

PROGRESS REPORT:

ENHANCEMENT OF CARNEGIE RESEARCH CLASSIFICATION OF UNLV AND UNR THROUGH COLLABORATION WITH DRI

Prepared by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, University of Nevada, Reno, and the Desert Research Institute

UNR, UNLV, and DRI are working under an agreement that will enhance the Carnegie research classification of UNR and UNLV in ways that are mutually beneficial. The action items that the task force are to address are outlined in the Presidential MOU signed in April 2015. Specifically these items include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Rationale, framework, and mechanisms to count DRI's research grant/contract expenditures, and research faculty and post-docs in university totals while maintaining DRI's independent institution status in NSHE.
2. Framework and mechanisms for establishing a long-term (multi-year) agreement for graduate programs among the three institutions, especially doctoral programs.
3. Structure, appointment and compensation for leadership of university graduate programs, with an emphasis on doctoral student teaching, mentoring, and research, which are performed by faculty at multiple institutions.
4. Eligibility to lead/advise on individual graduate student thesis and dissertation research.
5. Opportunities for joint appointments of faculty between two or more institutions.
6. Mechanisms to incentivize collaborative research and graduate education.

Progress through 10/31/2016:

- Through discussions with National Science Foundation and other organizations (Scripps), it appears unlikely DRI research grants, postdoctoral scholars, and research faculty (all metrics in the Carnegie classification system) can be used to enhance the metrics of UNR and/or UNLV under the current structure.
- UNR and DRI completed an agreement in which UNR will support DRI teaching activities in the Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Program and Graduate Program of Hydrologic Sciences at no less than \$200,000 per year. DRI faculty will be compensated at a rate of 0.5 month per credit.
- UNLV and DRI agreed to the same teaching compensation rate (0.5 month per credit) and this was implemented for the Spring semester.
- DRI funded three new fellowships for DRI-advised Ph.D. students at UNR or UNLV.
- UNR is investing in a faculty-position to support the Hydrologic Sciences program at UNR, which benefits both UNR and DRI.

- Institutional barriers to DRI faculty members acting as primary advisors for UNLV graduate students have been removed. The majority of UNLV departments will now allow DRI faculty to act as primary advisors.
- DRI faculty can act as primary advisors for UNR graduate students in most departments. A number of the remaining departmental barriers have been resolved.
- Recruiting more high quality Ph.D. students is necessary for both UNR and UNLV. M.S. degrees may be more appealing because of a lack of guaranteed funding to complete a Ph.D. The group has been looking into joint programs to increase recruitment including recruitment weekends and flagship fellowships.
- There was much discussion and some enthusiasm for creating a jointly operated statewide graduate program in water resources. We are generating a list of faculty and programs in water-related disciplines at the three institutions. We are also exploring a statewide environmental microbiology program.
- DRI and UNLV are both supportive of UNR's Global Water Center and plan to collaborate with this entity.
- DRI is participating in the UNR GradFIT program to recruit underrepresented graduate students.
- UNLV and DRI have implemented a joint post-doc program. Post-docs will be co-advised by one UNLV and one DRI faculty member who will be asked to develop scientific proposals, mentoring plans and will participate in the UNLV professional development program. UNLV will receive credit towards Carnegie ranking for every postdoc who receives a minimum of 50% funding from UNLV, with the balance coming from DRI.
- The UNR Graduate School is coordinating with DRI to hold joint social and professional development events for post-docs from the two institutions.
- UNR started an office of post-doctoral affairs with an emphasis on improving post-doctoral professional development. DRI post-docs can now participate in this program.
- The UNLV Graduate School coordinated with DRI South to hold joint social and professional development events for post-docs from the two institutions.
- Discussions regarding a limited number of joint appointments between DRI and UNR or UNLV are still ongoing and we are looking into a model for these faculty in which ICR is distributed to both institutions but grants/contracts are counted toward UNR or UNLV metrics.
- We have discussed methods to incentivize large collaborative research projects. Ideas include, enhanced ICR return, space sharing, partial funding for graduate students, additional teaching opportunities for DRI faculty, and administrative support. The group also discussed modification of the EPSCOR and IDEA programs to facilitate more sustained research programs and cross-state collaboration.
- The group is considering initiating programs to enhance the competitiveness of our proposal efforts. Suggestions have included: (1) grant writing time/expertise/focus to help with deliverables; (2) review services to help ensure proposals are complete, well

written, and well planned; and (3) travel support to enhance faculty collaboration across the state.

Progress Report:

Enhancement of the Carnegie Research Classification of UNLV and UNR Through Collaboration with DRI

Background

- The Board of Regents charged UNLV, UNR, and DRI with implementing a collaborative process to raise the Carnegie rankings of the campuses.
- A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was approved in April 2015. The focus of the MOU was to:
 - foster more cooperative partnerships in research and graduate education, with an emphasis on doctoral programs
 - contribute collectively to the goal of attaining Carnegie Research University R1 at UNR and UNLV
 - to codify DRI's role as a contributing institution in the Nevada System Higher Education.

Joint Working Group

- To implement the MOU, a joint working group was formed.
- Membership has been fluid based on implementation needs.
- Current members include:
 - Provost: UNLV and UNR
 - Vice Provost: UNLV
 - VPR: DRI, UNLV, UNR
 - Dean, Graduate School: UNLV, UNR
 - AVPR: DRI
 - Faculty/Program Representatives: DRI

Action Items

- Address specific metrics to enhance Carnegie Ranking:
 - Research funding
 - Number of research faculty (includes post-docs)
 - Number of Ph.D. students

Specific Action Items

- Mechanisms to count DRI's metrics under UNLV and UNR totals.
- Establish long-term (multi-year) agreements for graduate programs among the three institutions.
- Structure, appointment and compensation for multi-institutional university graduate programs.
- Eligibility to lead/advise on individual graduate student thesis and dissertation research.
- Opportunities for joint appointments of faculty between two or more institutions.
- Mechanisms to incentivize collaborative research and graduate education.

Progress (1)

- Does not appear we can count DRI metrics under UNLV and UNR
- Long term teaching agreement between UNR and DRI for interdisciplinary graduate programs
- Agreement for teaching compensation between UNLV and DRI
- Barriers for DRI faculty to serve as primary advisors on student committees resolved at UNLV and UNR
- Initiating programs to recruit high quality graduate students
 - Additional DRI fellowships for Ph.D. students
 - Joint recruitment activities
 - Collaboration between UNR and DRI to recruit underrepresented students

Progress (2)

- Collaboration to recruit and mentor post-docs
 - Joint post-doc socials
 - DRI post-doc participation in UNR and UNLV professional development programs
- UNLV/DRI post-doc program (jointly funded, overcame BCN/BCS barrier)
- Increased collaboration to support and develop new programs
 - Development of statewide programs in water resources and environmental microbiology
 - Support for UNR's Global Water Center

Progress (3)

- Investigating structure and policies for joint research faculty appointments
- Developing strategies and programs to enhance research collaboration and competitiveness
 - Incentivizing large collaborative research projects
 - Modification of the EPSCOR and IDEA programs to facilitate more sustained research programs and cross-state collaboration
 - Support for grant writing time
 - External review services for proposals
 - Travel support to enhance faculty collaboration

Take Away Points

- **Significant progress has been made to increase:**
 - Ph.D. student recruitment
 - Post-doc recruitment, mentoring, and professional development
 - Number of research faculty through joint appointments and research collaboration
 - Research funding through enhanced collaboration and the implementation of programs to improve proposal competitiveness
- **The committee has proven to be an excellent forum to resolve issues and overcome barriers among the participants**