

FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE

The principles and recommendations as presented in the previous section were developed in response to the Commission on Research at Emory's charge. These recommendations are designed to continue Emory's excellence as a research university and to create a research environment that will enable scholars to make substantial and innovative contributions to knowledge and practice. In this section, several recommendations were selected to describe what might happen if those were adopted, thereby translating the principles into practice.

What if *Emory developed an action plan for a 25 percent faculty growth over the next five years?*

What if *this growth was targeted to enhance research excellence?*

THE COMMISSION FOUND that having access to a critical mass of colleagues with similar interests is essential for the retention of current scholars as well as the recruitment of new faculty. Being part of such a group energizes scholars and leads to new and cutting-edge approaches to the complex research questions that concern them. Moreover, having a critical mass of faculty in an area allows for sharing teaching and service responsibilities, while simultaneously creating opportunities for release time to conduct research. Emory is strongly committed to providing excellent undergraduate and graduate teaching. The Commission on Research at Emory, like the Commission on Teaching that preceded it, views teaching and research as closely intertwined. Emory judiciously has chosen not to rely on temporary faculty to provide additional research time for its tenure-track and tenured faculty. Through strategic faculty growth Emory can maintain its outstanding teaching standards, while also providing an environment for stellar scholarship and the training of outstanding graduate students as scholars of the future.

Targeted recruitment to build a concentration of junior and senior scholars in specific areas also facilitates mentoring opportunities. The commission realizes that the recruitment of new fac-

ulty requires significant time commitments from current faculty. However, Emory hires faculty it intends to retain. Thus, the commission's recommendation about a more sustained effort to retain outstanding faculty is an essential element in any overall recruitment strategy. Related to this faculty retention and recruitment is Emory's potential to further the institution as well as its individual scholars by nurturing and developing centers of research excellence. Setting priorities based on sound strategic planning, another recommendation made by the commission, will identify targeted areas for faculty growth and centers of excellence. These might be within or across the cultures of research described elsewhere in this report.

What if the Office of the Provost established a research initiation fund that provides seed and bridging money by using the patent income revenue stream and other internal funding streams for the advancement of outstanding research and the establishment of centers of research excellence that support collaborative scholarship and intellectual exchange?

THIS RECOMMENDATION provides a possible source of revenue that can enable centers of research excellence to develop without relying entirely on external funding. Moreover, along with other recommendations, it would transform the commission's principle that ideas and not the availability of funds drive the research portfolio from a perfunctory pronouncement to an institutional commitment. Obviously, being awarded external funding symbolizes the outstanding quality of scholarship as judged by peers. In addition, it is a must for those whose research is complex, interdisciplinary, and often expensive, particularly in the health sciences but also in other cultures of research such as the sciences and social sciences. The emphasis on external funding also impacts cultures of research such as the humanities, theology, and law in which such funding is limited.

The cliché insists that innovative research requires thinking outside the box. However, reliance on available funding often assumes that one thinks within the box. The history of knowledge

production teaches us that hypotheses that challenge accepted wisdoms are those most resisted by arbiters of established knowledge claims, including review committees of granting agencies. When it comes to funding support from private agencies and corporations, the constraints multiply. The commission found that external funding opportunities can constrain the types and foci of scholars' investigations. Using external funding as the main foundation to build excellence in research may serve to endanger traditional academic values of autonomy, freedom, and public service. If Emory University were to use its income from patents and licenses as we recommend, faculty will be able to initiate certain scholarship without possible constraints associated with external funding. Moreover, such funding would provide evidence of institutional commitment to these projects and help to persuade external agencies and foundations that these are worthy of support. Finally, such a commitment will set a standard that not only enables path-breaking research, but also will blaze a trail that other institutions of higher education will want to emulate.

What if *salary compensation reflected the twelve-month research commitment of most faculty members?*

EMORY'S FACULTY MEMBERS are expected to devote a considerable effort, at least 50 percent of their time, to pursuing research activities. Among the tenure-track and tenured faculty are those who have a contract for the nine months that constitute the academic year and those who are appointed for twelve months, most of whom are located in the schools of medicine and public health. However, among the latter, the expectation is that at least a significant proportion—ranging from 50 percent to 90 percent—of the salary is supported by external funding. Typically, faculty appointed for nine months hold a hard money faculty line.

Given the considerable teaching and service demands placed upon faculty, most of which are concentrated during the nine-month academic calendar, those with a twelve-month contract struggle throughout the year to support and conduct their research. Among those with a nine-month appointment, the expectation is that the summer months will be used for research.

However, unless faculty members acquire funding for the three summer months, the institution does not provide any financial compensation for their research work. Moreover, it is misleading to assume that faculty who are compensated for nine months are not Emory employees during the summer, simply because they are not in the classroom.

