Forum 2
January 27, 2017
Summary of Table Conversations and Group Recommendations

Attendees:

Aaron Tesfaye; David Cupo; Richard Kearney; Ken Wolf; Tim Newman; Aleksander Kecojevic; Natalie Obrecht; Barbara Andrew; Tom Fallace; Vidya Kalaramadam; Balmurli Natrajan; Jim Samuel; Laura Fattal; Matt Crick; Marlene Taylor; Katherine Machere; Jason Codrington; Eleazar Segovia Gazul; Carol Frierson Cambell; John Bae Kim; Michelle Hinkle; Ray Schwartz; Lisa Werner; Carrie Masia; Pamela Theus; Tao Guo; Carey Waldburger; David Gilley; Martin Williams; Christine Bravo; Maureen Peters; Russell Mallery; Amanda Duggan; Toufic Hakim; Kathy Weiner; and Stephen Hahn

Actionable Suggestions (prioritized in the following order):

1. Umbrella Catalyst (incentivize)
2. Reduce to 2-3 loads (for research vs. teaching)
3. Guaranteed travel money, have funds available/ Travel request restrictions (removal of obstacles)
4. Establish mechanisms and a research portal to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and research
5. Strengthen involvement of adjunct faculty
6. Restructure Honors College programs to coincide with and be available in additional departments
7. Collaboration, discussion, and transparency amongst departments and in an interdisciplinary way
8. Additional funding for start-up costs
9. Clarify role and value of "more" RSCE (Ask administration why research matters; what do they mean by "research and creative activity", student centered research vs. faculty centered research [change the definition of research])
10. Increase the number of GAs and their connection to specific research goals
11. Get faculty involved in ideas exchanges and mentorship groups/programs
12. Additional faculty resources (i.e. smaller faculty to student ratio for research classes)
13. Encouragement for students to participate in research
14. Student mentorship should be recognized into teaching time (define if they want professors to focus more on working with students or on publications)
15. Integrate more research into undergraduate classes

Table 1: **Stewardship & Funding - Improve the coordination and stewardship of research across the University & Work strategically to strengthen the culture of research funding.**

-WPU (does well) providing students the opportunity to experience the perspectives of others who are different from them

-Need more of an incentive to work across our areas (collaborative with other departments)

-WPU doesn't provide incentives well

-Incentives do not necessarily need to be money…it could be time, recognition/prestige

-Plan for interdisciplinary programs even after the external funding runs out

-OSP is supposed to be the main stewards – subcommittee or groups could be put together by OSP…they can see the available grants, and know the faculty. The faculty are in "silos" and OSP is at a different vantage point and are able to see the overall picture and could help the faculty come together to collaborate on projects—perhaps OSP and overall university need more resources to accomplish this. The weekly emails are helpful, but need more.

-Support needs to also come from above

-Very difficult to find internal funding – summer research funding alone, is not enough

-Civic engagement over the long term with Paterson Metropolitan Research Center…why haven't we applied for more with them; how can we put things into place with them for long term programs

-There was a side discussion about the terms:
-"Institute" university wide
-"Center" departmental or college wide
-"Program" can be used if it is neither center nor institute

-External funding is something that is less tapped into here at the university

-Grants are lots of work…lot of paperwork and it can become a "burden" (need for more help with the administrative side of funded projects)…perhaps OSP, library, Advancement, or Other Program could help more with these tasks

-Frustration with Institutional Advancement and the functionality there…regarding private funding opportunities

-Concept for a Program with a focus on "research" – "old blood" can mentor or guide "new blood"; it could be a 3 year appointment "program within your department"…year one work with OSP, year 2 and year 3 work on the project. Groups or projects could be showcased.

