

Office of Research, Innovation, and Graduate Education (RIGE) Review Committee Report

Submitted February 14, 2014

Table of Contents	Page
1. Executive Summary and Recommendations	2
2. Introduction and Overview	7
3. RIGE Context and Environment	8
4. RIGE Changes and Accomplishments in Recent Years	11
5. Key Issues in Current Operations of RIGE	13
6. Institutional Issues and the Research Enterprise at UO	16
Appendices	
A. Individuals and Groups Who Met with Our Committee	
B. Minutes of RIGE Review Committee	
C. RIGE Powerpoint Overview	

1. Executive Summary and Recommendations

This report presents a summary of findings from the Research Innovation and Graduate Education (RIGE) review committee, composed of an interdisciplinary group of administrators and faculty appointed by the UO Senate and President's office in 2013. Information in this report was gathered from a number of sources including (a) interviews with RIGE personnel, UO administrators, and members of the research community across campus and (b) institutional data which we gathered with assistance from RIGE staff.

Overall, the RIGE review committee uncovered a complex picture of research infrastructure activities at the University and a wide range of perspectives and experiences expressed across a variety of stakeholder groups. More importantly, we found some essential background information and heard several consistent themes that shed light on both current and previous operations of RIGE. Our major findings are identified briefly here and described in detail in the body of the report.

Influence of Contextual Factors. First, we found a set of contextual factors and conditions that created major barriers to effective research operations. In 2011, when the new Vice President for Research arrived on campus, the University was still feeling the far-reaching impact of the economic recession. Decision-making at the university, and particularly related to the research enterprise at the UO, was influenced by pressing financial realities, including ongoing de-investment in higher education from the state, a new tuition based budget model that did not include research in the formula, major reductions in external federal research dollars, and a donor base with declining resources. In addition, many central research operations were in disarray stemming from a long history of inconsistent practices and "special deals" with various research institutes and centers. At that time, sponsored project functions were being managed and monitored by external consultants hired by the University to address significant operational concerns. More recent have been discovery and audits of potential payroll violations. Adding to the uncertainty, there were numerous changes in senior leadership; i.e., over a four-year period, the University had three different presidents and three different provosts.

Changes in Procedures. It was clear that the RIGE office implemented a number of changes in response to pressing issues noted above. Over the last several years, new processes and procedures have been developed, which include new budgeting principles, clarification of human subjects compliance procedures, changes in estimation processes for federal facilities and administration (F&A) rate redistribution, and implementation of federal policy for managing conflicts of interest in research. Centralized financial support for research institutes and centers also was redistributed, and the specific units operating under RIGE authority were reorganized. These changes in organization and financial support left many in the research community feeling frustrated and disregarded. In the effort to create consistency there often were "winners and losers."

Communication and Collaboration. A majority of interviewed stakeholders identified concerns regarding RIGE communication and collaboration. Although experiences varied, many noted that new processes or changes in procedures were not directly communicated or explained fully to the research community. Follow-up communication with the RIGE office was often slow or inconsistent. More importantly, we found a lack of collaborative

decision making, with key individuals in the research community noting that they were not given opportunities for input or discussion prior to the announcement of important decisions impacting research operations. The newly formed Research Advisory Board may be able to address some of these issues with communication and collaboration.

Institutional Issues in the Research Enterprise. Finally, our committee found a number of issues regarding institutional support and oversight of research on campus. Given ongoing leadership turnover, there has been a lack of clear strategic direction and transparent priorities to guide research operations and decision making. Many individuals we interviewed wanted greater clarity on the purposes and purview of the RIGE office, specifically questioning whether graduate education and research should be jointly managed within the same office and if RIGE services are designed to support sponsored research or all levels of research on campus regardless of funding.

General Principles of Institutional Support for Research. Beyond the context just described, the performance of RIGE is intertwined with the general infrastructure supporting research at the UO. For any university, the key elements for supporting research activity are:

- A. Intentional and well-defined processes for determining and setting strategic research priorities and goals for the institution. This should be led by the highest levels of leadership, but should also involve input from the entire University community.
- B. Units with well-defined roles in coordinating and implementing research activities to achieve the strategic research goals of the University.
- C. Funding and resource allocation mechanisms that are aligned to directly support the units in implementing the strategic research priorities of the University.
- D. Robust communication and collaboration processes to coordinate research activities across units and allow continual review and updating of strategic priorities and goals.

There are a variety of ways in which a university could structure itself along these key elements. It was beyond the scope of our review to determine what type of structure would be optimal at the UO. Instead, we have synthesized the concerns we heard from the research community into recommendations that relate to these key elements.

Committee's Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: The University needs to develop and maintain processes to determine strategic research priorities and goals for the campus.

There is a general perception that prioritization and goal setting, and associated fiscal investing, has not been done in a systematic and regular fashion at the UO. Instead, research priorities appear to develop organically across departments, deans, and research leaders (such as the VPRI), and they become common research goals only to the extent that these units have a common vision and can effectively collaborate. Importantly, the issue is not only where to spend the resources we have for research, but also how much of the institution's resources should be allocated to its research mission. Data indicate that the

UO spends few discretionary dollars on research beyond the indirect cost returns it gets from sponsored research. The President's and Provost's recent initiatives to engage the entire community in a benchmarking exercise and conversations about strategic priorities for the university seem to be a good first step in this direction.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The role of RIGE in the implementation of strategic research priorities and goals should be reviewed and well defined. There are a number of concerns we heard regarding the role of RIGE in various research and related activities, which people felt should be examined further.

A) The role of RIGE in day-to-day research decisions, particularly vis-à-vis the departments and the deans of the Schools and Colleges. We have a current system where research decisions and associated funding allocations are split across these units. If the roles of the units in these decisions and the mechanism to coordinate unified decisions across them are not well defined, it puts a high premium on collaboration and communication across the units in order to get efficient and optimal decisions. We heard a number of examples where coordination of research decisions across RIGE and other units was contentious, protracted, and sometimes completely broke down. Perhaps because of these issues, some felt that RIGE should be given a reduced role in research decisions, and instead should be more of a clearinghouse for indirect cost returns on grants and overseer of grant compliance and support.

B) The role of RIGE in all research activities at the UO, not just sponsored research. There is a general perception from our conversations with others that RIGE's focus is weighted almost entirely on sponsored research. With many researchers in disciplines that have rare opportunities for external support, this is concerning. It also is impossible to evaluate these perceptions when the University has not determined the weight that unsponsored research activity should have in our strategic research priorities and, thus, the financial support such activities should receive. Many felt this issue should be examined more closely, with the related question of whether oversight and support for unsponsored research activities should be separated from sponsored research activities.

