

Water Institute FAC meeting Notes

Monday, January 9, 2012 (11am to 1pm in Weil 307). Lunch was provided.

Attended by: Jon Martin, Mark Binford, Martha Monroe, Tom Frazer, Rafael Munoz-Carpena, Tatiana Borisova, Christine Overdeest, Ramesh Reddy, Matt Cohen, Kathryn Frank, Jane Southworth (Graham, Staal, McKee)

Notes:

1) Water Institute Updates: Seminars, Symposium, WIGF Program

Discussion/Action: Wendy Graham gave updates on recent activities, and shared progress on developing WIGF evaluation process.

2) Strategic Planning

- a. Review of strategic planning activities to date
- b. FAC SWOT analysis
- c. Development of priorities for 2012 – 2017

Activity/Discussion/Action:

- a) Wendy Graham reported out the process to date of the strategic planning exercise. The process began with an on-line survey of the Water Institute Affiliate Faculty and WI staff retreat. A draft of the revised strategic plan based on input gained during the WI faculty survey and WI staff retreat was distributed and discussed (see attached).
- b) SWOT activity - A list of STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES OPPORTUNITIES AND TREATS was shared with FAC. FAC was asked to rate the level of importance for the WI by indicating High, Medium or Low rankings for each. They were also given an opportunity to add to the list or indicate whether the item should be discarded from the list.

SWOT (results)

Strengths	FAC Ranking ¹
Excellent Water Institute Staff	2.73
Solid externally funded grants program from state and national sources that engage a strong core of faculty from a variety of departments/Colleges/Centers	2.70
Well-attended, well-recognized biennial Symposium	2.64
Strong interdisciplinary Distinguished Scholar Seminar Series that brings in internationally known experts in water-related fields	2.55
Excellent relationships and recognition from Progress Energy, Swisher Foundation, Sherwood Stokes Foundation, Smallwood Foundation that have resulted in additional gifts for Water Institute Programs	2.55
Good recognition with Deans, Vice Presidents and President at UF	2.50
Excellent interdisciplinary graduate education opportunities through	2.40

Water Institute Graduate Fellows Program and Hydrologic Sciences Academic Cluster	
Increasing recognition as focal point for water expertise within the state and region (Water Management Districts, FDEP, FDACS, Senate Select Committee on Florida's Inland Waters, EPA)	2.30
Good progress facilitating discussions/partnerships/projects between regulatory agencies, industry, and UF faculty	2.30
Diverse, well-respected Faculty Advisory Committee	2.27
Comprehensive website with searchable faculty expertise, awards, and publication database	2.09
Strong reputation for timely, unbiased service to state and regional agencies for funded peer review/stakeholder review activities	2.00

¹ Average ranking assigned by Faculty Advisory Committee (3 high, 1 low)

Weaknesses	FAC Ranking ¹
No large (multimillion) interdisciplinary grants received to date	2.30
No formal External Advisory Board established	2.30
Uneven participation by UF faculty (particularly in social science disciplines)	2.22
Perceptions/realities of overlap with existing UF centers/institutes remain	2.13
No new large endowments received since the Progress Endowment	2.10
Recurring legislative support from the state not established	1.88
No federal earmarks received	1.57
Uneven awareness of Water Institute activities and added value/benefit to UF	*

¹ Average ranking assigned by Faculty Advisory Committee (3 high, 1 low)

* Added by FAC but not ranked

Opportunities	FAC Ranking ¹
Continue to submit large interdisciplinary proposals to federal funding agencies (NSF, USDA, EPA, DOE) that build on previous efforts and partner with other UF Centers (WRRC,CFW, FCI, EPI), outside agencies and external academics where appropriate.	2.90
Establish foundation/private donor support to supplement and ultimately replace UF Deans' support for Water Institute Graduate Fellows Program.	2.50
Partner with departments to establish state and/or endowment support for hiring of interdisciplinary water faculty.	2.40
Partner with IFAS Extension and the Center for Public Issues Education to build strong stakeholder engagement/education programs within the newly created EPA Center for Excellence in Watershed Management.	2.10
Partner with Center for Latin American Studies, Center for African Studies, IFAS International Programs Office to develop Foundation- supported water research, education and outreach programs in developing countries.	2.00
Establish Foundation/Industry support for Undergraduate Water Scholar/Internship Programs.	1.70

¹ Average ranking assigned by Faculty Advisory Committee (3 high, 1 low)

Threats	FAC Ranking¹
State and Federal budget cuts for environmental programs in general, water programs in particular, reduce external funding opportunities	2.50
Broad faculty engagement declines due to increased pressures on their time and resources as well as reduced resources within the Water Institute	2.40
Potential for declining administrative support from UF	2.38
Increased real/perceived competition with Departments and Centers on campus due to new UF budget model and institutional framework (RCM)	2.00
Covering Water Institute staff salaries as direct costs on specific grants reduces their availability to provide program and proposal development support to broad Water Institute Affiliate Faculty	1.70
Maintaining Water Institute programs takes priority over efforts to document and publicize Water Institute successes	1.60

¹**Average ranking assigned by Faculty Advisory Committee (3 high, 1 low)**

- c) PRIORITIES exercise – A list of activities/priorities was distributed and FAC members were asked to indicate whether the priorities were on-target, or off-the-mark. They then noted on flipcharts for each priority the degree of on-target or off target, by placing a dot in the center or an appropriate distance from the center.

Proposed Future Priorities (results)

Future Priorities for 2012-2017	FAC Ranking₁
Develop a charter for and form an External Advisory Board	3.0
Build upon past successes (symposium, seminar series, moderate-sized interdisciplinary research grants, funded service projects for state agencies, maintenance/enhancement of web-accessible faculty, awards and publication databases)	2.64
Continue to form and nurture interdisciplinary teams with diverse faculty leadership and representation to go after large (multimillion) externally funded programs, partnering with other Centers and Institutes (e.g. EPI, FCI, LATAM, PIE, Center for Wetlands, WRRC) where appropriate.	2.64
Build and strengthen the Water Institute Graduate Fellows Program by obtaining continuing commitment from UF Deans and supplemental/replacement funding from private donors	2.27
Partner with departments to establish state and/or endowment support for hiring of interdisciplinary water faculty	2.18
Develop a strategy for Water Institute promotion, marketing and public relations	2.09
Build externally funded stakeholder engagement/education programs within the EPA Center for Watershed Excellence in partnership with IFAS Extension and the Center for Public Issues Education	1.91

Partner with industry (i.e. utilities, consulting firms) state and local governmental agencies and private donors to establish an externally funded Undergraduate Water Scholar/Internship Program	1.73
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¹**Average ranking assigned by Faculty Advisory Committee (3 high, 1 low)**

- 3) **Next Steps** – The next steps in the Strategic Planning process were discussed and it was recommended that the Water Institute director and staff meet with Chairs and Deans for similar discussions to revise the plan further. Finally a meeting with the Affiliated Faculty in a retreat type meeting was recommended to complete the process.