

SEPTEMBER 15, 2017
INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND ACADEMIC SENATE

***A PROPOSAL TO CREATE A “CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP,”
CERES, AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND***

ABSTRACT

This document, presented to the Indiana University South Bend Academic Senate for adoption in September 2017, describes a plan for the development and organization of a Center for Excellence in Research and Scholarship (CERES) at Indiana University South Bend. The plan was drafted by Associate Professor Joshua Wells, under the auspices of the Office of Academic Affairs, which in Fall 2016 solicited the needs assessments and planning to commence for a center that would develop programs and strategies to facilitate and showcase faculty excellence in research and scholarly activities.

CERES is designed to function as a complementary counterpart to the University Center for Excellence in Teaching, to provide intellectual and organizational support for research and scholarship, which will benefit the entire campus community and help fulfill the university’s mission. A one-time expenditure of up to \$75,000 may be necessary in order to appropriately appoint and organize this center in an existing space on campus. Beyond the initial expenditure, the center will only require lesser funds to produce outreach opportunities and materials, professional development, and to pay for course releases and summer stipends for the director; the center will utilize existing shared secretarial staff in Academic Affairs.

The name “CERES” itself helps to exemplify the purpose of the center, to encourage growth of the IUSB community’s intellectual work on campus and beyond, as Ceres was the Roman goddess (Demeter in Greek) of agricultural fertility. This name situates the hard work and products of research and scholarly activities in the context of IUSB’s Greco-Roman mythological themes that stem from the Titan mascot.

CONTENTS

1. Abstract
2. Assessment of Need
3. Description of Current Best Practices
4. CERES Mission Statement
4. CERES Scope and General Activities
5. CERES Organizational and Governing Structure
6. CERES Initial Budget Categories
6. CERES Initial Goals and Scaffold Assessment Expectations Schedule
7. CERES Timetable for Initial Development

ASSESSMENT OF NEED

Determination of interest in development of CERES among IUSB faculty, and discovery of areas of faculty-identified needs, were accomplished through face-to-face interviews during assembled faculty meetings of departmental units, and with administrators of constituent schools and colleges. These interviews were prompted with a draft general design of a research center in order to solicit feedback about interest in the particular implementation of a center, as well as a list of questions to encourage discussion of particular needs of faculty, staff, and students in particular contexts.

Without exception, the feedback from the faculty, and administrators of the schools and colleges, indicated universal interest in the development of a research center with a general design and scope as communicated in this document. Responses revealed four distinct themes of interest for CERES to act, each of which have important bearing on the IUSB commitments to teaching excellence and regional engagement through the support of excellence in research and scholarship:

1. Infrastructure and Funding: Respondents indicated interest in a center that would actively support IUSB researchers and research infrastructure through promotion of IUSB research regionally, as an advocate for research support needs (assisted identification of opportunities, peer-review of proposal and publication writing, travel assistance), and provide programs to facilitate development and professionalization of student-faculty teams.

2. Collaboration and Networking: Respondents indicated interest in a center that would serve as a pillar around which work groups and interest networks could coalesce by attracting regional clients and interested stakeholders (including links to the new Carnegie Engaged Campus initiative), promote on-campus interdisciplinary cooperation and communication, attract collaboration with other regional campuses in line with the *IU Regional Blueprint 2.0* and the goals of IU programs such as *New Frontiers*, and coordination with the IUSB University Center for Excellence in Teaching (UCET) (to enhance research-to-classroom pipelines, in consideration of SOTL as a research endeavor, and cooperative promotion and tenure preparation activities).

3. Departmental and Faculty: Respondents indicated interest in a center that would provide general and tailored programming to help disciplines and individual tenure line faculty, contingent faculty, and staff develop their research agendas and activities, including departmental and related disciplinary summits on tenure track assessment and best practices for employee evaluation, mentorship of junior faculty beginning with new faculty orientation programming and of senior faculty seeking promotion, trainings for grant proposal and budget development, trainings for new tool use (e.g. software, archives), guidance for coordinating teaching and research, management training to work with budgets and student employees.

