Master Plan – University Research Workgroup

In attendance:
1. Paul Lingenfelter, Chair 7. David Longanecker,
2. Kerry Davidson & Karen Denby, 8. Cliff Loy, Committee of 100
   BoR 9. Meg Mahoney, LABI: BRAC
4. Les Guice, LA Tech 11. Donna Ryan, LSU/Pennington
5. Tom Klei, LSU System 12. Cheryl Serrett, PAR
6. Rancy Legeai, LAICU/Tulane (for Yvette Jones) 13. Sharon Southall, UL System
14. Aziz Saber, ALFS

University Research Workgroup:
• Task is to consider broad strategy; investment toward productivity, in strategic view of research enhancement/growth. How to use the research funded enterprise to the betterment of the state… how might they be focused in a different way?
• Consider meshing w/ BoR (Sponsored Programs) work in developing strategies for the master plan.
• Using LONI as communication system in the link – can enrich academic envt by linking the state for collaboration.

Presentation – comparing research dollars, data
• In LA research expenditure per capita is lower than (most) states: private research expenditure is 31% of total (75% nationally)
• HEd expenditures: greater state investment in LA than most other states… Growth rate is good

DISCUSSIONS:
LA puts a lot of state money into research: are we getting the kind of returns that we should? Is it serving the state’s priorities? Are we leveraging it enough?

Human Capital,
• To build an academic environment: is it more productive to support early development (junior faculty) or to attract more senior scientists with start-up packages, i.e., with external funding, track records, teams, who attract post-docs, technology transfer, corporate research.
• Group people w/ multiple disciplines around a theme/topic/focus area: build energy with different skills, backgrounds all addressing the same goal.
• Life Cycle issue of an academic career: developing young faculty is important, but that’s not how you build real capacity, e.g., build high level capacity & infrastructure, then develop the young.
• Need for connections, collaboration – formalized mentoring. What if: fund junior faculty, but they need mentoring. It doesn’t all have to be at every institution … those junior faculty in the teaching inst could collaborate and be mentored by those senior faculty in research institutions.
• Importance of infrastructure: one can’t attract top researchers without facilities, technical support, and labs. The increased state funding brings an opportunity for institutions to address strategic use of resources.

Research in non-STEM fields:
• LA has good reputation in K-12 teacher education innovations; liberal arts.
• What is the right role for the State, the right balance in the State’s role? Are there other things the State should do? What should be the objectives – reasonable, with reasonable time period; right strategy & measure? What is the role of competitive grants in infrastructure?
• What should institutions do, in management of the research enterprise, to ensure they are getting as much benefit as possible in mgt (& creation) of flexible resources?