C) RIGE's role and oversight of graduate education at the UO. Graduate education connects to the University's academic mission beyond just research priorities. We heard significant concern that because the Graduate School is part of RIGE, decisions on graduate education may not get the attention they require and/or are given less priority than other research priorities in an office that combines research, innovation and graduate education. Due to the enormous range of RIGE activities, the committee chose to devote attention primarily to research activities and we recommend here a formal review of the best institutional structures for graduate education.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Funding of research activity should be intentionally and transparently aligned with the strategic research priorities and goals of the campus.

RIGE should receive and allocate funding streams as fits their defined role in implementing the strategic research priorities of the University. To date, RIGE has not been part of the Oregon Budget Model (OBM), but mainly funded through indirect cost returns on sponsored research. This absence has left the funding of RIGE (and its ability to support research activities on campus) to the whims of trends in sponsored research activity, including the large recent losses due to federal sequestration. A revision of the OBM, which includes RIGE, has been underway and could be an important step for addressing this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The communication and collaboration issues between RIGE and a number of important research communities at the UO need immediate attention. As discussed in the report, there is a wide spectrum of communication and collaboration experiences between RIGE and various groups on campus. This ranges from good working relationships to some that are clearly broken. There were enough concerns and issues that our committee recommends they be addressed in ways that go well beyond simply a call for renewed efforts for improved communication and collaboration; indeed, these issues appear to be the main impetus for this report. This is an urgent matter and will need direct attention and substantial leadership from the Provost and President in determining the best course of action.

RECOMMENDATION 5: There needs to be more independent oversight and engagement of the research community in institutional research activities. RIGE has made substantial process changes and decisions in recent years that have implications for research strategies and priorities. Although much of this action was needed as quick responses to the circumstances RIGE faced, these changes also occurred at a time when leadership overseeing RIGE was in constant turnover and without any clear institutional research priorities in place, realities which have led to the perception that RIGE has become the *de facto* arbiter of research priorities and processes on campus without sufficient collaboration or oversight.

To address this, we recommend that the University pursue one of two possible courses of action.

The first possible course would be the establishment of an independent and appropriately representative committee to advise the President and the Provost on all matters related to research. Such a committee could help to work through some of the recommendations listed above, including strategic research priority setting, policy work, and regular reviews of RIGE and overall research structures within the institution. This course of action would leave the current Research Advisory Board as advisory only to the RIGE office and the VPRI, and it must be pointed out that the structure and charge of the two committees would need to be carefully tuned to avoid conflict.

The second possible course of action would be to leverage the existing Research Advisory Board, but assure that the RAB is both perceptually and actually appropriately independent, representative and empowered. This could be established through a combination of several actions: formalize and publicize the charge to the RAB, formalize the methodology

by which members of RAB are chosen (e.g. have most of the members appointed by the Deans, the Provost and the President), formalize an advisory reporting duty of RAB to both the VPRI and the Provost, and formalize the relation of the RAB to the institution's overall budget process.

Before choosing between these two options, or some hybrid between them, it is probably important to answer the fundamental question of Recommendation 2B: Should the primary focus of the RIGE office be research or sponsored research?

RECOMMENDATION 6: Inform UO community of responses to this report. Many of the major themes in this report can be found in the prior reports by the Huron Consulting Group in 2011 and the Research Advisory Panel, a special committee that was organized by and reported to Provost Jim Bean, in 2013. Although there are indications that the administration has taken some actions to respond to the findings and recommendations of these reports, they have not been publicly communicated. In order to avoid another review by a special committee in the future, we strongly advise a plan to publicly communicate responses to this report.

2. Introduction and Overview

On March 13, 2013, the UO Senate passed motion US12/13-28, which moved that the University Senate and Central Administration “shall conduct a joint review of the Office of Research, Innovation, and Graduate Education (RIGE).” The motion also specified that, “The review committee shall consist of 6 tenure track professors, 1 NTTF, 1 dean or associate dean, 1 academic administrator, and 1 financial administrator.”

The motion also stipulated that a report be provided by May 15, 2013. The initial RIGE Review Committee requested and was granted additional time to conduct the review. Due to prior commitments, a number of the committee members could not serve past spring 2013 and the committee was re-staffed in summer 2013.

This re-constituted RIGE Review Committee began meeting in August 2013. The committee is comprised of the following individuals – listed here in alphabetical order:

Susan Anderson (TTF, German and Scandinavian)
Bruce Blonigen (TTF, Economics, and current Acting Associate Dean, CAS)
Bruce Bowerman (TTF and department head, Biology)
Mike Bullis (TTF, College of Education and former Dean)
Maram Epstein (TTF, East Asian Languages and Literatures)
Mike Haley (TTF and department head, Chemistry & Biochemistry)
Chuck Kalnbach (NTTF, Lundquist College of Business)
Alison Kwok (TTF, Architecture, School of Architecture and Allied Arts)
Lauren Lindstrom (TTF, College of Education, and Associate Dean of Research and Outreach, COE)
Brad Shelton (TTF, Mathematics, and Vice Provost for Budget and Planning)

A comprehensive and detailed examination of all RIGE operations and activities was not feasible given the relatively short time frame for our review, as well as the varying familiarity of committee members with RIGE prior to this review.

As a result, our committee responded to the charge by first asking a wide range of stakeholders at the University basic questions about the performance of RIGE and the general institutional framework supporting research activities and graduate education on campus. We then took direction from the responses we received in further refining the focus of our inquiry.

This process led us to review certain aspects of RIGE more closely than others. Our review is primarily centered on the research and innovation activities of RIGE. This focus does not imply that graduate education activities are not important to RIGE or for our campus – indeed one of our recommendations is that there should be further review in this area.

In addition, we consulted additional sources including prior reviews of the RIGE Office (the Research Advisory Panel (RAP) Report from January 2013, produced for the Provost) and subsections of the UO research enterprise report (the Huron Consulting Report from 2011) to learn what recommendations had been made previously and understand the current status of the recommendations contained in those reports.

We have had conversations with a wide range of stakeholders in the UO community to gather individual perspectives and observations of RIGE (see Appendix A for a list of individuals and groups who participated in interviews and Appendix B for minutes from all meetings of the committee). We then summarized and distilled these conversations (including those with the leadership team of RIGE) into what we believe are representative perspectives and observations. Given the wide range of people and groups we consulted, many with quite different points of interaction with RIGE, we have frankly been surprised at the consistent themes and observations that have emerged.

The body of the report has four major sections. The first provides a brief overview of the environment in which RIGE has operated in the past 3-5 years, a period of substantial financial challenges and almost annual changes in the top leadership of the University. This context is crucial for understanding the significant changes that have occurred in RIGE and its interactions with other units in the UO community. The second section delineates significant changes that RIGE has made to support the research enterprise at the UO. The third section synthesizes the common themes and concerns about RIGE that emerged in our conversations with UO stakeholders. The fourth and final section discusses larger institutional issues with how research activity is directed, supported, and financed at the UO. The committee also developed a number of recommendations, which are presented in the executive summary of the report.