4. Student Support: Respondents indicated interest in a center that would provide relevant training and professional development opportunities to student researchers who either work directly with IUSB researchers as assistants or partners, or who are mentored through individual projects, at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Topics in this category included student training in general research and scholarly expectations, programs to support and enrich research participation among underrepresented and international student populations, programs to help students match interests with faculty activities, next-level

educational preparation (undergrad to MA/PhD, or MA to PhD), and facilitation of interdisciplinary student support groups for theses or project reporting.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT BEST PRACTICES

Among the colleges and universities recognized in the “IU South Bend Peer Institutions Benchmarking Report” (2015), and in the IU system at large, a variety of campus research centers exist. These exhibit a number of useful organizational traits and activities that are illustrative of what should be expected at CERES.

Among the IUSB peer institutions outside the IU system, five schools stand out as having particularly robust research centers which the organizers of CERES should strive to emulate: Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU), Augusta State University (ASU), the University of Michigan at Flint (UMF), Southern Oregon University (SOU), and Southern Utah University (SUU). Of these schools, all had above median retention rates to second year (except for SUU, which was still ahead of IUSB), and all had above median six year graduation rates (except for AASU, which was still ahead of IUSB). Within these schools, UMF had the highest second year retention rate of 72% (IUSB 63%), and SUU had the highest six year graduation rate of 44% (IUSB 24%). All five schools have existing programs analogous to the IUSB Student/Mentor Academic Research Teams (SMART) funding program. These schools also have more detailed and well-defined campus programs that exist to promote research and scholarship interactions, mentorship, and partnership between faculty and students, and their regions, beyond the scope of what currently exists at IUSB. Important elements of these peer institution research centers which should be emulated by CERES at IUSB include detailed Web portals and face-to-face opportunities for matching student interests and faculty expertise (AASU, ASU, UMF), well-defined disciplinary specialization among center directors and faculty board for broad engagement (ASU, UMF), offerings of training activities for the entire lifecycle of a university population from undergraduates through to senior faculty (AASU, SOU, SUU, UMF), purposed training programs that are focused on creating highly functional faculty-student teams (AASU, UMF), easily navigated Web information and a well-defined set of contact(s) for potential regional clients to start contacts with the campus research apparatus (SOU, SUU).

Within the IU system, there is not a similar campus-wide structure at IUSB’s sibling regional campuses of East, Kokomo, Northwest, and Southeast. Those four campuses contain research support mechanisms for faculty and students similar to those available at IUSB through the Faculty Research Grant (FRG) and SMART programs, mainly focused on limited one-time seed funding for projects and not for broader campus development and regional service; although the IU Kokomo Applied and Community Research Center provides a good example of a research service point of contact for regional clients regarding social, behavioral, and economic activities. Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW), with its contextually unique organization, contains an *Institute for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Endeavors* (IRSC) to provide financial and logistical support faculty and student activities and promote regional outreach, but without the broader emphases on professional development and training as exemplified by AASU, SOU, SUU, and UMF. IU Bloomington (IUB) and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) have more robust structures befitting their higher tier research campus statuses; IUPUI in particular describes the mission of its research center with direct

reference to the National Organization of Research Development Professionals to: “... support the efforts of faculty to secure extramural research funding and initiate and nurture critical partnerships throughout the institutional research enterprise, among institutions, and with external stakeholders. With the goal of enabling competitive individual and team research and facilitating research excellence [by] implementing collaborative services and resources that span across disciplines, and cross administrative boundaries within organizations and beyond, in order to foster multi- and interdisciplinary research excellence.”

CERES MISSION STATEMENT

The Indiana University South Bend (IUSB) Center for Excellence in Research and Scholarship (CERES) supports the university’s core values of research, scholarship, and creative activity as integral and overlapping areas with teaching to form a combined realm of excellence in the campus community. This realm is formed by diverse faculty activities as expert researchers and scholars, is expanded by their student engagement and the achievements of the student body, is supported with the efforts of staff and contingent instructors, and finds expression in intellectual products that are of value to regional needs and circumstances in a dynamic and complex global climate.