-The OSP could help more…they are very helpful, but in a passive way

-Combine service and RSCE through programs

-Umbrella Program Catalyst – perhaps deans, library, OSP…clusters of faculty, project that they apply for grants

-Fragmented time is a problem and it is a road block getting in the way of doing research

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Table 1 Recommendations

Recommendation and Action:

-"Umbrella Program" a catalyst to support and house research - start a program

-Need more of an incentive to work across areas (collaborate with other departments)

-Exploit Paterson Metropolitan Research Center more

-Not incentivizing collaboration as they should - (incentive not necessarily money…it could be time, recognition/prestige)

-Administration should better encourage faculty to take advantage of funding already available for open access publishing

Actionable Suggestions:

-Travel request restrictions (removal of obstacles)

-Umbrella Catalyst (Incentivize)

-Need clarification from administration on:

      -why research matters

      -what do they mean by "research and creative activity"

      -student centered research vs. faculty centered research

-Change the definition of research;

      -teaching, research, service – three legged stool

      -add Scholarship of teaching and learning to the definition of research

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Table 2:   Focus on Faculty – Be more attentive to research needs of junior faculty.

Ideal research setting

-Perspective of teaching as advancing knowledge

-More communication clarifying expectations and current situation

-Sabbaticals for senior faculty for in-depth research and publication

-Mentorship between senior and junior faculty

Suggestions to advance research culture

-Post-conference support for faculty and students to promote and synthesize findings

-Summer research programs and support currently offered is narrow, should allow for more travel, improvements would help junior faculty (JF)

-Improving student's research programs and funding for students' research and travel, and partnering them with JF would help

-Increased travel funds

-Summer grants for Junior faculty

-Initial expenses for new faculty, dedicated salary for new faculty, start-up funds for new faculty in all colleges for equipment and materials

-Let new faculty know upfront how much funding will be available to them

-More support for funding for incidental outcomes and post-trip/research sharing

-Post-tenure review focusing on senior faculty's mentorship of junior faculty and research productivity

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Table 2 Recommendations

Action Items:
-Connect faculty more for interdisciplinary collaborators, perhaps with an online forum listing project interest, skills, availability, current projects and possible future interests

-A webpage listing faculty publications to help faculty see what is trending, more in-depth info. On faculty interest and academic background

-Make ART and webpages more visible and accessible, and easier to update

-Increase opportunities for faculty from different departments to exchange ideas and increase interdisciplinary collaboration

-Create more accessible active research agendas to see progress on research, identifying milestones

-Increase research intensive classes and research opportunities for undergrad students

Actionable Suggestions:

-Integrate more research into undergrad classes

-Establish mechanisms and a research portal to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and research

-Get faculty involved in idea exchange and mentorship groups/programs

Table 3: Environment – Endeavor to make the WP work environment more hospitable for research.

- Clarity of purpose, consistency, connectives
- Consolidation recommendation- link recommendation to strategic plan

Not seeing anything about creative expression. Should be separated, as own entity. Mentoring, creating ideas, Scrap program (needs more promotion)

Creative expression carries its own weight, difficult to define. Could be considered a disadvantage. Should it have more student involvement. More weight is put on professor's individual work.

Difficult to get credit for ART. Issues with independent study. Without enough enrollment it cannot be used. It is difficult to involve students at a more advanced level. Restrictions from amount of time of ART.

Unclear rewards & outcomes for working with students. Work slows down when working with students, very time consuming. Define more mentorship guidelines. Not compensated for extra time spent with students.

Librarians provide information literacy, often found in freshman year seminar.

Issues that it is a teaching university, not a research university. However, there is heavy emphasis on scholarship. Create research groups / analysis for newer faculty members.

Lack of publishing achievements.

Hurts the program that graduate students do admin work instead of working with faculty. (in the psychology department)

Need more administrative staff in departments with graduate programs.

No credit for mentoring unless through an independent study.

Measurements for tenure for hours worked with students.

Difficulty for student engagement with different education backgrounds/ outside life.

Lack of transparency when asking for funding.

1. Agree students and faculty work together. Challenge: is how to measure that and how

to measure   that. How will it evaluated? Departmental mechanisms. What does the University value?   Mentoring time? Grants? Papers? Time? **What are the positive outcomes?** Recognize and weigh and promote/market student success.

 2.   GA's purpose across campus should be more research driven.

 3.   More transparency in funding availability for travel. Stipend for travel for each faculty member.

 4.   Research Centers in individual disciplines.

Table 3 Recommendations

Promote center for research, promote collaborative meetings for other departments, creating area specific grants, Increase of travel grants, create clear yearly stipend for traveling, For each individual faculty member. Important to fully reimburse faculty rather than partial. Teach 4 course one semester, take off one. Let faculty decide when they want to take time off for ART.