3. RIGE Context and Environment

After interviewing a number of key stakeholders as well as RIGE personnel, we were able to better understand the environment and context for many of the decisions and activities occurring in RIGE over the last several years. These contextual factors provide an important framework for the information contained in the remainder of the report.

When Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School Kimberly Espy was hired in the summer of 2011, she faced a research environment at the UO that was confronting a daunting array of issues impacting research office operations, including:

- Frequent leadership turnover at the President, Provost, and VPFA positions;
- Little or no University-level strategic direction for research;
- A deep recession that affected ongoing funding from federal, state, and local sources;
- Delayed and declining donations and funding for research infrastructure;
- A history of poor financial management at the VPR, institute, and center levels;
- A new budget model in which the previous VPR chose (and was allowed) not to participate;
- New regulations from federal agencies regarding reporting of financial conflicts of interest;
- Inadequate processes concerning the financing, managing, and evaluating of research centers and institutes;
- Management breakdowns at the Office of Research Services and Administration (ORSA - now known as Sponsored Project Services) and the Office of Human Subjects.

3.1. Financial Issues

The leadership of the UO office of research changed in the summer of 2011. The new leadership faced severe financial challenges that continue to this day:

- Between FY10 and FY11 total awards for sponsored projects declined by almost \$25 million dollars as the federal stimulus program ended.
- Awards continue to decline, but related expenditures to support research awards necessarily stay constant or increase.
- Certain research institutes on campus were operating in deficit, operating budgets continued to show shortfalls.
- Certain facility expansion/renovation had significant cost over-runs.
- Federal facilities and administration (F&A) reimbursements declined by \$2.2 million from FY11 to FY13.
- The institution experienced continued state de-investment in higher education that made it very difficult to shore up research related expenses with general fund dollars.
- Potential payroll violations within the Institute of Neuroscience were discovered, prompting a state and federal audit. (During our review, the state completed their audit.¹ The federal audit is continuing.)
- Substantial ongoing financial commitments had been made by the previous VPR.

The federal government sequestration, shutdowns, and continuing resolutions related to federal funding have also limited the amount of funds federal agencies have available to provide to research universities in the form of federal grants. The impact of the sequestration is now starting to be felt at universities throughout the country.

3.2. Research Office Management Issues

Prior to VP Espy's arrival in 2011, there were no coherent or consistent processes for how the research office awarded research funds, creating a culture of "special deals" for certain departments and institutes. For example, a one-person "center" that generated no F&A was given \$100,000 each year. The lack of transparent and consistent processes for determining how the research office would support research activities on campus created an inequitable system that privileged some and disadvantaged others. During our interviews, some individuals were very vocal that they wanted "things to go back to the way they were (under VP Linton) because it worked;" conversely, others feel as strongly that the current system (initiated by RIGE) for distributing support is more fair and equitable.

In addition, prior to 2011 there was limited oversight within the research office. With the exception of the external evaluation of ORSA conducted by Huron Consulting, there had been no personnel or process evaluations of the research office.

3.3. ORSA, Human Subjects, and New Regulations Issues

¹ The Oregon Secretary of State Audit Report can be found online at: <http://sos.oregon.gov/audits/Documents/2013-30.pdf>.

In 2009, Huron Consulting was contracted to review pre- and post-award administration at the UO. They found that “The University of Oregon has a culture with a high reliance on ‘the Oregon Way’ as a justification for inaction, acceptance of the status quo, and slow response on a variety of efforts, which fosters an environment with a lack of accountability and willingness to change.” Huron continued to administer ORSA, now SPS (Sponsored Projects Services) through December 2012.

Shortly after VP Espy’s arrival, compliance issues with human subjects and animal subjects were reported to the federal government (as required) and remedies were put in place. Personnel changes were implemented after an administrative review.

New regulations concerning financial reporting for conflicts of interest were also federally mandated shortly after VP Espy’s arrival. UO was given nine months to fully implement these new processes. Many members of the research community were frustrated with the new compliance procedures, and may have perceived the regulations as a hindrance to their ongoing operations.

3.4. Oregon Budget Model, RIGE, and Funding Crisis

In 2010, the UO implemented a new decentralized budget model that pushed tuition revenue back to the units generating the tuition. At VPR Linton’s request, the flow of institutional revenues known as F&A or ICC, was not, in any way, affected by the new budget model, including those ICC funds that were expended in the Schools and Colleges. It was assumed that the VPR office would primarily continue to operate through the use of F&A revenues. In FY2011 only \$2.5 million of the \$20 million Research office budget came from the general fund.

Almost immediately, the full effects of the Great Recession, including delayed donor pledges and reduced grant funding, created a financial crisis in RIGE’s main funding sources. As a result, VP Espy inherited a RIGE office with several million dollars of debt and almost no current funds that had not already been committed to previously determined activities. This situation created considerable confusion and friction early in VP Espy’s tenure at the UO. After considerable negotiation and an initial year where the colleges funded start-ups almost entirely, central funding of RIGE was adjusted so that major start-up funds are now split 50/50 between the Colleges and RIGE.

3.5. Strategic Direction for Research

Many people we spoke to felt that the UO administration has for some time provided far too little coordination of strategic direction for research priorities. Some commented that the strategy used by previous leadership of the research office was to spread the money broadly to placate research communities (e.g., research centers and institutes on campus) without regard to measures of research success or financial viability. The current leadership of RIGE is to be commended for focusing its efforts and resources more strategically. However, many stakeholders, research faculty, current and past administrators, feel that RIGE has established research priorities without adequate consultation and collaboration with other relevant units and leadership at UO to ensure that these strategic decisions are in line with the University’s overall goals and mission.

A related administrative issue is the absence of a clear institutional process for negotiating priorities and expenditures that involve more than one unit. The question of who should pay for what continues to create friction between RIGE and other units. A salient example of how the lack of process affects the research climate at the UO is the on-going debate surrounding the Applied Computational Instrument for Scientific Synthesis (ACISS) supercomputer. Because the initial grant application in 2009 was not appropriately vetted through all impacted parties, there is no consensus about which unit is responsible for funding its support and maintenance.

The RAP Report recommended that “research should be placed on a higher financial, development, and scholarly priority” (Recommendation #2) and that the UO Leadership “develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for rebuilding and increasing the research infrastructure and capacity” (Recommendation #3). RIGE, the President and the Provost are now in the early stages of addressing these issues.

