

INSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS TO FACILITATE THE INTEGRATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL & RESEARCH ACADEMIC STAFF

BACKGROUND

At the June 2001 Board of Regents Education Committee meeting, Interim Senior Vice President Al Beaver gave an informational overview and submitted an executive summary on the results of the *Instructional & Research Academic Staff Working Group* report and the comments it generated from Provosts. Both the executive summary and the Working Group Report are available at: <http://www.uwsa.edu/acadaff/ias/>. This working group report was written in response to a resolution on “staffing principles” made at the March 2000 Board of Regents meeting. Two of the principles focused specifically on the instructional and research academic staff (IRAS) issues of 1) titling of instructional and research academic staff, and 2) the integration of non-tenure track instructional staff into departments and institutions.

The Interim Senior Vice President determined that we could not support the working group recommendation to create systemwide instructional professor and research professor titles because there existed divergent perspectives within the system and no clear national consensus or trend on instructional and research academic staff titles. We did remind institutions that existing personnel policy permits the establishment of informal working titles for IRAS and we encouraged them to use this flexibility as appropriate.

We did accept all of the working group’s recommendations on enhancing the integration of instructional and research academic staff into institutional life and noted that many of these were already being implemented.

In December 2001, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Cora Marrett sent a survey to all UW System Provosts requesting that they provide information on institutional efforts towards meeting the eleven recommendations on integration of IRAS that were identified in the March 2001 Working Group Report. The survey is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

SURVEY RESULTS

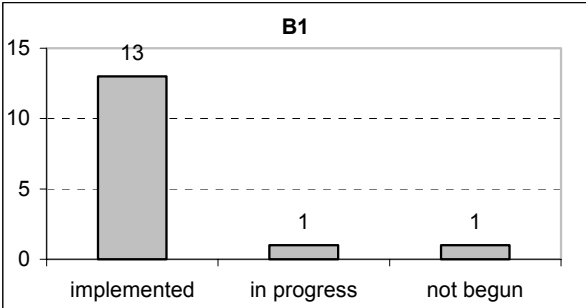
All fifteen institutions in the UW System responded to the survey. Overall, these responses indicate that efforts are underway on all campuses to pay ongoing attention to successfully integrating IRAS into the academic life of the campus. The primary integrative mechanisms in place at UW institutions are academic staff governance systems and institutional orientation programs.

Following are graphic summations of the survey responses we received from the fifteen institutions for each recommendation. This report summarizes the survey results according to the four recommendation areas identified in the Working Group Report: 1) Instructional and Research Support for IRAS, 2) Orientation Provided IRAS, 3) Professional Development, and 4) Governance. Appendix 2 provides results that summarize, by institution, how many

recommendations have been implemented, are in progress, or have not yet begun to be implemented.

1) INSTRUCTIONAL AND RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR IRAS

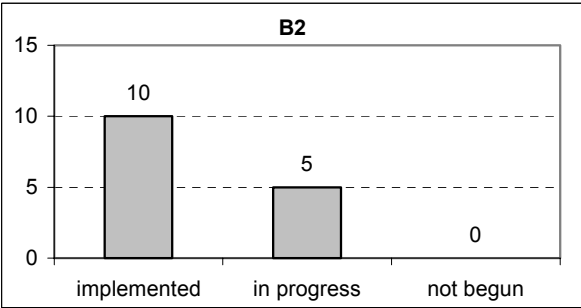
B.1 All IRAS should have a minimum support module that includes access to each of the following: (a) office space, (b) clerical support, (c) phone service, and (d) computer with internet access and e-mail.