Action Items:

Possibly bring in more speakers on research.

Create more specific grants to be filled, mentors would be involved as a part of the grant.

More easily searchable data base for support programs.

Graduate/ undergraduate division.

Needs a system of graduate students assigned to faculty.

Measurements for tenure for hours worked with students.

Qualitative report from student for working with mentor.

Credit for being a mentor to an honor student, try to bridge that to other students.

Use student success as a marketing tool.

Increase transparency with funds for travel.

Summary:

1) How to measure time with students/ be compensated
2) Make it more localized to faculty to make definitions of time with students
3) What does the university value? Time with students or working on grants?
4) Graduate students need to work more on research projects

Suggested Actions Agreed Upon by Group:

1) Guaranteed travel money, have funds available
2) Student mentorship should be recognized into teaching time. Reduce to 2-3 loads.
3) Define if they want professors to focus more on working with students or publications
4) Increase GA's & connection to research

Table 4: Students - The Vision Questions: Interpreting & Assessing the recommendations.

Overview of the types of Research in which the students present are involved

Nursing: NP Master's Program; Oncology clinical trials

Only taken one research class as part of the Master's program

Faculty advisor was very supportive and went over and above in terms of engaging students in research; accessibility for calls and appointments

Research needs to be current

IRB approval can be difficult at other institutions - Ended up doing a different type of research even though it's not directly related to the field

Art Education: Not formal research – investigational hands on; gaining experience in the field

BFA thesis – sculpture – creating a LED sequence – STEAM technology – center of the sunflower

More individual interest based

What is the engagement with the research advisor? Back and forth communication – push for ways to make the product engaging – done research on artists that inspire – Youtube research –

Will work closely with the faculty member – more with the adjunct faculty members

Adjunct faculties are unrepresented in the discussions

Chemistry: Computational chemistry research (theoretical based); models of chemical reactions

Student + faculty and also in a group experience

Junior year start as transfer student

Importance of research for future plans – grad school/med school

May have students who do not understand how it could help in the future

Research helps students gain skills - Critical thinking skills – coding skills – soft skills (presentations, technical writing skills)

Engage students who don't understand the potential benefits of being involved in research; layman's terms

Student reached out to the Associate Dean to find an opportunity

Accounting/Financial Planning: Business student – Numberg program – see how the market is doing and how different companies are doing in the market so people know how to invest

Competition type of things which are important in the field

Was told that WP students aren't competitive by other students – students should be able to research how to be competitive and the types of competitions in which to participate

How are you making the name of the school become better than it is now? Students are not aware of the opportunities available to get the name of WP out there.

Should WP get more students into research? Or is it better that research is only available for competitive people?:

Yes it would be better for more people to help get the name out of there

Or a balance of more – it's a matter of communications and then faculty should guide the students to participate

Too many students may impede the research for the students who want to be competitive; more students can competitive but not necessarily every student should be required to participate

Let the students make an informed decision after knowing how being involved in research can assist

Honors College can be limited for certain fields (i.e. art education) – could be a place for more people but the opportunities need to be available for a variety of fields

There are internal types of competition i.e. seeing a thesis and then wanting to do better for their own – seeing others doing it makes it interesting for them to want to participate and be engaged in their own project

Professional organizations – read journals and have groups for journal reviews

Master's students in Nursing have time commitment issues with doing the research since they are working full time – there needs to be more internal options

Certain programs need more classes geared towards research

Four to eight students is a reasonable number for faculty to balance the management of a project

How involved are the faculty mentors in the project? Frequency? What do they do to mentor you?:

Chairs had been more informative – tell them what students can do – informed about opportunities (competition, scholarship, internship); professors also compete too

Faculty are spread pretty thin – 15 to 17 in the class that the one faculty member needs to manage – overwhelming for everyone – the research class should have been spread over two semesters or have some help (adjunct, teaching assistant)

Create a timeline; break apart the work into manageable sections; answer technical questions; informed by things learned in prior classes but pushed to find influences that inform the work