3.6. Frequent and Rapid Leadership Turnover

There is no doubt that the frequent and rapid turnover in leadership at the UO has had a negative impact on strategic leadership, communication and collaboration issues at RIGE. Within the first year of VP Espy’s arrival at the UO, the Provost left on sabbatical for health reasons, an interim Provost was hired, the President was fired by the OUS board, the VPFA was replaced, an interim president was hired, the Provost returned from sabbatical, and a new President was hired. One year later, the Provost resigned and another interim Provost was appointed.

Without strong leadership from either the President or Provost to resolve the financial issues at RIGE, or to develop a University-wide strategic plan for research, there was little oversight for RIGE as the team worked to resolve funding issues and establish research priorities. In addition to RIGE’s budget issues, a number of centers and institutes also had substantial budget issues that required immediate attention. We believe that given the extent of the financial and administrative crises that VP Espy inherited when she arrived at the UO, RIGE appropriately made immediate and dramatic research funding changes. Many of these changes meant passing along significant budget cuts, which can often lead to the messenger (here, RIGE) being the flashpoint for anger about the loss of research support at the UO. Without stable leadership at the top, RIGE was significantly isolated in determining research priorities and communicating the resulting funding decisions.

The many large, and often urgent issues facing RIGE when VP Espy arrived necessitated immediate action on a number of fronts. We next describe the changes implemented by RIGE since VP Espy began her position in summer 2011.

4. RIGE Changes and Accomplishments in Recent Years

The following list provides the recent major actions and accomplishments by RIGE, and which was broadly consistent with the feedback received from UO administrators, research faculty, and center/institute directors. Our brief discussion here relies in part on a Powerpoint file provided by RIGE that gives a detailed overview of RIGE operations,

including a list of improvements identified by RIGE in recent years and which is found in Appendix C.²

RIGE has shown leadership in addressing the crisis in research funding at the UO. All administrators have been unanimous in stating that the UO research budget was in crisis in 2012. The bleak picture of UO research funding compared to our AAU peers is conveyed in slides 8, 10, 11, and 21 (see Appendix C). The most immediate impact of the financial crisis was seen in funding start-up packages for new faculty hires (see slide 21). In 2012, the RIGE budget had only \$150,000 to invest in start-up funding, unlike the “Oregon Way” model, in which financial promises were made even when funds were not available. While the latter led to significant unfunded commitments, current RIGE leadership is now working within established budgeting principles to ensure that all financial commitments are fully funded. RIGE has developed a new collaborative cost-share model with the Colleges and the UO continues to offer competitive start-up packages in areas identified as having strategic importance (slide 21).

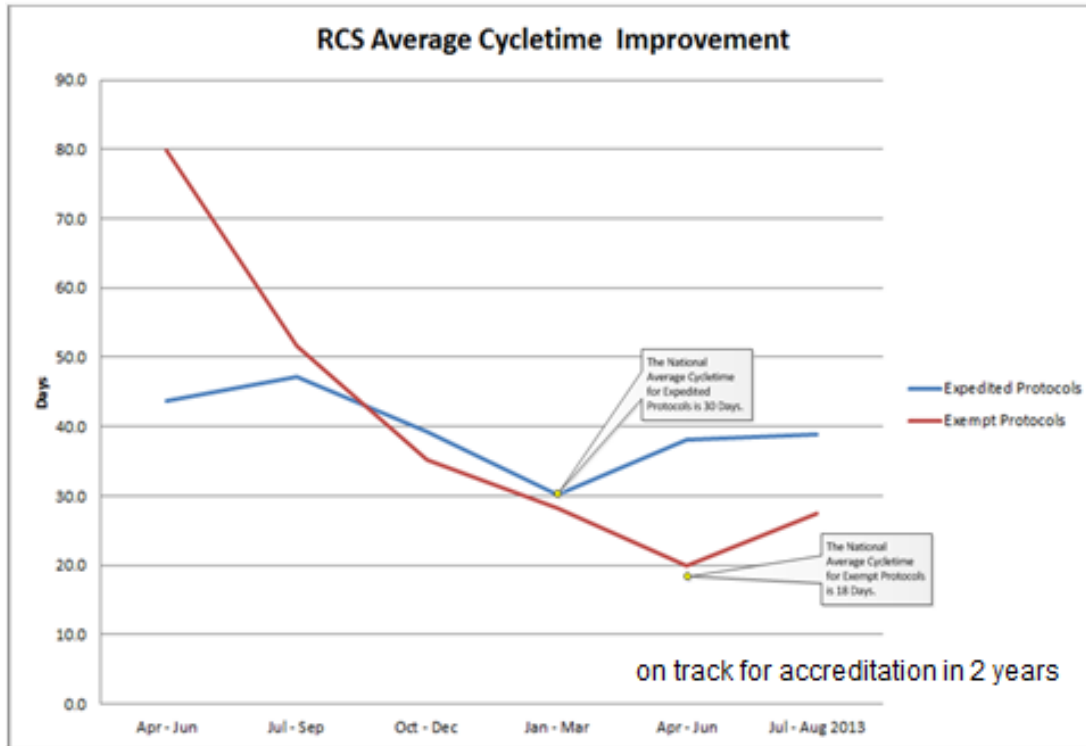
RIGE has begun to develop and implement a set of consistent processes and procedures, ending the longstanding practice of individual ad hoc, and often undocumented, arrangements that were typical of the “Oregon Way.” Most important is the regularizing of F&A rates across units. Although the shift to the new funding model was extremely disruptive to many units who were privileged with “special deals” under the old system, the new model is more equitable and transparent.

RIGE has reorganized and professionalized its office management to a dramatic extent. Crucial services within Sponsored Project Services (previously ORSA, the Office of Research Services and Administration), such as human subjects compliance and grants and contracts administration have reduced turn-around times and are now fully functioning after experiencing significant personnel turnover and periods of staff training. For example, in 2010 the average time to turn around a contract in SPS, from intake to execution, was 35 days. In 2013 that average is 5 days.

Additionally, services related to research compliance have improved substantially in recent years. Current RIGE leadership has instituted a more robust office of Research Compliance Services. As shown in the following graphic, the average cycle time for compliance protocols in that office has improved dramatically and is approaching industry averages.

² Since Graduate Education was not included in our committee review, we refer only to areas of improvement in Research and Innovation.

Projects reviewed in FY2007 = ~375; in FY2013 = 1466



Areas of success and improvement identified by RIGE leadership that were not mentioned in interviews with other administrators or faculty include increased emphasis on innovation and the creation of UO research-related companies (slide 5), the updating of some internal funding programs (slide 20), investments in infrastructure support (slide 24), and new collaborations with the College of Business and the Law School that brought in \$3.75 million in state funding (slide 25).

As a step toward campus-wide collaboration in establishing research priorities and processes, RIGE has created a Research Advisory Board with broad representative membership.