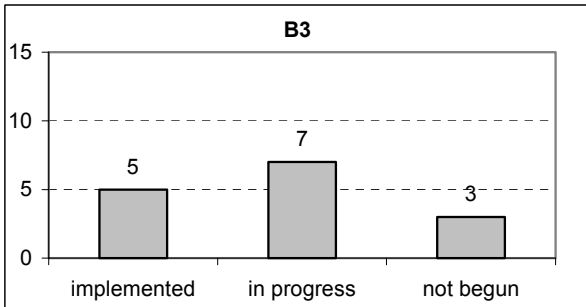
Only one institution indicated that IRAS do not yet have minimum support in terms of space, clerical support and technology. A number of institutions indicated that some IRAS share offices due to limited space on the campus. Clerical support is usually provided by the Department. One institution is still completing a survey to determine the support situation for IRAS. Another institution reported significant progress towards full implementation, but believes there may be small numbers of IRAS that do not have full support service as of yet. Staff on this campus are currently determining the extent of the problem.

2) ORIENTATION PROVIDED IRAS

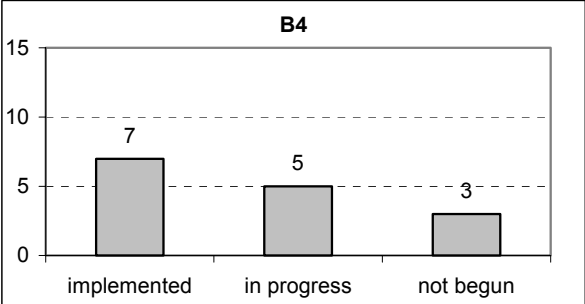
B.2 All institutions should continue to offer new IRAS orientations to the institution, school/college, division, department, and campus.



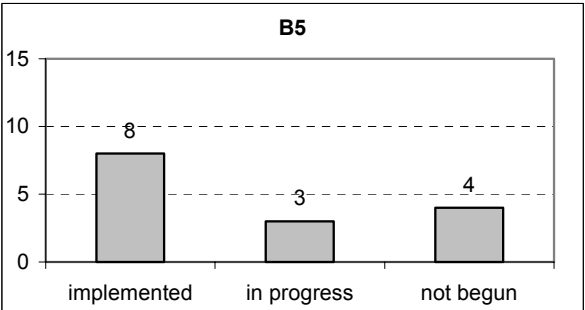
B.3 For those IRAS unable to attend orientations, institutions should develop alternative methods to acquaint IRAS with the institution, school/college, division, department, and campus. In addition, on-going orientation and information updates should be provided to continuing IRAS. Methods might include use of the web, "e-orientation," or videotape.



B.4 Provide mentoring support for IRAS to enhance their integration into the institution.



B.5 Institutions should develop or enhance a webpage that includes information specific and relevant to IRAS. The webpage should be promoted widely across each institution.

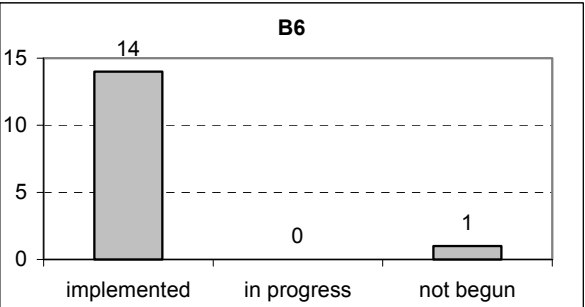


All UW System institutions are providing regular orientation for new IRAS. While all institutions are offering formalized institution and school/college level orientations, the provision of departmental orientations varies significantly among and within institutions. Of the five institutions that indicated “implementation in progress” as their response to B.2, it was largely due to the inconsistency of departmental level orientation activities.

