Research Communications Council Minutes  
December 8, 2017

Research Advocacy  
Dr. Melanie Loots, Executive Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, was December’s featured guest. Melanie just returned from an advocacy trip to Washington, D.C., and provided perspective on research advocacy efforts and their relevancy for communicators. Highlights from the discussion included:

Research Advocacy History  
- Ten years ago, the possibility of federal earmarks existed.
- Earmarks were discretionary spending through appropriation acts—funding put into the federal budget by line item.
- This process has phased out and is unlikely to come back.

Current Advocacy Efforts  
- Paul Weinberger, Director of Federal Relations for the Office of Government Relations (OGR), heads of our government-relations efforts in Washington.
- As communications experts, we play an important role in getting them the information they need.
- OGR is open to ideas about government relations and new advocacy approaches.
- Latest trip to Washington, D.C., was to inform delegation of blue waters project and latest supercomputer proposal.

Current Process  
- Working to create targeted communications efforts.
- Melissa Hass and Melissa Edwards developed this new approach.
- Faculty sometimes don’t know we have this process, so it’s helpful to spread the word.
- The following handouts are used in advocacy efforts, and we welcome Ideas from communicators to improve/build on them:
  - Department of Homeland Security
  - Department of Education
  - Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - Department of Defense
  - Department of Health and Human Services/National Institutes of Health
  - National Science Foundation
  - Department of Energy
  - National Endowment for the Humanities and National Endowment for the Arts

Congressional Hearings  
- Communicators don’t always find out when faculty members address senate committees. Is there a way to spread the word better? Also, should we promote these talks?
• Vanessa Faurie, Visiting Director of Advancement for Research Initiatives, advocates for highlighting these events afterward, as there may not be much to gain beforehand.
• One strategy is to find a quote from the faculty member and build on that—challenging to think about how to share this with the larger audience.
• Alumni like to know that we’re engaged and involved. It provides a perception of advocacy efforts that shows engagement, status, and influence.

Office of Corporate Relations
Rashmi Tenneti, Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications, and Roxana Ryan, Assistant Director of Research and Analysis, discussed OCR efforts to help units develop corporate partnerships.
• OCR will help units create corporate friendly documents—“Why should a company work with us?”
• The reports include sections on campus engagement, student recruitment, program activities/involvement, etc.
• The companies OCR is initially focusing on include:
  o State Farm
  o BP
  o Boeing
  o Shell
  o Deere
  o State Farm
• Compiling and gathering the relevant information is the biggest challenge.
• OCR is hoping to hear from the other RCC members about work their units are doing with the companies mentioned above.
• Examples of OCR’s one-pagers:
  o Opportunities for Corporate Engagement: Data Science
  o Opportunities for Corporate Engagement: Leadership

Updates from the OVCR Research Report
• The annual research report is nearly final. We may be reaching out to some of you to confirm content before publishing.

November Book Club
• The next book club meeting will be on Thursday, February 22, at noon at the Family Resiliency Center (the Studio of Christopher Hall, which is at the corner of Lincoln and Nevada). We’ll be discussing Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration by Ed Catmul. This will be a brown bag, so bring your lunch.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements
• As a reminder, the OVCR sends out a weekly funding opportunities and announcements newsletter. If any of your units have opportunities or announcements that you’d like to promote, please send them to us.

Updates from the Group

Advancement at Illinois
• Advancement is working with the research institutes to create more public facing interdisciplinary events. More information on this to come.

Beckman
• Science at the Art—The Art Film Foundation recently received a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for a Science on Screen series and will host three film screenings accompanied with discussions led by experts from the local scientific community. Find more details about the event and sponsorship here. Direct any questions to Maeve Reilly.

Fine and Applied Arts
• Krannert Art Museum named Jon Seydl as their new director. Seydl is an art historian with a specialty in Italian Renaissance art, and he is currently the senior director of collections and programs and curator of European art at Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts. Find full details here.

IGB
• IGB has a new Art of Science installation at the Harold Washington Library in Chicago. Find more details about Art of Science here.
• IGB also held an outreach event with YOUmedia, an innovative teen digital learning space at 12 Chicago Public Library locations.

Graduate College/University Library
• The fifth annual Image of Research competition is accepting images of research, creative, or scholarly work from graduate and professional students at Illinois. The entry deadline is Monday, January 22, 2018. Find full details, including requirements, deadlines, and judging criteria here. Find promotional materials here.

Public Affairs
• Public Affairs is trying to tell a more robust and cohesive story about graduation this year. The theme will be “Transformation—how an Illinois education transformed the lives of students.” Public Affairs welcomes unit participation and any story ideas involving student experiences. Contact Allison Vance for more information.