5. Key Issues in Current Operations of RIGE

The context surrounding RIGE and the research community at the UO in recent years (as discussed in the prior two sections) is important for evaluating the feedback we heard through our conversations with many in the UO community. The remaining sections of the report are a discussion and synthesis of the themes and concerns we heard from our conversations. In this section, we focus on what we heard about the operations of RIGE, while the next section focuses more on institutional support for research and the role of RIGE in that enterprise.

A common concern about RIGE raised by many of the stakeholders we interviewed were issues related to communication. Further, many groups were concerned about a lack of engagement and collaboration by RIGE.

5.1. Communication Responsiveness and Transparency

We heard significant concerns about communication issues between RIGE and others in the research community at many levels. The first is slow responsiveness to queries. Many people, including high-level leaders in schools and colleges, report that it can often be quite difficult to get responses back on email communications with some of the executive team of RIGE. This seems particularly true on issues where the parties may not be in agreement; for example, requests for resources that RIGE ultimately is not able to provide.

The second is poor communications from RIGE about policy and/or process changes. A specific example in this regard is a recent change by RIGE in how it estimates the portion of the F&A reimbursements it distributes to units. RIGE changed the formula for determining these estimations without announcing the change to affected units. When the budget managers contacted RIGE to see why their funding had changed, some reported that it was difficult to find personnel in RIGE who could or would provide information on how the estimations had been changed. About two months after units reported concerns, RIGE came out with a general announcement via email about revisions it was making to its calculations. There does not seem to have been much communication between RIGE and the affected units during the two months RIGE was considering the revisions, and some report that they were still confused about the changes after the general communication. Those units that saw significant decreases in their F&A allocations were left to cover commitments that were made based on the original budget model. Many stakeholders expressed that the slow communication from RIGE has led to wasted administrative time and inefficient delays in institutional decision-making. It must be noted that other stakeholders report that RIGE has communicated directly to them about major changes in processes or funding, even when it may not be favorable, and in a timely manner.

A related communication issue is what is perceived as RIGE's top-down communication style. Although some like the directness and are comfortable with this style, others feel that the tone is disrespectful in that there is no room for conversation or negotiation. It was clear to the committee that many who were most unhappy with RIGE's communication style were also most unhappy with the message being delivered. Several people we interviewed wondered whether gender issues play into these negative perceptions of the VP's communication style. While gender bias may be a factor in how some stakeholders react to the VP, we believe it is secondary to how people are reacting to the lack of collaborative conversation and problem solving, which we discuss next.

5.2. Collaboration Issues

A closely related communication issue echoed by a substantial majority of stakeholders with whom we talked is an inability (sometimes perceived as unwillingness) on the part of RIGE to initiate and engage effectively in collaboration in developing new protocols or negotiating changes in processes. Stakeholders report that communication on policy or process changes are almost invariably one-way in nature: RIGE communicates the decision or change and provides little to no opportunity for the stakeholder to respond or provide feedback. Even when institutional procedures require formal collaboration, such as a required Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between parties for approval by the Provost, collaborative efforts by RIGE are often minimal.

An example of this issue rests in the circumstances around the establishment of the Prevention Sciences Institute (PSI); a new interdisciplinary unit that brings together activities in the former Child and Family Center, which was a center under the office of research for more than a decade, with faculty in the Departments of Psychology, Counseling Psychology and Human Services, and Special Education and Clinical Sciences. Current leadership in both Psychology and CAS reported that they first learned of the creation of the PSI when they were presented with an MOU in August 2013. The MOU had terms that both Psychology and CAS felt were financially disadvantageous to them and were not consistent with other MOUs establishing Centers and Institutes at the UO, particularly because of the strict requirements for researchers associated with PSI to run all of their grants through the PSI. Because of the tight timeline, CAS and Psychology signed the MOU with limited negotiation, though both anticipate a loss of F&A dollars.

We note that members of RIGE disagree with the above description of the establishment of PSI. Also, they state that it has been a common practice at the UO for faculty to choose to submit proposals through whichever center or institute they wish; thus operating external grants through PSI is consistent with that established practice. The fact that there remains very different accounts and perceptions of the establishment of a new research center without further conversation and negotiation by the parties highlights the continuing communication and collaboration issues in our research community.

Other examples that have contributed to a perception amongst some stakeholders of ineffective or insufficient collaboration between RIGE and other units include funding issues connected with the ACISS supercomputer, changes to allocation of physical space in the Lewis Integrated Science Building, and funding of rent for off-campus spaces. Finally, there have been several hiring and retention cases of research faculty where communication and collaboration between RIGE and the involved research communities broke down in serious ways, most notably in the neurosciences. In some instances, relationships between RIGE and the affected research community have been generally characterized as beyond repair.

It must be noted that there are a number of instances where RIGE has collaborated effectively and shown strong leadership in hiring and retention cases across the University. Also, a positive sign of RIGE's desire to facilitate communication and collaboration is that it has instituted a Research Advisory Board (RAB) with broad representative membership. The RAB has been in existence for a little less than two years, and it is not yet clear how effective the RAB has been in helping set research processes and priorities. The Board has mainly been tasked with in-depth analysis and discussion of the functions of centers and institutes, an important issue, but only one of many broad issues facing RIGE. While RAB members feel they have been informed about most of the other main issues for RIGE, some members expressed that they had not been asked to provide advice in setting research processes and priorities.

6. Institutional Issues and the Research Enterprise at UO

In this section, we discuss the themes and concerns raised in our conversations with others regarding how the research enterprise is broadly supported at UO, and the role of RIGE in that enterprise.

6.1. Determination of UO Strategic Research Priorities

The communication and collaboration issues with RIGE noted in the previous section have been particularly concerning on a campus where people perceive a lack of formal and robust processes for determining research priorities at an institutional level. Perhaps the closest attempt was the development of an Academic Plan, which only addressed research in a broad context of the overall mission of the UO. Historically, research priorities appear to develop organically across departments, deans, and other research leaders, and they become common research goals only to the extent that these units have a common vision and can effectively collaborate. Insufficient engagement and collaboration by RIGE with all research communities in establishing priorities has caused significant disenfranchisement of a number of important research communities. In reality, the larger issue is that the university has not had processes in place to determine transparent and public strategic research priorities for the campus that stem from appropriate input from the entire community.

Determination of research priorities includes thoughtful consideration on the general funding level for research activities on campus. It includes consideration of supplementing research activities beyond dollars from external sponsored research activity and/or insulating campus research resources from the volatility in these sources of funding. The 2013 “Benchmarking Report” from the Provost’s Office and the data supplied by RIGE show that the university’s financial commitment to the research endeavor is roughly \$4M. This level of internal research support figure puts us at the bottom of a list of our AAU peers. Many we talked to felt that UO leadership must demonstrate a credible financial commitment and enact RAP Report recommendation #2 that “research should be placed on a higher financial, development, and scholarly priority.” Maintaining our AAU membership and Research One status most likely depend on how we respond to this question of general research funding.