The mission of CERES is to foster and facilitate a culture of research and scholarship in a complete lifecycle from senior faculty to first-year student at IUSB, and to demonstrate the benefits of diverse research and scholarship to the IUSB region. The mission of CERES does not include activities of the central IU systems for sponsored research administration and research compliance. CERES complements existing centralized sponsored research structures with strategic development and outreach efforts focused on the IUSB campus and region.

CERES SCOPE AND GENERAL ACTIVITIES

The scope of CERES is the IUSB campus and service region. CERES will provide various support mechanisms to enhance IUSB institutional expertise in research and scholarship at all levels, and engage stakeholders in our service region to collaboratively recognize and use IUSB expertise, research, and scholarship to enhance the development and well-being of our communities, region, and the state through civic, economic, and cultural development.

CERES is thus built upon a series of activity categories that support the university’s core values and are central to the CERES mission:

1. promotion, facilitation, and enhancement of faculty-student opportunities and activities
2. support for project proposal development and project management activities
3. support for individual and group professionalization and development activities
4. development of interdisciplinary interactions and collaborations
5. promotion and facilitated reuse of IUSB expertise in regional development
6. continuous assessment of the state of IUSB as relates to the mission for feedback

CERES ORGANIZATIONAL AND GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of the IUSB Center for Excellence in Research and Scholarship will consist of a director, a faculty board of advisors, as well as ex officio board members from strategic staff positions and regional stakeholders. Decisions regarding the activities of the center will be made with the simple majority vote or consensus of the group consisting of the director and the faculty board of advisors.

The director will be appointed from the IUSB senior faculty to a three-year term. Choice of a new director should be made with preference to an individual who has served for some time on the advisory board. Removal of the director for cause shall be appropriate for any behavior that would cause sanction in the course of regular university duties. The director shall work to organize and facilitate implementation of actions devised and generally approved by the board by vote or consensus in pursuit of the CERES mission, and serve as supervisor over any staff or student employees tasked to the center unless otherwise delegated or specified. The director will serve as an at-large member of CERES to help serve general campus and regional needs.

The faculty board of advisors will consist of nine individuals, appointed to three-year terms from IUSB constituent schools and colleges, who broadly represent the research and scholarship interests of the campus. To that end: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will be allocated three members, to be filled by a humanist, a physical or biological scientist, and a social scientist; one representative each will be allocated to the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts, the Judd Leighton School of Business, the School of Education, and the Vera Z. Dwyer College of Health Sciences; two representatives will be allocated to a pool which includes the Labor Studies program, the Schurz Library, the School of Social Work, and the Purdue Polytechnic Institute. Removal of a board member for cause shall be appropriate for any behavior that would cause sanction in the course of regular university duties. The faculty board members will serve as representatives of their particular areas of expertise (generally considered, without departmental boundaries); they are expected to solicit ideas and needs from colleagues, to individually and jointly develop programming and opportunities in support of the CERES mission, to assist the assessment activities of CERES within their respective areas and generally, and to serve as points of contact about their respective areas to students, regional stakeholders, and others who may seek IUSB research and scholarly expertise.

The ex officio board membership will include members of the IUSB community, including the Contracts and Grants Coordinator, the Grants Writer, and the chair or selected alternate from the Academic Senate Research and Development Committee (this person cannot simultaneously serve as director or fill another board position). IUSB ex officio members have no term limit, their removal for cause shall be appropriate for any behavior that would cause sanction in the course of regular university duties. These members are not part of any decision or action process on the part of the center, and are non-voting, but are chosen for their expertise and institutional knowledge and should be allowed equal voice in deliberations.

The ex officio board membership will also include up to three members from the regional community, to be nominated by the director and accepted with a simple majority vote of the board of advisors. Regional members will have a two-year term limit to provide a more dynamic tone to the positions. Regional members may be removed for causes that would be

appropriate to cause sanction among university employees or for negligence by a simple majority vote of the combined board of advisors and the director. These members are not part of any decision or action process on the part of the center, and are non-voting, but are chosen for their expertise and knowledge of regional needs and capacities to be served by CERES.

