, assistant director of operations, administrative associate, and director of engagement. Also to include faculty advisory committee and adjunct faculty, as well as graduate RAs, research scientists/postdocs, visiting scholars, and undergrad computing scholars.
- Budget: They will be proposing a \$3M/year (core) budget with a \$500k/year Tier-1 for the next budgeting cycle. Will also make a request to the Trustees reserve funds to cover immediate costs and faculty hires. \$1.15M external WIP funding.
- Currently working on establishing a physical and virtual presence by finding office space and setting up a webpage and social media. Putting out calls for RA's, research staff, faculty affiliates, visiting faculty, appoint Founding Adjunct Faculty and Curricula committees, and begin theme strategic planning.
- Soc utilized WIP funding to hold a campus-wide competition and now has five SoC Graduate Scholars.
- The SoC has also started a computer seminar series. This semester it is involving University of Wyoming speakers along with international and industry speakers. Seminars will be held on Friday. This semester's focus will loosely focus on the use of artificial intelligence as a tool for scientific discovery.

Introduction of Penelope Shihab, Director CEI

- Penelope Shihab has recently been named the Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI). Dr. Shihab holds a Ph.D. in Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences from the University of Strathclyde in the United Kingdom. She is a board member of the European Cooperation of Science and Technology funding organization

to create research innovation networks involving scientists across Europe and beyond. She is also a CEO and founder of a Jordan company for antibody production called MonoJO Biotech. MonoJO is a leading biotech company in the Arab region. The company was established in 2005 in Amman, Jordan, and was selected by the World Economic Forum in 2019 as among the top 100 Arab startups, shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

WIP update – Steve Farkas

- Phase II Funding has been approved. It will land in the governor's office. A position in the Governor's office will assist with the coordination of activities going forward, process TBD.
- A new committee was created on our external messaging. A website will be developed, the domain has been registered and we are working on content. The messaging will celebrate the work that is underway as well as highlight what can be expected with Phase II funding.
- Key Initiative Hires now in place: Penelope Shihab, CEI; Dan McCoy, WORTH; Gabrielle Allen, School of Computing.
- Overview of the two WIP Internal committees:
 - WIP Working Group: approximately 30 members very interdisciplinary and representing all the category component areas. Focused on the Phase I timetable of having deliverables by 2023.
- WIP Steering Committee: comprised of UW Initiative Leadership (SI, Ag, Tier-1, SoC, CEI, WORTH) focused on WIP investments and thinking strategically about how the WIP investments can support the UW strategic initiatives and align with the deliverables.
- Highlights of some of the measured activity deliverables include:
School of Computing
- Key hires
- Procuring new equipment to support the Science Initiative
- New internships and GA positions for our students
- Expansion plans for IMPACT 307 and the BRN
- LCCC/WCCC collaboration – Finalizing space at LCCC, identifying space at WCCC
- Planned increase startup challenges through the impact 307 group. Increased marketing to our communities around the state by visiting existing businesses small and medium-sized businesses. Made investments in maker space equipment, and expanded advanced manufacturing capabilities and partnerships.
- Scheduled new boot camps and seminars and workshops
- Wyoming Office of Tourism was able to secure the \$250,000 budget allocation to support that initiative.

Economic Development Strategic Planning Working Group – President Seidel

- President Seidel has commissioned the Economic Development Strategic Planning Working group, chaired by Diana Hulme and Steve Farkas. They have been charged with looking at all of the current economic development activities and developing a report that says what we need to do in terms of planning to best leverage them. He has asked for a one, two, and five-year plan for what we need to be doing going forward. Some areas they will be looking at include venture capital operation, plans to build out a research park, developing a culture of innovation, etc.