

Project Title: Creating a Center to Enhance Clinical Research at an Academic Medical Center

Topic Category: Research

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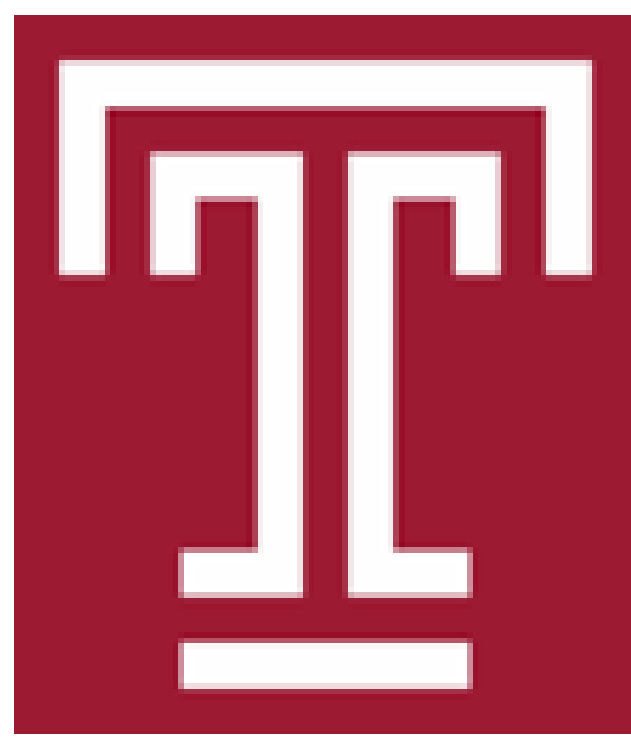
Background/Significance of the project: The volume and breadth of clinical research in academic medical centers has been decreasing for decades across the US. The fallout of this trend is felt most strongly by public and safety net hospitals, particularly ones without CTSA support, that serve poorer communities and can lead to decreased access to innovative therapies for patients and losses in revenue and academic prestige to those AMCs. At LKSOM, only three of 17 clinical departments (Internal Medicine, Emergency Medicine (EM), Pathology) have NIH funding to clinician-scientists. The goal of this project was to create a Center that leverages the strength of the successful EM research program and that overcomes obstacles to clinical research identified by faculty across clinical departments at LKSOM.

Methods/Approach/Evaluation Strategy: The Center to Enhance Clinical Research was designed with input from the faculty through institutional research strategic planning efforts. In November 2018, under the direction of the Executive Dean for Research, a six-member group of basic and clinical scientists formed a Research Directions' subcommittee of a Strategic Planning Task Force charged with proposing a plan to enhance research collaboration and productivity at LKSOM. The group collected relevant information from administration in addition to conducting a faculty survey on areas of research strengths and barriers to research. An electronic link to the 13 question survey was sent via email to all 430 full-time LKSOM faculty. Survey responses were reviewed and grouped by relatedness. These data plus input from clinical chairs, research administration, research faculty and coordinators were used to create an organizational structure for a Center to meet the needs identified; a financial analysis for implementation is currently underway. Evaluation will include review of research volume, clinician-scientist engagement, and trends in NIH Blue Ridge ranking by clinical department.

Outcomes/Results: The task force identified research strengths and barriers to clinical research at LKSOM. The group met in person to review and summarize data from the Dean's office and the faculty survey. Survey of the faculty (n=55 respondents) revealed Cardiovascular, Neurosciences, Cancer Biology, HIV research and Substance Abuse among the top research directions. Faculty indicated that the major needs to promote research activity for clinical investigators are: release from clinical duties for research (31%), administrative infrastructure support (24%), mentoring on finding and writing grants (12%), education on IRB submission process (9%), reimbursement for participating in research studies (18%). The Center was designed to meet these key needs and includes:

- 1) A clinician–scientist Center Director experienced in multi-disciplinary collaborative research;
- 2) Dedicated translational and clinical faculty to provide mentoring and strategic direction;
- 3) Expanded staff for grants/contracts administration, grant preparation, regulatory education and training, and proper accounting of study funds received.

Discussion/Conclusion with Statement of Impact/Potential Impact: Adoption of a clinician-driven research Center that includes resources specific to clinical research conduct and administration will enhance clinical research at LKSOM. Successful implementation will promote faculty engagement in research and increase institutional research rankings and academic prestige.