If Emory were to take the bold step and recognize the reality of a twelve-month faculty commitment with twelve months of compensation, research at Emory would be enhanced in a number of ways. Not least of all, such a step would attract many talented researchers in cultures of research such as the humanities and social sciences. Given the economic constraints faced by many universities, such a move by Emory would allow building one of the strongest faculties in the nation. It also would provide an effective means to retain outstanding faculty. By recognizing the reality of the faculty's twelve-month commitment, Emory University would set the standard for other research institutions.

The commission realizes that such a policy requires considerable allocation of resources, and a phased transition to placing all faculty on twelve months of compensation could be considered, including the establishment of a competitive summer fund or an early retirement program. The commission also expects that such leadership would attract considerable national notice and should result in increased fund-raising. For instance, it can provide a unique focus for the upcoming capital campaign. In addition, a number of foundations might find providing some financial incentives as an attractive way to signal their support of year-round academic research as a national priority rather than limiting faculty support to the academic term.

What if *Emory defined faculty responsibilities at the departmental/division level, including those of clinical faculty, consistent with research expectations and support and each unit's strategic research plan?*

What if *Emory were to use such consultations between faculty and department/division heads to develop a flexible approach toward faculty responsibilities and faculty research?*

THE COMMISSION IDENTIFIED inconsistencies regarding faculty responsibilities between schools and departments, sometimes even within departments. Discrepancies occurred based on departmental needs, for instance for teaching or clinical care, faculty rank, and seniority within rank. To address this, the commission proposes that faculty develop individual research plans.

In addition, the commission proposes that departments and divisions develop and regularly review research strategic plans and their outcomes. These should, in turn, be linked to the individual faculty plans. Individual and department/division research plans are not intended to micromanage but to foster an environment in which existing cultures of research can thrive and new opportunities emerge.

Such a commitment also will enable the targeted recruitment of faculty and nurture research centers of excellence at Emory. A successful research institution must make choices and so must its departments and divisions. If Emory were to follow this procedure, the research plans and priorities of individual faculty, departments/divisions, schools, and the university as a whole would be connected.

Furthermore, if implemented, this recommendation would create flexibility and targeted resources at all levels. For instance, at appropriate times during the conduct of research, faculty could adjust their schedules in creative ways by clustering their teaching on certain days or times of the day or by engaging undergraduate and graduate students in their research as a form of nontraditional teaching.

What if infrastructure support of research changed as recommended?

ALTHOUGH THE COMMISSION'S many specific recommendations about changes and improvements of infrastructure support for research may seem bureaucratic, these are essential to the conduct of outstanding scholarship. The commission's findings show that some of the major impediments to research at Emory are inconsistencies and inflexibilities in the infrastructure. Admittedly, some complaints lacked merit or involved unique situations. Most arose from an infrastructure that reflects an uneven and rapid development of research, specifically externally funded research, at Emory.

The rise of new cultures of research and the development of centers of research excellence require a flexible infrastructure. There is no blame here, and infrastructure challenges are not unique to Emory. Many of the currently existing barriers can be fixed. Examples of recommendations are streamlined pre- and post-award procedures, consistent accounting policies and interaction between unit and centrally based accounting and related research staff, improvements in information technology and a central coordination of all information technology offices, enhanced off-campus access to electronic sources and email, access to state of the art computing facilities, and a flexible job classification system with competitive salaries for research staff at all levels.

If all the other recommendations were adopted, but the infrastructure remained as it is, Emory's scholars could continue to face barriers to the enhancement of their scholarship. If faculty research is to drive the university research mission, its accomplishments must become the goal of the institutional research infrastructure. Indeed, recognition of this underlying goal should inform all infrastructure development and procedures. If this were to happen at Emory, innovative research would be considerably enabled.

What if Emory used its fiscal resources to achieve its research potential?

IF EMORY LEVERAGED its substantial financial resources to enable the recruitment of new and targeted faculty, provided financial support for centers of research excellence, and compensated faculty for twelve months, the university could become one of the strongest and most renowned research institutions in the world. As the mass of outstanding scholarship and research grew, it could cross-fertilize and stimulate other faculty and would produce scholarship and research that impacted the world of ideas and practice in profound ways. It could provide Emory's undergraduate students the very best education available, as it served to help recruit the very brightest and gifted graduate and professional students. It could attract the best faculty, wherever they now are or from wherever they will soon graduate, to Emory University.

Although what we propose has a financial cost, the commission is persuaded that such a focused commitment to research will result in a highly successful capital campaign, increased patents and contracts, and ultimately in an even greater endowment fund. We are convinced that an investment in ideas now will bring great returns, including financial ones, in the future. And what better return could one hope for from a university investment than more ideas, scholarship, and the institutional strength they engender? The commission understands that the price for what it recommends is not inconsequential, but we are absolutely persuaded that the cost of not following these recommendations will ultimately be much higher.