UM Faculty Survey on Research Support Needs

Preliminary Report for Full-time and Research Faculty (non-tenure track) respondents only (N=8)

Conducted by the Research and Scholarship Committee of the Faculty Senate and the URC

March-April 2012

1. What are the primary factors that currently limit your ability to engage in or expand your extramural research? Please be specific.

Text Response	Coding
I have projects that will support the Maine clamming industry and the Maine DMR in their biotoxin work but I need good hatchery facility with animal care support. We have a facility at the Darling Marine Center but no support for animal care there.	F-Eq, F-staff, F-Un
difficult to find colleagues who work in similar research areas with whom I can collaborate, isolation, lack of support in finding grant funding and preparing proposals	S-peers, opport-Fac, S-FO, S-prop prep
Limited salary commitment from UMaine. I currently receive 4 mos of salary from the University. This means much of my time is spent writing proposals to support my own salary, my technician's salary and graduate student support.	F-Un, F-Staff, F-GS
Unrestricted funding to pilot ideas, travel to meet with collaborators elsewhere, etc. Every cent I have is only for use in specific funded projects and no departmental funds are available for lab analyses to test ideas, for example.	F-Un, F-Tr
- Lack of salary support for research professors. Researchers doing well at the university should be able to have the university commit to them as much as they commit to the university. So a system of checks and balances to ensure productive researchers are given permanent salary would allow them to be more productive in research endeavors, taking on more students and writing larger more innovative grants. At present we write grants to help us survive, not necessarily the most innovative or forward thinking proposals. - Facility support, particularly access to marine vessels and scuba diving support. At present there is little institutional support for either of these, leaving researchers unable to propose certain fieldwork that require experienced scuba divers or vessels equipped with modern equipment. Yet it is these small coastal type projects that are presently getting funded and are important to Maine, thus it leaves us having to go outside the university to get adequate support, spending our research dollars elsewhere.	F-Un, F-eq
There are two major factors that limit my ability: 1) Time and 2) Support Structures. My time is split between many projects and as a result, I have limited time to pursue the collaborations I have. This is in large measure due to the fact that I work on many smaller projects and have become scattered in my work. For support structures, I am frustrated by the limited assistance that is available from ORSP to help process grants. Under the current system, the faculty member is responsible for entering all information and ORSP only validates that information. Although this is helpful, it could be more helpful if they were to assist on formatting and presenting the information in the correct format. Over time, I would learn how these things were done, but to have to get it right on one's first grant is both daunting and unnecessarily time consuming.	T, S-prop-prep
Time is the primary limiting factor. I am overloaded with too many projects.	T

It would be extremely helpful if UMaine would establish a help fund, similar to other universities, that give back a percentage of overhead, typically 7-12% to the researcher. This fund is renewable from fiscal year to year. It would help me collect preliminary data, fund student projects, etc, that provide material from which to write competitive grants to NSF or elsewhere.	[needs: F-Un, IDC-return]

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	8

2. What are the most helpful factors that currently support your research effort? Please be specific.

Text Response	Coding
The SRO is great in helping get proposals out the door.	S-UA
colleagues who are willing to collaborate on research learning best practices from faculty who are more experienced in research proposal writing	S-peers
ORSP staff assistance; Grant budget tracking by Departmental staff; Facilities support at the Darling Marine Center	S-UA, S-CA
Funding, access to telecommunications (most collaborators are off-campus).	F-Un
- Support from ORSP and SMS [School of Marine Sciences] is excellent, allowing proposals to be submitted in a timely fashion and funds to be allocated quickly. This is extremely helpful.	S-UA, S-CA
Collaborations with other faculty who have successfully written and submitted research and/or grants.	S-Peers
The library and the computer system. Also people in Sponsored Programs have been helpful.	L, S-UA
I think ORSP does a great job despite limited staff, and in general the administrative support staff at UMaine are friendly and cooperative, which helps a lot The facilities and support staff at the Darling Marine Center, including the research vessel, IRA C, have made it possible for me to write and receive several NSF awards	S-UA, F-Eq, S-staff

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	8

3. What other supports do you need from the University or your College/ Unit to engage in or expand your extramural research?

Text Response	Coding
We need full support at the Darling Marine Center for the shellfish hatchery support.	F-Un, S-staff
more training and assistance in preparing grant proposals	S-prop prep
Return on Indirect costs. More opportunities to support graduate students. University support for a technician	IDC-return, F-GS, F-staff
Unrestricted funding, better understanding of IT resources. For example, could there be a clearer help system for all IT? right now, you have to know who to call to find out about ITV and it seems like you're pretty much on your own to set up web conferences - every project I'm involved in uses a different web conferencing service (Skype, Webex, Polycom...need to know what is free and what is useful when working with others around the US). In the same vein, having some sort of research ombudsman would be really useful - a single person who would know what software is available, who has what lab resources/equipment, etc. I often feel that folks are wasting time and funds getting equipment we already have somewhere on campus but no one knows.	F-Un, S-staff, S-UA, F-Eq
- Overhead return would be helpful in addressing aging community equipment.	IDC-return, F-Eq
See previous answer about OSRP	S-UA
Getting some share of the overhead would be very helpful.	IDC-return
It would be helpful to have access to more support for graduate students, either through additional TAs or more possibilities for fellowships, or (as mentioned above), a percentage return on overhead back to the researcher.	F-GS, IDC-return

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	8

4. Other suggestions?

Text Response	Coding
Recommend a progressive process for research faculty whereby, upon hire, the university agrees to make an increasing salary commitment over an agreed upon time frame.	F-Un
Often soft-money faculty/staff can feel left out of UMaine opportunities, and we are some of the most productive members. For example, the new committee that is reviewing proposals for other faculty would be a great way that soft-money faculty/staff can contribute - since we already are successful at proposal writing - but the incentive is completely wrong. We can't legally spend time reviewing such proposals without getting paid for our time. Giving funds to the department doesn't help - who knows where it will end up. So basically, the best proposal-writers on campus can't participate unless they want to volunteer vacation time to do so.	F-Un, F-Inc, Oppor-Fac

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	2

5. Are you currently supported as a PI or Co-PI on an externally-funded research grant?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		8	100%
2	No		0	0%
	Total		8	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	8

6. Please indicate your current position:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Faculty member		8	100%
2	Professional Staff		0	0%
	Total		8	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	8

7. Indicate your position type:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Full time position		8	100%
2	Part time position		0	0%
	Total		8	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	8

8. Please indicate your unit of employment. Check all that apply if a joint appointment.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	College of Business, Public Policy and Health		0	0%
2	College of Education and Human Development		2	25%
3	College of Engineering		0	0%
4	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences		1	13%
5	College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture		5	63%
6	Cooperative Extension		0	0%
7	Other (Research Units)		0	0%

Other (Research Units)

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	5
Total Responses	8

9. If faculty, please indicate your current position and rank. (If staff, please skip this question.)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Non-tenure track faculty: Research Faculty		8	100%
2	Non-tenure track faculty: Instructor / Lecturer		0	0%
3	Tenure-track faculty: Assistant Professor		0	0%
4	Tenure-track faculty: Associate Professor		0	0%
5	Tenure-track faculty: Professor		0	0%
	Total		8	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	8