

Introduction

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The following papers each address an aspect of the subject of the fourteenth annual research policy retreat hosted by the Merrill Center: *Sustaining and Enhancing the Research Mission of Public Universities*. We are pleased to continue this program that brings together Chancellors, Provosts, university administrators and researcher-scientists for informal discussions that lead to the identification of pressing issues, understanding of different perspectives, and the creation of plans of action to enhance research productivity within our institutions. This year's focus is on the challenges regional Universities face in the effort to sustain and enhance their research missions. The 2010 Merrill retreat provided an opportune time to consider leadership strategies for best supporting our public universities in difficult times.

Our 2010 retreat featured a trifecta of top university leadership. Our keynote speaker for the event, Dr. James Moeser, first presented at the Retreat in 1997, as one of the inaugural event's invited speakers. In this year's presentation he summarized ten general principles he has drawn from his years as chancellor, particularly from his eight years at UNC. His presentation was followed by Harvey Perlman, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, also a previous participant in a Merrill Research Retreat (2004). Chancellor Perlman spoke about the current challenges to leadership of public universities. The anchor spot in the 3-way line-up, in her first participation at a Merrill Research Retreat, was Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little of the University of Kansas, who also served as host of the event. She offered her perspectives on the current climate facing the highest leadership

levels of public universities, and she then guided the participant group in a discussion of the issues raised in the talks. Collectively, the three papers allow readers to consider the overlaps and shared perspectives among the three leaders of public universities.

Benefactors Virginia and Fred Merrill make possible this series of retreats: *The Research Mission of Public Universities*. On behalf of the many participants over more than a decade, I express deep gratitude to the Merrills for their enlightened support. On behalf of the Merrill Advanced Studies Center, I extend my appreciation for the contribution of effort and time of the participants and in particular to the authors of this collection of papers who found time in their busy schedules for the preparation of the materials that follow.

Twenty-three senior administrators and faculty from four institutions in

Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska attended the 2010 retreat. Though not all discussants' remarks are individually documented, their participation was an essential ingredient in the general discussions that ensued and the preparation of the final papers. The list of all conference attendees is at the end of the publication.

The inaugural event in this series of conferences, in 1997, focused on pressures that hinder the research mission of higher education. In 1998, we turned our attention to competing for new resources and to ways to enhance individual and collective productivity. In 1999, we examined in more depth cross-university alliances. The focus of the 2000 retreat was on making research a part of the public agenda and championing the cause of research as a valuable state resource. In 2001, the topic was evaluating research productivity, with a focus on the very important National Research Council (NRC) study from 1995. In the wake of 9/11, the topic for 2002 was "Science at a Time of National Emergency"; participants discussed scientists coming to the aid of the country, such as in joint research on preventing and mitigating bioterrorism, while also recognizing the difficulties our universities face because of increased security measures. In 2003 we focused on graduate education and two keynote speakers addressed key issues about retention of students in the doctoral track, efficiency in time to

degree, and making the rules of the game transparent. In 2004 we looked at the leadership challenge of a comprehensive public university to accommodate the fluid nature of scientific initiatives to the world of long-term planning for the teaching and service missions of the universities. In 2005 we discussed the interface of science and public policy with an eye toward how to move forward in a way that honors both public trust and scientific integrity. Our retreat in 2006 considered the privatization of public universities and the corresponding shift in research funding and infrastructure. The 2007 retreat focused on the changing climate of research funding, the development of University research resources, and how to calibrate those resources with likely sources of funding, while the 2008 retreat dealt with the many benefits and specific issues of international research collaboration. The 2009 retreat highlighted regional research collaborations, with discussion of the many advantages and concerns associated with regional alliances.

Once again, the texts of this year's Merrill white paper reveal various perspectives on only one of the many complex issues faced by research administrators and scientists every day. It is with pleasure that I encourage you to read the papers from the 2010 Merrill policy retreat on *Sustaining and Enhancing the Research Mission of Public Universities*.