Strategic Enhancement of Clinical Research at an Academic Medical Center: Leveraging success and addressing faculty needs



Nina T. Gentile, MD; Steve Houser, PhD, Senior Associate Dean for Research; Yuri Persidsky, MD, PhD, Chair, Research Strategic Planning Committee; Susan Weigers, MD, President and CEO Temple Faculty Practice Plan and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Background

- Volume of clinical research in AMCs has been decreasing for decades
- At LKSOM, three of 17 clinical departments ave NIH funding to clinicians
 - Internal Medicine,
 - Emergency Medicine,
 - Pathology
- Resident research de-emphasized
- Patients not represented and cannot inform health care policy

Objective

- To create a Center that 1) leverages the strength of the EM research program, 2) overcomes obstacles to clinical research at LKSOM

Methods

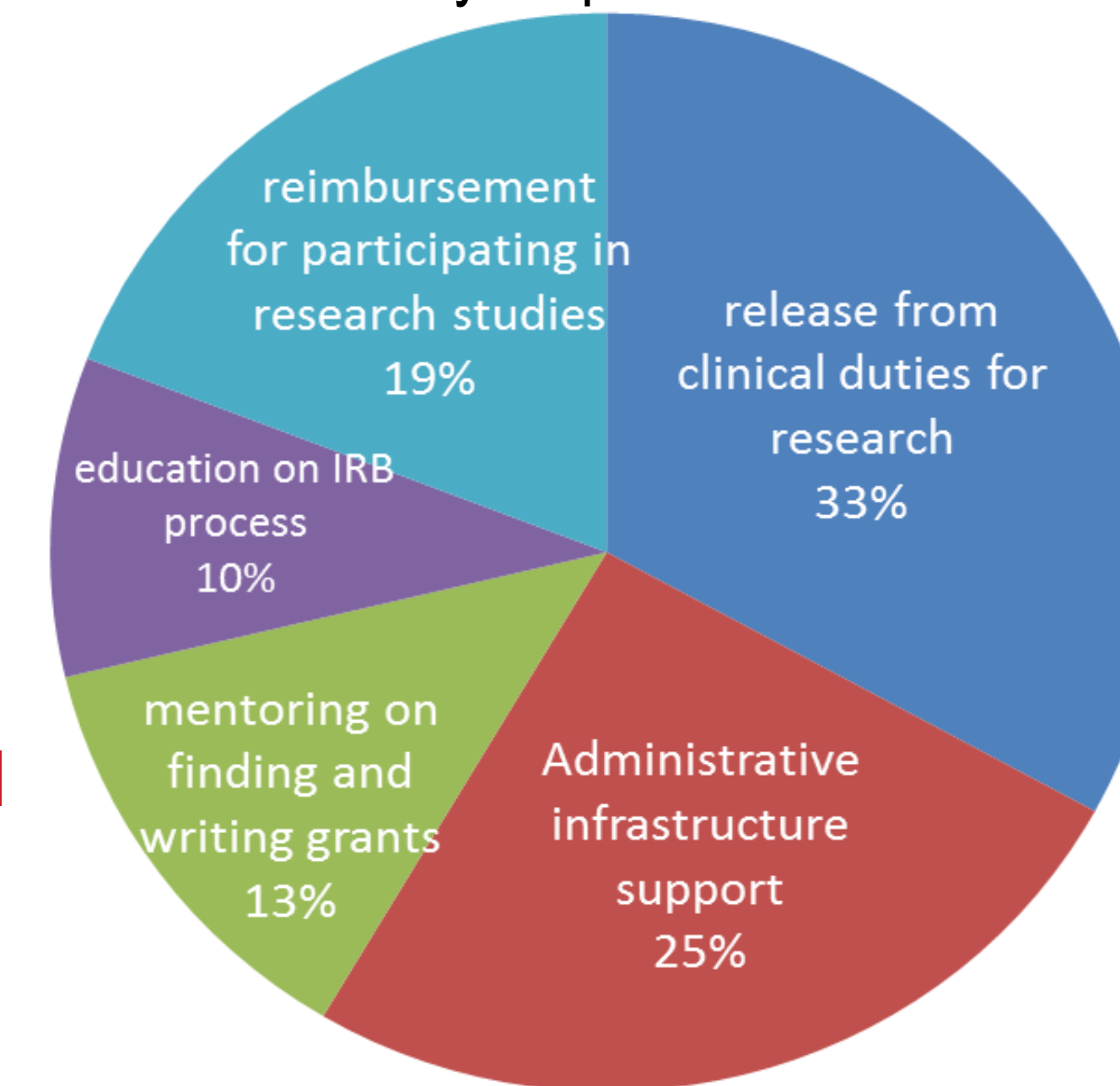
- Researched research programs
- Convened Strategic Planning Task Force in Nov 2018
- Surveyed medical faculty and consulted key stakeholders to identify impediments to research and determine institutional needs
- Performed financial analysis
- Evaluation
 - Track research volume
 - Physician engagement by Department .

