



President's Advisory Committee on Institutional Resource Modeling

2018-19

Research Working Group

CHARTER

CHARGE

1. Focus on a particular outcome or set of outcomes
 - a. Research / Creative Activity
 - i. Grant Revenue
 - ii. Internal Support
2. Develop operating assumptions and identify major drivers and evidence-based types of programs that will positively impact the outcomes
 - a. Can be direct or indirect
 - i. For example, programs that increase retention will increase graduation rate indirectly
 - b. Stay general
 - i. For example, high-impact experiences in general instead of each individual type of experience
 - c. Focus on the top 2-3 items that will make the most impact
3. Identify costs associated with improving outcomes
 - a. Should be general in nature
 - b. Concentrate on recurring operational costs
4. Develop no more than two scenarios for the upper and lower ranges of the performance measures in strategic plan.

MEMBERSHIP

Brian Burton, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chair (PACIRM)
Gautam Pillay, Dean, Graduate School / Vice Provost for Research
Brad Johnson, Dean, College of Science and Engineering
Joel Swisher, Director, Institute for Energy Studies
David Patrick, Director, Scientific Technical Services and Professor of Chemistry
Kit Spicer, Dean, College of Fine and Performing Arts (PACIRM)
Manca Valum, Sr. Director for Strategic Initiatives / Corporate Relationships, WWU Foundation
Sarah Campbell, Professor, Anthropology Department

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

Working Group dissolves upon completion of its work in spring 2019.

REPORTAGE

Reports to the committee

1. Initial report on drivers and assumptions due by January 4, 2019
2. Report on updated drivers/assumption and prosperity gaps/costs by February 15, 2019
3. Final report on gaps/costs, drivers and assumptions by March 22, 2019.



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Drivers:

1. A grant-seeking culture (grant seeking is de-mystified and owned by all)
2. Greater multi/cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional approach to developing research, scholarly and creative activities
3. A more diversified and actively pursued portfolio of external funding sources
4. Available pre- and post-grant support

Assumptions:

1. All relevant faculty documents (unit evaluation plans, letters of offer, start-up packages, etc.) and touch points (new faculty orientation, onboarding, mentoring, etc.) reflect the importance of grant seeking at Western to support research, scholarly and creative activity
 - Relates to Driver 1
2. The level of teaching workload reflects the importance of grant seeking
 - Relates to Driver 1
3. Incentives, including seed money, are in place for grant seekers working across disciplines
 - Relates to Driver 2
4. Structures are in place for working across disciplines, including sharing of ideas
 - Relates to Driver 2
5. Staff time is available for:
 - a. Education of potential grant seekers in identifying sources and the nature of the process
 - b. Support for potential grant seekers in identifying sources
 - Relates to Drivers 3 and 4
6. Staff time is available for post-award support for grant recipients
 - Relates to Driver 4
7. Staff time is available for assistance with writing proposals
 - Relates to Driver 4
8. Faculty release time is available for all stages of the grant process
 - Relates to Driver 4
9. Internal support (non-personnel), including travel support, is available during the grant seeking process
 - Relates to Driver 4
10. Granting agencies will maintain behavior and/or Western will be able to respond to changes in granting agency behavior
 - Externality
11. A positive relationship exists between the amount of internal support and dollars of grants received
 - For modeling purposes
12. A positive relationship exists between the number of proposals submitted and the number of grants received
 - For modeling purposes

Name Driver	<i>Culture / A grant-seeking culture (grant seeking is de-mystified and owned by all)</i>	
Expected Impact	<i>If the culture at Western includes more interest in seeking external grants, more faculty, staff, and students will be likely to engage in such activity, leading to more grants received and increased revenue and positively affecting teaching and learning</i>	
Confidence Level	<i>High</i>	<i>Generally there is a strong relationship between the extent to which a culture emphasizes grant seeking, the number of grant proposals made, and the number of grants received. CSE has shown this to be true at Western.</i>
KEY ASSUMPTIONS		
	Assumption A <i>All relevant faculty documents (unit evaluation plans, letters of offer, start-up packages, etc.) and touch points (new faculty orientation, onboarding, mentoring, etc.) reflect the importance of grant seeking at Western to support research, scholarly and creative activity.</i>	Assumption B <i>The level of teaching workload reflects the importance of grant seeking.</i>
<i>Why is this assumption important?</i>	<i>Incentives in faculty evaluation and support from more experienced faculty are required to form and maintain a culture that is supportive of grant seeking.</i>	<i>Faculty need time to both write grant proposals and do the proposed work once a grant is made.</i>
<i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i>	<i>Different levels of organizational control of such documents and touch points, leading to the possibility of different levels of implementation across departments. Proposals may also be seen as pressure from administration.</i>	<i>Systemic changes in workload would need to be considered. Workload is a mandatory subject of collective bargaining.</i>
Complicating Factors (if any)	Implications for the number of tenure-track faculty in the classroom need to be considered. Support for students to participate in grant activity, and specifically underrepresented students, should be considered as important as grant activity increases.	