CERES INITIAL BUDGET CATEGORIES

It is expected that a first-time expenditure of about \$75,000 will be necessary to fully organize, supply, and staff CERES in its initial work, with lower costs for general operating expenses in subsequent years. Expenses include:

- Office Equipment: computer, furniture, telephone
- Communications Expenses: Website development and maintenance, shared copy/printing for general use, professional printing of outreach materials, postage,
- Media Expenses: books, journals, and online subscriptions through the IUSB Library
- Travel and Outreach Expenses: honoraria, hospitality, regional (more often) and national (less often) travel, National Organization of Research Development Professionals membership and meeting participation
- Salaries: partial use of shared secretarial staff through the office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, one course release per semester for director, summer stipend for director
- Awards: faculty conference travel assistance to pay above and beyond what is covered for faculty within their various colleges

CERES INITIAL GOALS AND SCAFFOLD ASSESSMENT EXPECTATIONS SCHEDULE

Based upon the mission, scope, and general activities of CERES, it is expected that the center should be able to define notable quantitative and qualitative successes on campus and in the IUSB service region within the first two years, and to demonstrate maintenance, development, and incremental improvements of those trends in subsequent years in the development contexts of IUSB, the IU system, the IUSB service region, and the state of Indiana in general.

- Year One: develop qualitative and quantitative assessment of all research and scholarly activity on campus and effects of CERES programming on individuals and groups; categorize quantities and qualities of students engaged in projects; categorize types of activities conducted and resultant products; categorize types of support resources sought, awarded, and used; use pre- and post- event survey instruments to assess effects of CERES programming; development of annual report
- Year Two: continued implementation of campus efforts described in Year One for longitudinal comparison; use appropriate survey, interview, and resultant data analyses to assess regional impacts; development of annual report

- Year Three: continued implementation of campus efforts described in Year One for longitudinal comparison; continued implementation of regional efforts described in Year Two for longitudinal comparison; development of third-year report for Year Four director and board detailing previous successes and ranked assessments of on-campus and regional priorities for the next 1.5 years, and to facilitate longitudinal assessment in Year Four and beyond
- Year Four: continued implementation of on-campus and regional assessments tailored for changes in priorities; development of annual report

CERES TIMETABLE FOR INITIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Spring 2017: finalize design study and draft proposal for CERES
- Fall 2017: introduce proposal for CERES to IUSB Academic Senate Executive Committee for approval and move to full senate vote, complete search process for director through office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Spring 2018: include CERES in IUSB budget plans for 2018-2019 academic year, complete processes for appointment of faculty board members through IUSB constituent colleges, schools, and programs
- Summer 2018: have monthly phone meetings (June, July, August) between director and faculty board to develop initial plans for 2018-2019 academic year including initial research gala for early Fall 2018
- Fall 2018: full implementation of CERES, initial programming development and execution, initial assessment exploration, initial campus-wide research gala (current activities, sabbatical findings, notable students, etc.) to inspire campus community and engage students, complete search process for ex officio regional board members
- Spring 2019: continued programming development and execution, continued assessment exploration, exploratory activities for engagement in collaboration with regional board members, exploratory participation in annual meeting of National Organization of Research Development Professionals
- Summer 2019: summary assessment report of campus needs met and not met by CERES, summary assessment report of campus research activity, summary assessment of engagement activities with regional board members, development of target campus-wide research gala
- Fall 2019: continue targeted programming development and execution on campus and engagement for regional needs as identified in Summer 2019, execution of targeted and planned campus-wide research gala early in the fall to highlight successes of the previous year
- Spring 2020: continue per Fall 2019 and present findings to National Organization of Research Development Professionals for broader exposure and critique; invite other regional IU campuses, other regional university researchers, and non-IU partners for research summit at IUSB in Summer or Fall 2020