This month’s featured guests were associates from Lewis Burke (our Washington lobbying group) and Melissa Haas and Paul Weinberger from OGR. They gave an overview of the federal landscape and insights into identifying opportunities for impact. Specific topics covered included: (1) How are federal funding priorities and levels for research established? (2) How does Congress get information to inform appropriations decisions? (3) What are the priorities of this administration? Download the Lewis Burke PowerPoint slides [here](#).

**Highlights from the discussion are below.**

**What do legislators care about?**
- Needs of district
- Economy
- Positive attention from the media
- Reelection

The Office of Government Relations (OGR) is always looking for interesting content or unique opportunities for elected officials to visit campus.

**What’s the ideal flow of information?**
Feel free to reach out to us directly. We’re a small team, but we’re always open to relevant research and issues. Copy Melanie Loots and Melissa Edwards on emails to help coordinate things.

**Would it be helpful to have more materials that highlight the University’s research strengths?**
Yes, tremendously helpful—that’s the dream actually. Opioids is an example of an area where these types of materials would be helpful.

**Can we as a group put together materials around the six areas you mentioned?**
We could do it on a quarterly basis. Identifying cross cutting themes that our members want for a snapshot of what’s happening. It would be awesome to have a one or two-pager of areas of interest. RCC can help compile this information.

**What kinds of research outputs are most impactful?**
Information about grants received and money coming to the districts is always helpful. The number of publications isn’t as important. Research that improves people’s lives in Illinois, in terms of health or security is also of interest. A return on investment always resonates.

*Note: You can always work with Extension on this. That’s their mission.*
Is it helpful to include what we’re doing that’s unique or different from other institutions?  
Yes, those are absolutely helpful.

If you could wave your magic wand and change one thing about information flow, what would that be?  
The big challenge we have is the delay in identifying the expert on campus in areas that are suddenly in the spotlight. We’d like to make connections happen faster.

Sometimes I feel weird tweeting at legislator, should I?  
Not as long as you say good things.

How do we access what a researcher is saying at a hearing if we want to include that in social?  
Hearings are typically webcast. OGR will usually have their written statements, and we can begin working with you to share that information.

Is there a way to build a relationship with communication folks at places at agencies?  
We’re putting together a plan to strengthen these contacts, and we suggest meeting with OVCR folks to facilitate relationship building.

Updates from OVCR
• Amy Adams recently joined the OVCR team as a web developer.
• A College/Unit newsletter list is on Airtable. Please add your newsletter if it’s not already on there.

Updates from the Group
College of Media
• Holly Rushakoff is the new communications director for the college.

IGB
• There’s an upcoming talk at CAS with author David Quammen, whose new book The Tangled Tree deals with evolution, science, and biological history, of which Carl Woese is featured prominently.

IHSI
• IHSI has an ongoing NIH Grant Writing Series. Their next session is September 25, and they’ll have several more sessions throughout the semester.

IPRH
• Elizabeth Tsukahara recently joined IPRH’s team as a Communications Coordinator.
iSEE

- iSEE seeks [Critical Conversation](#) topic. Proposal are due October 15.
- The first online issue of [Q Magazine](#), featuring articles by University of Illinois students enrolled in the Undergraduate Certificate in Environmental Writing, is available.