Name Driver	<i>Cross Boundary Investigations</i> Greater multi/cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional approach to developing research, scholarly and creative activities.	
Expected Impact	Currently many granting agencies are rewarding such approaches with relatively large grants. Increasing this mindset at the University will allow for greater participation in grant seeking and under current conditions more funds for the same amount of activity, both of which should increase grant revenue.	
Confidence Level	High	Current agency behavior is clear. Logically working across disciplines should result in faculty from disciplines that have not been active in grant seeking participating to a greater extent than in the past.
KEY ASSUMPTIONS		
	Assumption A <i>Incentives, including seed money, are in place for grant seekers working across disciplines.</i>	Assumption B <i>Structures are in place for working across disciplines, including sharing of ideas.</i>
<i>Why is this assumption important?</i>	<i>Without incentives there may not be sufficient motivation to move faculty more toward these approaches and away from the traditional disciplinary focus.</i>	<i>Structures for interaction across disciplines, such as AMSEC, Institute for Energy Studies, brown bag and charrette type events, and within the hiring process, create opportunities to identify potential partners for proposals and to support such proposals.</i>
<i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i>	<i>Besides resources, appropriate incentives need to be identified. Some incentives may lie in control of decentralized and siloed units such as departments and programs.</i>	<i>Faculty are used to working within their disciplines, and many publication outlets are discipline-specific. Faculty will need to learn something about other disciplines.</i>
Complicating Factors (if any)	If agencies reward different approaches, resources put into incentives and structures will be less effective in meeting the goal.	

Name Driver	<i>Sources / A more diversified and actively pursued portfolio of external funding sources.</i>	
Expected Impact	<i>If more sources of grants are known, understood, and utilized, because of the likely relationship between the number of proposals and the number of grants received, more grants and thus more grant revenue should be earned.</i>	
Confidence Level	<i>High</i>	<i>Well-crafted proposals may have similar success rates no matter the source; even if not, an increased number of applications (and thus more possibilities for success) should result.</i>
KEY ASSUMPTIONS		
	<p>Assumption A <i>Staff time is available for education of potential grant seekers in identifying sources and the nature of the process.</i></p>	<p>Assumption B <i>Staff time is available for support for potential grant seekers in identifying sources.</i></p>
<i>Why is this assumption important?</i>	<i>Without knowledgeable staff providing education, it will be more difficult for grant seekers to become aware of the variety of external funding sources.</i>	<i>Without support, grant seekers will take more time to identify sources because the specialized knowledge of staff is difficult to duplicate.</i>
<i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i>	<i>The availability of people with specialized knowledge of all sources of grants is uncertain.</i>	<i>The availability of people with specialized knowledge of all sources of grants is uncertain.</i>
Complicating Factors (if any)	Private foundations and organizations, and government agencies, can alter emphases within their programs, meaning staff must keep up to date. Private and public organizations operate differently, so knowledge in one area may not be transferable.	

Name Driver	<i>Support / Available pre- and post-grant support</i>	
Expected Impact	<i>If more support is available during the proposal process, more faculty, staff, and students are likely to submit proposals, and those proposals will be of higher quality, leading to more success. Post-award support is important in fulfilling the grant's objectives and will reinforce Western's reputation among granting agencies.</i>	
Confidence Level	<i>High</i>	<i>Support is a vital factor and has been shown to improve all outcomes.</i>
KEY ASSUMPTIONS		
	<p>Assumption A <i>Staff time is available for:</i> <i>a. Education of potential grant seekers in identifying sources and the nature of the process.</i> <i>b. Support for potential grant seekers in identifying sources.</i></p>	<p>Assumption B <i>Staff time is available for post-award support for grant recipients.</i></p>
<i>Why is this assumption important?</i>	<i>Without knowledgeable staff providing education and support, it will be more difficult for grant seekers to become aware of the variety of grant-providing sources and identify appropriate sources for their activity.</i>	<i>Increased grant activity, leading to increases in grants received, will require sufficient staff time to work on post-award accounting and compliance.</i>
<i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i>	<i>The availability of people with specialized knowledge of all sources of grants is uncertain.</i>	<i>Western needs to identify skills that are necessary for support of varying types of grants and evaluate the institutional support structure.</i>

KEY ASSUMPTIONS		
	<p>Assumption C <i>Staff time is available for assistance with writing proposals.</i></p>	<p>Assumption D <i>Faculty release time is available for all stages of the grant process.</i></p>
<p><i>Why is this assumption important?</i></p>	<p><i>Writing proposals is an area of specialized expertise that takes time to develop. Support for new proposal writers is crucial in gaining success relatively quickly for such writers.</i></p>	<p><i>Some proposals can be written and grants fulfilled solely during summer, but many deadlines and due dates will be during the academic year. Without sufficient time for working on proposals and grant activities, faculty will not be able to increase their activity in this area.</i></p>
<p><i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i></p>	<p><i>Proposal writing is a specialization that may be hard to find in the general workforce.</i></p>	<p><i>This type of more ad hoc release time needs to be planned ahead without scheduling problems, yet often the needed time is not known in sufficient time to avoid problems.</i></p>
	<p>Assumption E <i>Internal support (non-personnel), including travel support, is available during the grant seeking process.</i></p>	
<p><i>Why is this assumption important?</i></p>	<p><i>Often in planning a proposal faculty must travel to workshops or home institutions of collaborators. Even without travel, some support such as equipment or funds for trial surveys is needed to enhance the application.</i></p>	
<p><i>What challenges affect whether this assumption is true?</i></p>	<p><i>Some staff time would be necessary to administer these funds.</i></p>	
<p>Complicating Factors (if any)</p>	<p>It's important to note that staff and students also may apply for grants and will need this type of support. Also worth noting is that staff outside of Research and Sponsored Programs, the WWU Foundation, and Business Services may be able to provide support and should be included in communications regarding grants.</p>	