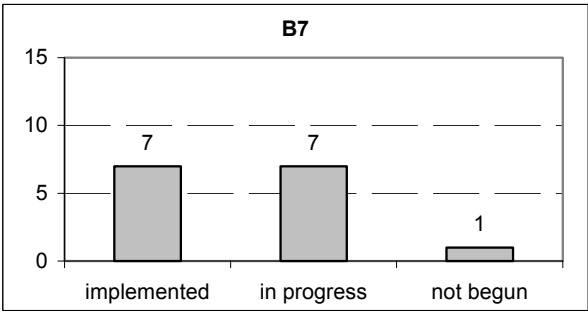
Most institutions (12 of 15) have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, alternative methods for orienting new IRAS who are unable to attend orientations. These alternate means primarily rely upon web-based orientation materials. Centralized, formal mentoring programs are also in place or in process at $\frac{3}{4}$ of UW institutions. Similarly, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of UW institutions have already placed, or are in the process of placing, specific information relevant to IRAS on the web. Four institutions have not yet begun this process, but each of these institutions does have academic staff policies on the web and has an intention to add information specifically regarding IRAS in the future.

3) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

B.6 Institutions should review professional development opportunities for IRAS to ensure that such opportunities are based on programmatic and/or professional need, not on title or longevity, in accordance with the Regents’ 21st Century Report.



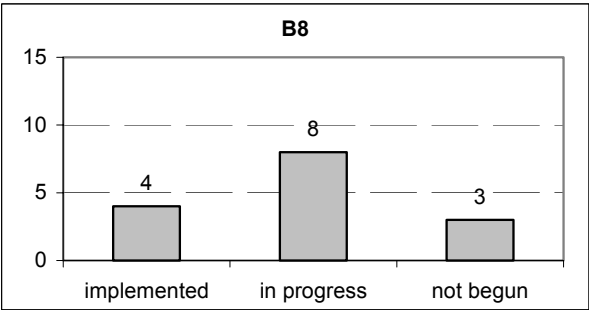
B.7 Institutions should consider offering new or expanded professional development opportunities for IRAS (e.g., staff exchange programs, study leave, support to attend and present at conferences, etc.).



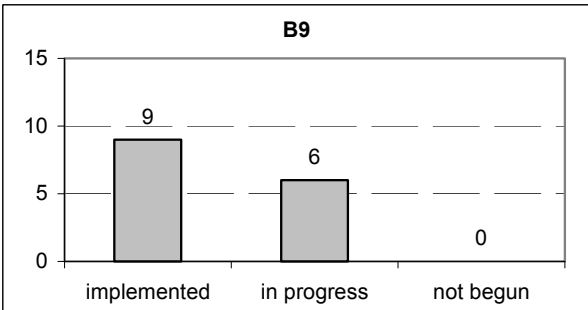
Fourteen institutions have professional development grants available for IRAS. IRAS are restricted from those development opportunities, such as sabbaticals, which are reserved for faculty. A number of institutions limit eligibility on some grants to individuals with greater than 50% appointments. Release time is also not usually offered for IRAS with less than half-time appointments. No institution had grants that used longevity as an award criterion. Two institutions indicated that there is significant variation among departments and units in the ability for IRAS (with 50% or greater appointments) to be granted leave time. All institutions that offer professional development opportunities also have some study leave opportunities or grants to support presenting at conferences (though fewer institutions offer both). Several institutions indicated that funding was a major obstacle to new or expanded opportunities as the pool of dollars for professional development (for either faculty or IRAS) is relatively small.

4) GOVERNANCE

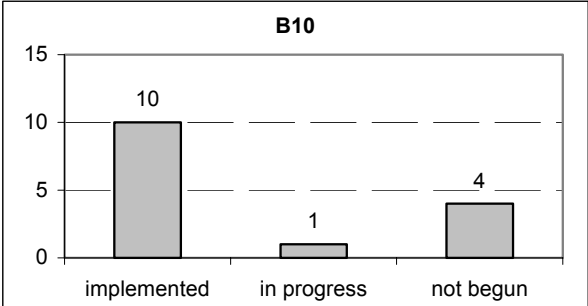
B.8 Participation in departmental governance by career IRAS (those with an appointment of 50 percent or more and who have been with their institution multiple years) is encouraged. Institutions should ensure their eligibility to participate.



