

This year the committee worked in an advisory role with the Vice President for Research Office on strategic planning, open access data and publication, and protection of intellectual property rights and copyright.

Strategic Planning for Research Activities

The VPR completed an internal strategic plan summer and fall of 2015, bringing the draft result to the committee for consideration and comments prior to official adoption. The committee appreciated several aspects of the plan, including the foundational orientation to faculty support and provision of appropriate support and guidance research activities initiated by the faculty and the various centers, research groups and project teams they participate in. This higher vision unifies the work of various units within the VPR enterprise around the higher purposes of research and education, promoting a seamless and communicative mode of operation for the unit. This approach also suggests that faculty are responsible for defining grand challenges and research concepts, working with the VPR office and other administrative units for defining future directions rather than the VPR office directing *intellectual* directions and content. Colleges would pursue strategic planning understanding that they can *partner* and focus research activities “upstream” with administration and “downstream” with faculty, providing more focus and constructing synergistic relationships between research and other collegiate activity areas to achieve strategic priorities. The committee found that this approach best supports individual and organized faculty research initiatives while still allowing guidance at the college and university level to achieve institution wide and college focused strategies.

Two members of the committee also participated in the President’s Strategic planning effort on the Research Profile subcommittee- Julia Badenhope, DES and Michael Kimber, VetMed. With the support of the VPR and the Research Profile Co-chairs, Kan Wang and Beate Schmittmann, the committee reviewed the draft plan of the university and discussed integration/impacts of the plan concepts on the broader research enterprise. The conclusion was that the strategic priorities were complementary, with the institution level plan identifying more defined goals around research excellence and reputation, and involving many units including the Graduate College, VPR, etc. The information provided by the Research Profile subcommittee was helpful to the committee and VPR in that it conveyed a broad based reflection of faculty and institutional support needs to increase the research activity, quality, and support structures. The committee and VPR will use this insight as we consider changes and refinements in research planning and policies in the future.

Open Access

Open access data and open access publication were discussed as the research communities of the world seek to connect and leverage the knowledge we have created to investigate and solve complex and emergent problems. Jonathan Sturm led a discussion of open access publication, noting that it is the faculty who provide the intellectual insight and service necessary to curate the peer reviewed publication enterprise, but the financial benefits and intellectual rights seem to accrue more to the publishers. At a time when library budgets are diminished and the communication context is accelerating to digital sharing, the increasing costs of publishing for faculty and gaining access seem untenable. The committee concurred, with one member noting that while he was studying overseas, he had to purchase a subscription to a journal as a graduate student to gain access to one article his university library did not carry. This case vividly illustrates the financial and access problem. The committee recommends that the University and the library support publication in open access

journals and promote the formulation of credible open access peer reviewed journals. We can do this by considering publications subvention support, if consistent with legal restrictions and purposes; as well as participating as faculty by placing our scholarship in the ISU library digital repository. Interestingly, the University can be assigned copyright through the digital repository in order to support faculty who resist the copyright claims of for profit publications. Prior assignment allows the institution to act on behalf of faculty. If needed, Sturm noted, the University can and will relinquish these rights but only as the request of the faculty member.

The committee also reviewed the operation and interface of the digital repository, which provides metrics as well as real time information about downloads of items by clients around the world. The committee concluded that if quality can be assured and validated, open access publication and distribution through the digital repository will support the reputation and impact of faculty scholarship.

Open access research data is a hot topic globally, and has been a significant factors in the ability of researchers to quickly solve research problems. According to VPR Nusser, open access is a new frontier in global research culture. The Royal Society recently published a report on the topic, [Science as an Open Enterprise](https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/science-public-enterprise/report), accessible online at <https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/science-public-enterprise/report>. The report highlights six key actions, including developing standards for open access data sharing, publishing data in a reusable form and developing support personnel and software to support open access data. The committee discussion is scheduled later this academic year. Some important takeaways that are emerging from these policy frameworks surrounding open access is that the world is changing around us- and we must consider how we plan to adapt to remain relevant, maintain and improve research impacts, and provide necessary support to thrive in the global research community.

Intellectual Property

The committee discussed the issue of intellectual property rights and advised the Resource Policy and Allocation Council and VPR Nusser to adopt a voluntary surrender of IP rights to better protect the faculty and the university from future claims by others for royalties. This issue is important because the laws surrounding IP shifted with Stanford Vs. Roche, a case in which Stanford and the faculty lost IP rights to a company on the point that faculty must overtly assign rights, not just consent to do so. Why should we care? One issue is that when faculty and staff attend industry sponsored technical training, they are often asked to sign nondisclosure agreements that include IP assignment in the fine print. All work that uses this technology, even years later, must honor the agreement. Assuming the university has made a "substantial investment" in the IP development, beyond salary and regular research support, Faculty royalties, rights, etc. will be protected by the university in the event of a challenge if the IP rights have been assigned. Assignment of IP preemptively may prevent claims, even when university investment has not been substantial. Currently, all PIs and co-PIs assign IP when the "Gold Sheet" is submitted to OSPA, but staff and grad students are not included. Thus, the university is asking that all staff and faculty involved in research assign these rights. More information is available in the meeting minutes dated October 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

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