Many of the collaboration issues with RIGE could be resolved if the UO developed clear protocols for establishing and funding research priorities at the UO. We must find ways for the entire research community, the President and Provost down to the individual researchers, to engage in thoughtful conversations to ensure that the UO research mission is financed, managed, evaluated, and improved if UO is to maintain its AAU membership and Research One status.

6.2. Role of RIGE within the UO

Once the strategic priorities and vision for the UO research mission have been determined, the function and role of the Office for RIGE within the broader university should be addressed. A number of important themes and questions about RIGE’s role arose from our conversations with stakeholders.

(i) How involved should RIGE be in research personnel decisions?

The largest concern was the issue that specific research decisions, particularly hiring and retention of faculty, involve agreement by RIGE and deans without any processes to guarantee a unified decision. For example, departments in CAS often feel caught triangulating between RIGE and the CAS Dean's office to cobble together not only approval by both, but also the required funding. Such a setting can lead to strategic behavior by various sides, waiting for the other to commit funding. It is clear that we need mechanisms and processes to coordinate unified decisions in timely fashion, or put the responsibility for the research decision with one clear entity.

This led some to suggest a more subsidiary role for RIGE than it currently has vis-à-vis the deans, as is true at other major research institutions. This would shift the authority for research directions and investments to the deans and/or associate deans at the College level. Opinion was split among the faculty: some believed it would give too much power to the Deans. Others thought it would be appropriate to give more budgetary authority to the deans/associate deans, since they have greater familiarity with the research profiles of each department. A related idea mentioned by some is separating natural sciences into its own College because it is so different from the rest of the CAS in terms of sponsored research activity. The thought is that such a split could make it easier for each unit to best serve the very different research needs of its faculty.

(ii) Should RIGE oversee only sponsored research (SRIGE vs. RIGE)?

Currently, RIGE is still primarily funded by F&A returns, although central (general fund) allocations to RIGE have increased recently – related primarily to the need to support start-up expenditures. The redistribution of F&A returns to those research units who generate sponsored research expenditures is also now more equitable and transparent.

However, recently a number of smaller research centers were removed from the RIGE portfolio. And many of the research centers and institutes in the Humanities and Social Sciences operate with budgets that are a small fraction of those in the natural sciences and COE. The communication and collaboration issues mentioned in section 5 are not limited to areas of sponsored research and often have their own flavor in the smaller units. All of these things lead to a *perception* amongst many stakeholders that RIGE does not value or wish to prioritize non-sponsored research. The RIGE leadership team assured the committee that RIGE valued non-sponsored research contributions, and cited some recent activities to bolster this claim. Nevertheless, there is an increasing perception that RIGE made a decision to align its research mission with those units that generate the highest rate of F&A and no longer values non-sponsored research contributions. Most faculty we interviewed believe that RIGE should support all research constituencies, sponsored and non-sponsored.

(iii) Should the Graduate School be part of RIGE?

At present, the UO is at the bottom of the public AAU in number of PhD degrees granted per tenure-related faculty (.226 degrees per faculty member in AY 2009/10 vs. an AAU mid-range of .331). Prior to and during VP Espy's tenure, RIGE has developed some initiatives (e.g., new specializations, accelerated MA programs, exit surveys of graduate students, data

metrics within Academic Analytics, new scholarship partnerships, and -- although this did not move forward -- recommended reduced credit hours for students advanced to candidacy) to strengthen graduate support. Although graduate education is central to the university's mission, the lack of funding has made it difficult to attract and retain enough high-quality doctoral students.

Although our committee intentionally refrained from addressing issues concerning the graduate school, we did ask most faculty and administrators we interviewed if the graduate school is well served by being part of RIGE. A significant number felt that the research mission and graduate education, while strongly interconnected, should be overseen by *separate* offices/administrators. Most expressed the need to overhaul graduate education and to strengthen graduate student research support (e.g., provide more funded graduate fellowships, and abolish or significantly reduce tuition after advancement). Most felt that the current structure of combining oversight for graduate education with the research mission in one office, as has been the case for over a decade, deprives the graduate school of focused leadership and investment.

Since the committee was unable to assess the operations and activities of the Graduate School within the time frame of this review, we recommend further review of both graduate education and the administrative structure of the Graduate School.

6.3. Fiscal Support/Funding of RIGE

Funding of a university's research office should be commensurate with the university's overall strategic research priorities and the defined role of the research office to implement and support the university's research goals. As discussed in section 3.4, RIGE faced a dire financial situation when VP Espy began in the summer of 2011. As we have noted in section 6.1, research support from general university funds is quite low relative to our AAU comparators. We heard a number of concerns about the budget and resource allocation changes that RIGE has been making, as well as changes to their staffing levels.

In this sub-section we address fiscal support from the central administration; the way in which RIGE has used F&A within its own office and for the UO; and administrative support offered RIGE from central administration. Funding of RIGE and general UO research activities should be aligned with the entire mission of the university, including determination of (i) the general level of funding and (ii) the treatment of RIGE in the Oregon Budget Model.

The UO offers little fiscal support to RIGE; that office, its staff, various units, and activities are funded primarily through the F&A revenues generated through external funds. And, in point of fact, RIGE has grown little over the past 5-years, except to rebuild to previous levels, which may not be sufficient to support and grow a robust research enterprise. This reality becomes especially important as we turn to the way in which F&A returns are distributed by and used by RIGE. (We want to thank the RIGE Office for generating the following tables as that process was time-consuming and demanding.)

This lack of central support for the university's research efforts is highlighted in the attached slides (Appendix C) illustrating the disparity of fiscal support for the respective

research enterprises provided by UO and other peer institutions and non-peer institutions. These data are admittedly “messy” as accounting procedures vary across institutions, but overall paint a less than positive picture of the UO’s fiscal support for RIGE and the activities it is to support.

Table 1 summarizes that revenue stream for the past five academic years for the UO. It bears mentioning that across recent years, the CAS, particularly the natural sciences, and the COE were responsible for virtually all of the UO’s entire external funding each year, accounting for roughly 60% and 35%, respectively, of the UO’s external funding portfolio by year. Table 2 displays the sponsored program expenditures across colleges and academic units.