Constant communication – hands on approach to walking through what needs to be known and learn the skill set and then apply to the problem which is trying to be solved; research papers; discussion groups to talk about the project and progress that has been made; involved in all steps from conception to actually implementing and discussing the problems until the completion and involve students in writing the publication; good exposure

How engaged do you feel or how good of a job do you feel WP is doing having students engaged in research or other activities? Good job? Bad job? Other?:

Frustrating to run a club – administrative burden

Obstacle that the University needs to simplify the process – very discouraging – happens on multiple levels

Students may not be educated on the technical aspects of something that is needed to complete the project (i.e. software)

Some students are aware of what's available to them (i.e. Chem Club; LSAMP) – address in the classroom as well – structured lab with one project beginning to end versus having smaller multiple projects –

Talk to colleague outside the University and describe the level of research support (classroom, summer, etc.)? What would you tell them?

Moderately – what would happen to the engagement if it was expanded to more students

Open studio for students – BFA students would present – inspiring concept (another school)

More hands on experiences (kiln) – more experience with the finishing process

No clear path for certain programs – multiple advisors – longer time to graduate

How do we rank at competitions? Financial planning is pretty high; other majors may not rank as high because it is not communicated well or at all

Other students in comparable programs don't want to go to a school that requires a thesis due to time commitment; they don't see the value of the importance of doing the thesis

Recommendations on how WP can be more supportive of student research/Barriers:

Start at the top; departments are disorganized (three classes got cancelled late and then student was charged for registering to new classes late)

Certain program that told students about achievements (highlight more student achievements) – what can other students do to become better and meet similar goals, raise the name of the school

Monthly program where faculty get together to discuss an article (i.e. Science Café) – have it for students as well as an informal conversation – facilitated by a faculty member

What would it take to get the students there? What needs to change with the faculty in the classroom, etc.? How can it be built up year to year?

Tell freshman and sophomore students about how the labs work – build interest into the curriculum at an earlier stage; get a basic skill set on how to engage before becoming a junior or senior

Project based work

Disconnect amongst courses

More opportunities to see what other students are working on

Required independent study at a lower level (sophomore or junior) – discouraged due to faculty needs – have the experience and somewhat forced to start research earlier on

More opportunities for more research classes

Where does the library fit in for research skills?

Resources are used as needed and accessible

Table 4 Recommendations
Get students started early on (sophomore or junior year) – opportunities for independent study
Don't discourage adjunct faculty from participating in/overseeing research
Additional faculty resources – smaller class sizes or spread out over multiple terms
More research classes – basic research skills and then applied afterwards
Program where students can see what opportunities are available in the context of research
Project based classroom experience
Forums to discuss research
Get alumni to talk to students about research
Make it more apparent to students that other students are doing research (across fields);

promote it better and more frequently

Action Steps:

- Restructure Honors College programs to coincide with and be available in additional departments
- Additional faculty resources (i.e. smaller faculty to student ratio for research classes)
- Additional funding for start-up costs
- Collaboration, discussion, and transparency amongst departments and in an interdisciplinary way
- Encouragement for students to participate in research

Overview General Conversation During Report Out of Recommendations, prior to Deciding on Action

-More informal way for students to share their experience of taking part in research

-No release time…"Reassigned time" in college of Science and Health

-ART(discussion about ART and wording in the contract)

-Rename; new phrases…example "course load" ---load sounds too much like a burden

-Don't see honors students in Education---[a student shared her experience]…it is almost like a double major…too much extra with another thesis for honors, but she already is doing Art programs (project) and student teaching…already at 4.5 years and 18 credits a semester, there wasn't an honors college track for education or Art (sounds like Honors college tracks need more "structure" or a revision)

-Some schools see grants as a way of Self preservation

-University Research Center – writing support, grant writing, finding opportunities (Group 3, group 1 had similar suggestion)

-Incorporate adjuncts – they teach many courses and if they are not part of research, it will not be in their courses (student brought up the point that "we forgot about adjuncts")

-arts and less hard sciences – we have our own idea of what creative expression and research is, but collectively don't think we know each others view; we need to discuss what we mean collectively

-Have administration do the same exercise to see what they come up with…then work from there

-need to remember that it doesn't need to be a us/vs them.. "what can I do to help make the change"