

## **Office of Research Impact Statement**

Since taking on this position in 2016, many things have changed at UCF, from its leadership (three presidents and most of the vice-presidents) to its budget model. Leadership within OR had not changed in more than two decades. When I arrived, I was tasked with two major objectives: modernize and make the Office of Research more efficient and better able to compete for sponsored awards and ensure the College of Graduate Studies grows and develops in a manner that would complement and extend the research mission.

Like the institution, I've implemented many changes in both of my areas that have improved performance. Aside from achieving most of the strategic plan objectives, I am most proud of the changes I've helped implement that go beyond the division, but which directly impact on the performance of each.

Progress toward UCF's strategic goals for Research:

**Double research awards to \$250 million in five years.** This was an ambitious goal that we are close to achieving in 2021.

- UCF's research increased from \$133 million in 2016 to \$204.5 million in 2020, despite two government shutdowns
- the complete reorganization of Research operations and modernization of software used for research management from 2017-2019 (Project Wahoo) helped facilitate submissions and award management
- OR implemented several SEED funding programs (more than \$2 million from 2019-2020) to encourage additional research including a program with imec in March 2021.
- OR Development Office, which helps junior and senior faculty prepare and compete for grants, launched several initiatives (2017-2020) that have resulted in new awards including leading Florida in NSF CAREER grant awards in 2020 and several large grants from the NSF and NIH.
- Assumed responsibility for Faculty Cluster Initiative, which includes 9 interdisciplinary clusters at various stages of development.

**Become a top public research university by 2035:** UCF is ranked in the top 100 by Top American Research Universities in the Nation rankings. In 2018 UCF cracked the top 50 list based on 2017 data. However, in 2019 UCF has slipped back into the lower tier. Some of the metrics used to rank are not directly within OR's control such as amount of annual giving, number of National Academy Members and student SAT scores.

**Achieve 135 patents awarded by the US Patent and Trademark Office over three years**

- Metric achieved.
- UCF continues to rank in the top 100 universities in the world for issuing patents according to National Academy of Inventors and the Intellectual Property Owners Association.
- UCF ranked 29 in 2020 up from 31 in 2019 and has ranked every year since 2013.

**Reach 200 postdoctoral research appointees**

- Developed and implemented the P3 matching program to fund post-doctoral fellows. Total number of fellows before the program (November 2016) was 62; there are currently 162, with over 45 more in the pipeline
- Additional funding and transition back to "normal operations" will see the number increase to our strategic goal.

**Other Initiatives not directly connected to strategic goals, but that support them.**

- Relocating post-award staff formerly housed and reporting to Finance and Accounting to the Office of Research and training them to be grant administrators.
- Revamping the Institutional Review Board, including initiating a second IRB to serve the biomedical sciences and beginning to stand up a clinical trials office
- Implementing digital security protocols to meet government required NIST 800-53 level standards.
- Developing master agreements, contracts and NDAs to speed up review and completion of contracts
- Bringing in NSF program managers to visit UCF for training purposes and providing more than 60 workshops reaching more than 500 faculty

- Launching Luminary Awards to recognize research and scholarship leaders that have achieved national and international prominence at UCF
- Increased integration of undergraduate and graduate research for better and more recognized Student Research Week prominence
- Assumed responsibility for the various faculty overseen groups (e.g., lab safety.) and worked to improve both our processes and the relationship among EH&S and faculty
- Created a new website for EH&S to make it more user friendly
- Established a communications office to better promote research outside the university and enhance internal communications
- Launched Blue Ribbon Panels with industry representatives to investigate strategic opportunities for UCF in the area of Energy
- Launched Blue Ribbon Panels with industry representatives to investigate strategic opportunities for UCF in the area of Big Data
- Launched program to provide white coat cleaning service to ensure appropriate safety and cleaning of coats required to operate in laboratories across UCF
- Created a task force of faculty from across the university to create a Research Lab Ramp Down and Ramp Up plan at the start of the COVID pandemic to ensure research continued while minimizing risk
- Communicated COVID-19 related research information through an organized, multi-layered campaign which included email, notices, websites and direct outreach
- Established the Department Administrator Research Focus Group (DARF). The group consists of 15 department administrators from approximately 10 colleges/departments. The group was created to provide input as the VP for Research embarked on reorganizing OR operations and to help communicate change management during the restructuring process. DARF continues today as an important advisory group to the VPR as we continue to look for ways to provide better service.