MEETING MINUTES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-Milwaukee
2030 Implementation Team – Research Group
December 11, 2020 at 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm
Held as a virtual Teams Live Meeting

Attendees: Mark Harris, Kari Whittenberger-Keith (Guest- Office of Research), Scott Gronert (Dean of College of Letters and Science), Michelle Schoeneker (Guest- Office of Research), James Peoples, Kim Lacking Quinn, Jennifer Gutzman, Nigel Rothfels, Andrew Graettinger, Kathleen Koch, Akke Neel Talsma, Robin Mello, Prasenjit Guptasarma, and Ana Gonzalez

1. Call to order (12:04pm) – Mark

2. Announcements
    a. Provost Britz, Associate Chancellor Van Harpen, and 2030 co-leads (Kathy Dolan and Mark Harris) have started meeting with various school and college groups. The groups consist of deans, associate deans, chairs and some faculty and staff.
    b. RPAC meeting on Dec. 10 brought up several themes along the lines of our discussions: collaboration problems, rewards and recognition, etc.
    c. Faculty Senate meeting on Dec. 10 revealed some of the concerns about the 2030 initiative, particularly realignment of academic units.

3. Minutes approved by automatic consent

4. Discussion on Collaborative Research: Notes
    a. Scott Gronert
        i. Largest issue is institutional culture.
            1. Example: large gulf between traditional universities and medical schools
        ii. Within universities, expressed as two mindsets
            1. Single PI – very hard to change
            2. Collaboration – will only be adopted by some PIs
        iii. From this come other issues such as recognition, skill development
        iv. **IDEA**: When hiring faculty, consider the potential interactions with other researchers:
            1. How does this position interact with others within the department and college?
            2. How does this position interact with other schools/colleges?
        v. Based on experience, research centers that arise organically from faculty activity work much better than those that are imposed.
    b. Kari Whittenberger-Keith and Michelle Schoenecker
        i. General comments
            1. Collaboration across units is difficult and takes time to develop
            2. Decentralization at UWM is a barrier; competition for resources

3. Collaborative research is increasingly important as agencies realize complexity of significant problems; more effective if use different approaches
4. Collaboration thrives on diversity; leads to more robust solutions
5. In the long run, collaboration pays off for researchers and institution

    ii. Obstacles
1. Culture is #1
2. Adopt a broader definition of research that includes community engagement; work needed to invest in collaborations
3. Rewards and recognition need to reflect the range of research outcomes and varied nature of projects
4. Takes longer to get collaborative projects started
5. Can be risky for new faculty given the tenure timeline and potentially way that some colleagues may view this work

    iii. Funding agencies
1. Agencies are increasingly expecting that projects will include collaborative teams
2. Expectation of evidence that teams can work together such as past joint research efforts of some team members

c. Discussion
    i. Economic side of this
1. Funding for addressing important problems using collaborative teams can be substantial
2. Inability to adequately support team efforts can shift funding outside the University

    ii. Growing and sustaining teams
1. Need to think beyond a single proposal
2. Fostering them often requires more contacts
3. Campus issue of connecting and engaging potential teams
4. Need "layered" opportunities for interacting
5. **IDEA**: Adopt a "what is needed?" approach to teams versus a "one size fits all" approach. Need extended support from initial gatherings to initial efforts to longer sustainability

    iii. Some questions and comments
1. Is collaboration an "add on" or is it central to the research?
2. What kinds of collaboration fundamentally change a person's research agenda?
3. Collaboration is not a thing you do; it is what you do to get things done

    iv. IDEAS
1. Department plans for strategic development that include potential directions for collaboration; research strengths (not everything)

2. Build a better culture that is conducive for collaboration
    a. Need to create opportunities for linking people together on campus to create a broader array of friendships because these are important for sustained collaborations
    b. On-campus and off-campus social networks that break the tendency for people to come to UWM for work duties and then leave (in part due to transportation and parking issues).
    c. Bring more regional and national conferences to UWM to increase our connections
3. Hire for collaborative efforts (not just disciplines); open to different fields.
4. Improve "accounting systems" so that the finances of team projects are more transparent; allows more direct recognition of collaborators
5. Modify the tenure timeline or nature of expectations to be more flexible
6. Invest in diversifying the faculty
    a. Broader types of research topics
    b. Broader approach to research problems
    c. Essential for becoming a "radically welcoming" campus
7. Re-examine and revamp the budget model. The current scheme does not support collaboration

5. Next meeting: Thursday, December 17 at 3:00-4:30. The topic is "UWM's Research Workforce" and our guests are Scott Gronert and Dev Venugopalan