Results

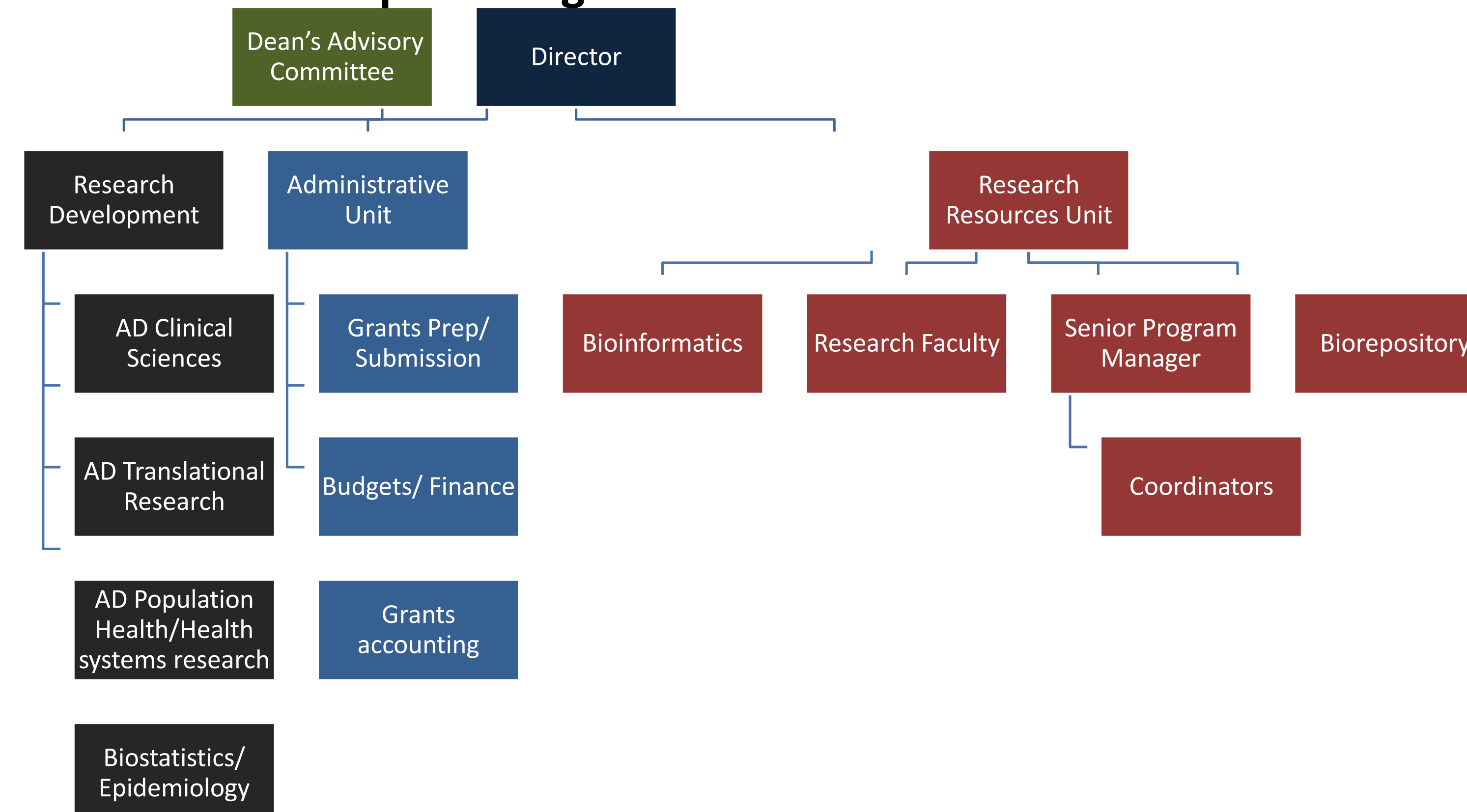
- Elements of a successful program:
 - 24/7 research staff
 - Highly collaborative
 - Multiple areas of research
- Faculty focus groups:
 - “Find the right funding and make the application look polished”
 - “Can’t just leave it to the coordinators”
 - “Need a compensation formula for clinical faculty that includes research effort”

Results

- n=55 survey respondents



Leadership and Organization to Enhance clinical research



Conclusions

- Center designed to meet needs:
 - Center Director experienced in multi-disciplinary collaborative research
 - Dedicated translational and clinical faculty to provide mentoring and strategic research direction
 - Research Resources Unit assists investigators conducting studies
 - ❖ High tech screening capability
 - ❖ On site core research faculty
 - ❖ Nurse coordinators cross trained
 - ❖ Biorepository
 - Clinical research – friendly administrative unit with accounting to track faculty and coordinator effort

Potential impact

- Successful implementation will
 - Increase successful research study enrollment and retention
 - Promote faculty engagement in research
 - Increase institutional research rankings
 - Enhance academic prestige.