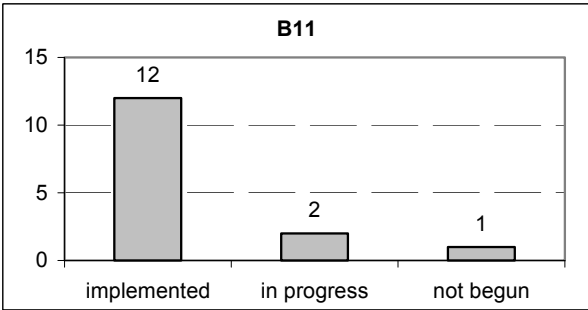
B.9 Institutions should review the role of IRAS in academic staff and faculty governance at all levels to insure that the IRAS voice is heard.



B.10 If institutions do not have a single faculty/academic staff governing body, executive committees of the respective faculty governing body and academic staff governing body should meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of mutual institutional interest.



B.11 Academic staff governance groups should have representation from both category A and category B academic staff on relevant governing bodies, committees and groups.



The primary mechanism at UW System institutions for IRAS to ‘be heard’ is through a governmental body specifically for Academic Staff or through a faculty governance body that includes Academic Staff members. At some institutions IRAS have a choice as to whether they will participate in the Academic Staff governance body or the faculty governance body. Fourteen institutions have implemented or are in the process of implementing policy to ensure that there is representation by both category A and category B academic staff on relevant governing bodies, committees and groups. A number of institutions are working to address relatively lower numbers and involvement by category B academic staff, while other institutions have addressed this problem by formalizing how many positions are reserved for category A and category B academic staff members.

Eleven of the fifteen institutions have structures that ensure communication between academic staff governance and faculty governance either by a joint governance body (three institutions) or regular meetings between the academic staff executive committee and faculty executive committee. Four institutions report no formalized means for faculty and academic staff governance executive committees to meet or exchange information.

All institutions reported significant variation among departments in the level of involvement by IRAS in departmental governance. Some institutions offer opportunities for granting IRAS ‘faculty status’ in order to participate in departmental governance. Some offer full participation (even without ‘faculty status’) and voting rights except in rank, salary and tenure decisions.

DISCUSSION

Based on the survey results, there has been significant effort across UW System to improve the integration of IRAS into the academic life of the campus. Particularly notable are the results for recommendation B1, which indicate that a minimum support module of space, clerical support, phone and computer resources is implemented on all but one of the UW System institutions. Also encouraging were the results relating to mentoring initiatives (recommendation B4), which indicate that only three institutions have not implemented or begun to implement mentoring support for IRAS. Notable too, is the fact that fourteen institutions currently have or are implementing changes to ensure that both Category A and Category B academic staff have representation on relevant governing bodies, committees and groups.

The survey results included some useful examples of ways that institutions are addressing the integration of IRAS. A number of campuses have undertaken their own surveys of departments and IRAS to determine what problems or obstacles to integration exist on their own campuses. One institution has a team of individuals that have been working on IRAS issues ever since they attended a 1999 UW System forum on IRAS. Their work has resulted in a web based survey of all IRAS to determine needs and interests, a number of 'brown bag' forums for IRAS aimed at those identified needs, an Orientation Session for new faculty/staff that now includes an IRAS member on the panel, a new IRAS issues web site, and an IRAS distribution list for administrative updates.

Obstacles identified as barriers to successful integration included space issues that made the provision of private offices to all IRAS not always possible, limited financial resources to offer professional development opportunities, and issues regarding the ways contracts for IRAS are written. One institution offers IRAS an unlimited number of one-year contracts, however this institution has concerns that one-year contracts (even when unlimited in number) may limit the likelihood that IRAS will apply for grants or governance opportunities that require a time commitment or future planning greater than one year. Decentralization can also be a barrier as most institutions report significant variation at the departmental level in the attention paid to successfully involving IRAS.