Table 1. Summary of the UO’s external Funding Portfolio and F & A

Category/ Academic Year	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
External Awards (\$millions)	100.5	135.6	110.2	110.6	97.6
# Active Awards Generating Expenditures	987	994	1023	1017	1050
Sponsored Expenditures (\$millions)	110.3	115.6	124.7	121.7	120.4
Revenue recovered from already expended F & A costs (\$millions)	19.2	19.5	21.1	20.7	18.9

Table 2. Sponsored Projects Expenditures by Submitting Organizational unit FY13

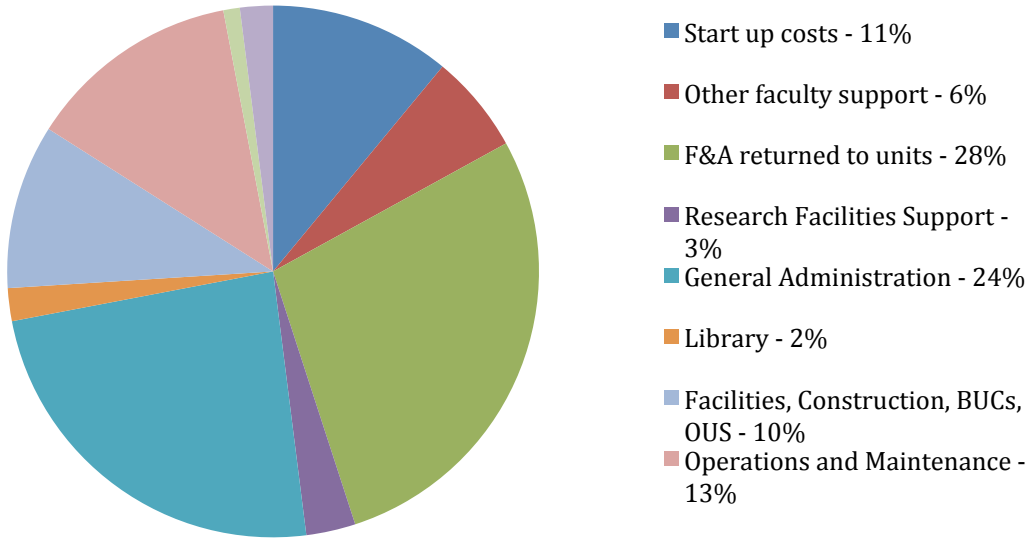
Unit	Total sponsored expenditure FY13
Academic Extension	\$512,941
Architecture and Allied Arts	\$863,687
CAS – Natural Science Division	\$13,435,685
CAS – Social Science Division	\$1,833,987
CAS – Humanities Division (including American English Institute)	\$3,006,936
CAS – Other (IT, Dean’s office, etc.)	\$58,012
College of Education	\$33,977,254
Honors College	\$29,543
Provost and Academic Affairs	\$6,918,176
School of Journalism and Communications	\$16,950

School of Law	\$125,511
Library	\$885,834
President and VPs (not including VPRI)	\$374,277
VPRI (not including centers)	\$523,253
VPRI – Prevention Science Institute (formerly Child and Family Center)	\$3,610,370
VPRI – Committee on the Advancement of Women Chemists	\$614,447
VPRI – Community Service Center	\$1,520,688
VPRI – Center on Brain Injury Research & Training	\$57,439
VPRI – Center for High Energy Physics	\$1,786,359
VPRI – Center for the Study of Women in Society	\$0
VPRI – Environmental Science Institute	\$129,058
VPRI – Institute of Ecology and Evolution	\$3,578,565
VPRI – Institute of Cognitive and Decision Sciences	\$212,056
VPRI – Institute of Molecular Biology	\$8,554,438
VPRI – Institute for Theoretical Science	\$832,192
VPRI – Institute of Neuroscience	\$11,910,986
VPRI – Institute for a Sustainable Environment	\$1,395,251
VPRI – Materials Science Institute	\$9,522,389
VPRI – Neuroinformatics Center	\$1,667,187
VPRI – Northwest Indian Language Institute	\$1,449,183
VPRI – Oregon Center for Optics	\$1,950,667
VPRI – Oregon Institute of Marine Biology	\$1,260,921
VPRI – Oregon Humanities Center	\$0

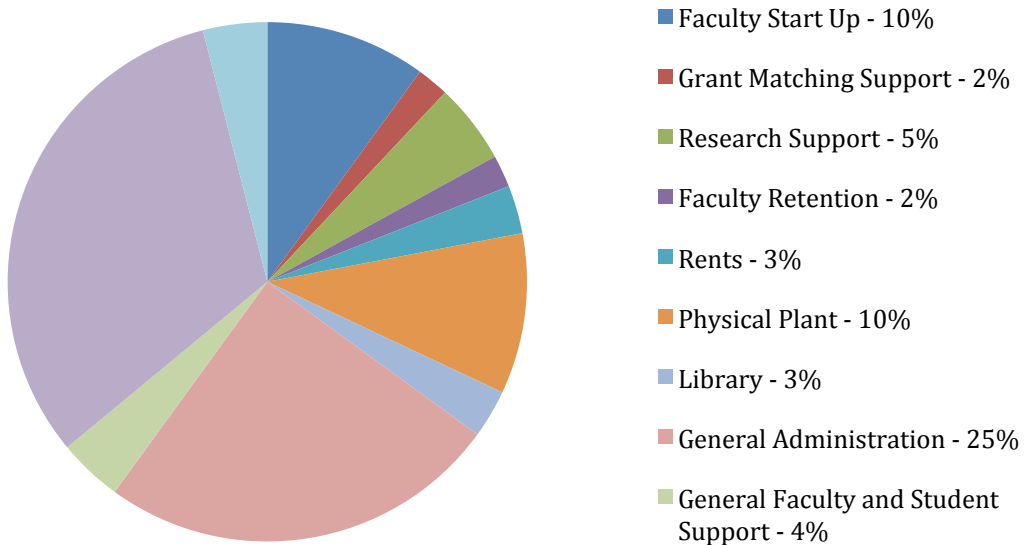
The University negotiates with the federal government on a standard set of rates to charge sponsors to recover a portion of facilities and administration costs attributed to sponsored activity. The rates and agreement can be found on the SPS website. Currently the F&A rate for research on campus is 45%; however, not all sponsors allow that rate to be charged and thus the current effective recovery rate for those costs is approximately 20% across all active awards in FY13.

A consistent pattern of questioning and comment we heard relates to the way in which the F & A generated through the UO's external funding efforts are distributed and then used both by RIGE and for the UO at large. The following figures and tables summarize data on this issue. These data are found on the SPS website under the reports tab which contains both annual and quarterly reports from SPS and categories have been renamed over time. We present those data here in pie charts for the reviewers' convenience and for the sake of clarity on this important issue.