NEXT STEPS

There were a few areas that surfaced where staff in the Office of Academic Affairs could assist institutions as they continue to work on IRAS issues. Since the survey results reveal that much of the contact and interaction with IRAS occurs within the department, it is important to work with department chairpersons to enhance their awareness and understanding of IRAS policies and issues. There also appears to be varying practices related to some IRAS policy and personnel matters. The UW System Office of Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources, could provide appropriate campus leaders with accurate information about IRAS policy issues and interpretations. Over the next several months we will distribute this report to Provosts and other constituent groups to review these results and gather their recommendations on addressing the obstacles to full integration of IRAS into institutional and departmental life and other issues that surfaced in this survey.

December 4, 2001

TO: Provosts and Vice Chancellors

FROM: Cora B. Marrett
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Instructional & Research Academic Staff (IRAS) Report On Implementation

In late October, I sent you a letter informing you of the *Instructional & Research Academic Staff Working Group* report and our recommendations for implementation. In the letter, I asked that your institution submit a report to the Office of Academic Affairs by May 1, 2002, informing us of your progress towards meeting the recommendations regarding the integration of research and instructional academic staff into institutional life. Please use the attached format (also available for download as a Microsoft Word document at <http://www.uwsa.edu/acadaff/ias/>) to report on your institution's progress. Since we are asking for a single report from each campus, I urge you to consult widely so the information you provide reflects a range of perspectives.

The Office of Academic Affairs will review the reports received from each institution to highlight successes, and to identify areas where campuses are encountering barriers to full integration of research and instructional academic staff. As you complete the report, please provide us a contact name for initiatives that have been particularly successful or innovative so we can share best practices widely with all system institutions. Based on the information we gather, we will produce a report to share with the Board of Regents at the June 2002 meeting.

Thank you for your assistance with this initiative. When you have completed the document, you may mail hard copy, send it electronically to jsheppard@uwsa.edu, or fax it to 608-263-2046. If you have any questions about this report please contact Fran Garb (608-263-9939, fgarb@uwsa.edu) or Janice Sheppard (608-262-5563, jsheppard@uwsa.edu).

cc: Katharine C. Lyall, President
Chancellors
Ronald Singer, Associate Vice President
Larry Rubin, Assistant Vice President
Chuck McConnell, Assistant Vice President
Fran Garb, Senior Academic Planner
Janice Sheppard, Academic Planner
Faculty Representatives
Academic Staff Representatives

REPORT FROM UW- _____
Name of person completing report _____
Phone _____ email _____

CAMPUS REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS TO FACILITATE THE INTEGRATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL & RESEARCH ACADEMIC STAFF

Please respond to each question by summarizing what your campus has done or plans to do to implement the recommendations from the *Instructional & Research Academic Staff Working Group* report (p. 9-10). Where appropriate, provide the name of a contact person so we can get the necessary information to highlight successes from the various institutions. If you have met barriers to implementing these recommendations, please also share that information. In preparing one response per institution, please consult widely with governance and administrative or service offices to provide campus-wide perspective.

You can obtain this document as a Microsoft Word document for download from the web at <http://www.uwsa.edu/acadaff/ias/>. The grayed areas in the document are form fields that will expand as text is entered.

B. Recommendations for UW Institutions to Facilitate Integration of IRAS (*Instructional & Research Working Group*, submitted to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, March 16, 2001, p. 9)

INSTRUCTIONAL AND RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR IRAS

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Describe your institution's efforts toward meeting this recommendation:

Recommendation implemented Implementation in progress Implementation not yet begun

For more information, contact: _____ email: _____

ORIENTATION PROVIDED IRAS

B.2 All institutions should continue to offer new IRAS orientations to the institution, school/college, division, department, and campus.

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For more information, contact: _____ email: _____

Please provide any additional comments or information we should know:

Survey Responses Tabulated by UW System Institution