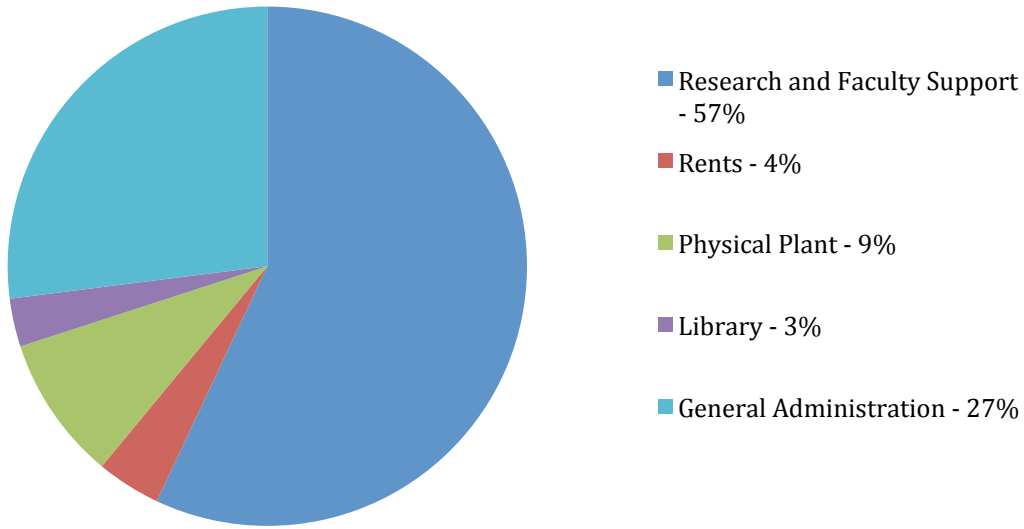
F&A Allocations FY09



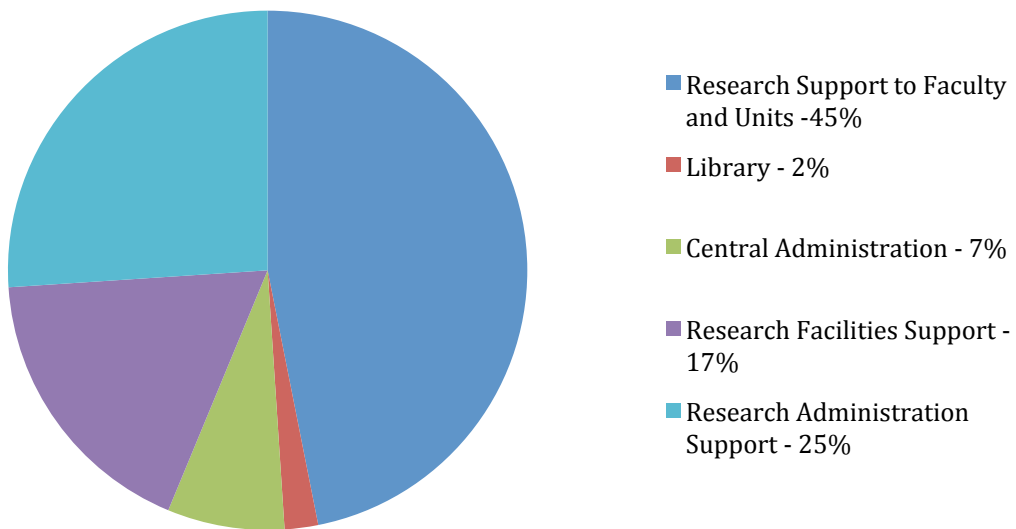
F&A Allocations FY10



F&A Distribution FY11



F&A Distribution FY12



In a related vein, several faculty members we queried commented on the perceived growth of the VPRI Office. The following tables present data on this issue, suggesting that both expenditures to that office, and staff FTE levels, have either decreased or increased only to levels found early in the 5-year period we examined. Given the number of “crises” the office addressed over the past few years, and a number of new federal compliance requirements that have had to be addressed (listed below), there has been major improvement in research services provided to the campus (as mentioned in section 4). It

follows that a question that must be asked is whether or not the current staffing and associated fiscal expenditures are sufficient to support current and future research goals?

**Table 3. FTE count for administrative units reporting to the VPRI June 2009-2013
(Source: PWIPAYR)**

	<i>FTE</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>FTE</i>
<i>Unit</i>	<i>Jun-09</i>	<i>Jun-10</i>	<i>Jun-11</i>	<i>Jun-12</i>	<i>Jun-13</i>
<i>Vice President's Office (direct reports to VP and admin staff providing direct VP office support)</i>	12.13	12.41	12.01	10.80	9.80
<i>Research Business Administration</i>	NA	NA	NA	2.00	3.40
<i>Research Development Services</i>	1.76	1.80	1.00	2.00	3.00
<i>Sponsored Projects Services</i>	17.00	12.30	14.50	18.30	20.60
<i>Research Compliance Services</i>	8.00	9.00	6.50	6.50	7.00
<i>Innovation Partnership Services</i>	3.75	3.75	3.50	2.50	3.75
<i>Classified Staff supporting SPS/RCS/IPS</i>	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00
<i>Animal Care Services</i>	4.94	4.54	4.70	6.45	6.70
<i>Graduate School</i>	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	6.80
<i>Total UO</i>	58.08	54.30	51.71	60.05	65.05
<i>HURON Direct Administration (maximum number on site during that year at one time)</i>	0.00	4.50	4.00	2.50	0.00
<i>Total UO +HURON</i>	58.08	58.80	55.71	62.55	65.05
<i>Total Sponsored Expenditures (includes F&A)</i>	\$110.30	\$115.60	\$124.70	\$121.70	\$120.40
<i>Ratio of Sponsored Expenditures to FTE (includes HURON FTE)</i>	1.90	1.97	2.24	1.94	1.85

6.4. Transparency and Systematic Review

Information on RIGE's operations, such as what we just presented in the previous section, should be readily and easily available. It has not been, though RIGE is now making efforts to do so with annual reports and presentations (such as in Appendix C), which are now shared publicly. We found confusion in the community over issues that were easily addressed by the information RIGE provided our committee; however, much of the information has not yet been made public. In our interviews with the VP and RIGE leadership we learned that a number of new processes have been created or are in the process of being designed that address many of the questions raised in our interviews and that these will become public when they are completed.

The repeated statements of consternation and confusion among almost all groups we interviewed about the internal policies, procedures, and practices of RIGE show an ongoing problem with transparency, which has generated a widespread lack of trust in RIGE's dealings with the campus community. RIGE has made a number of substantial decisions regarding research activity in the research areas of the RIGE leaders, particularly the formation of the Prevention Sciences Institute, without any formal processes for oversight, except for ultimate oversight by the Provost.

In order to reestablish confidence, there should be systematic and regular reviews of RIGE at the administrative level, both for the VP of RIGE and for the members of the RIGE leadership team. There should also be clear and explicit processes for oversight, particularly for issues where there may be conflicts of interest.