

CAS Core Facilities Committee

University of South Florida

Spring 2015 Report

The USF Core Facilities committee met three times in Spring 2015. We are continuing to address several key issues of the Core Facilities, including finding infrastructure support of the shared instrumentation facilities at USF. Several key pieces of research equipment have experienced major malfunctions that have been hard to procure funds for fixing in the last year or two. A compilation of core equipment was completed with the assistance of the Dean's office. It was found that CAS core contains 69 total instruments (many as peripheral components to larger equipment) for shared use worth in excess of \$6.1 million dollars (based on the original purchase price). The main finding was that effectively 37% of existing core instrumentation is either very old or near obsolete. Twenty-four instruments (worth \$2,305,400) have exceeded their normal life span with 10 of these instruments (worth \$461,900) being 10 years or more past their useful life. Eight pieces of major instrumentation, to which many of the minor peripherals are tied, worth in excess of \$1.3M has exceeded their useful life and need replacement. Should our major instrumentation go down, much of the remaining equipment will also be inoperable until the parent instrument can go back on line. These issues merit revisiting facility support from the university, given that these facilities generate the key data for the high research output of our faculty.

This past academic year the a new internal research support proposal submission was started that directly fund small equipment requests not exceeding \$10,000 per request with a total budget of \$60,000 for the academic year. 18 requests were made in fall totaling \$146,597 and 6 in spring totaling \$63,485. Many of these were specifically for repair existing instrumentation. The Core Facilities committee is charged with the review of these proposals and has made its recommendations to the college and was able to support 4 of these grants each semester. The Core Facilities Committee also recognizes and greatly appreciates the significant investment made this year in acquiring new equipment and instrumentation throughout the University through a one time matching funds opportunity, but also makes evident the need for continuous support for our existing equipment and for the new instrumentation that will arrive this year.

The core facilities committee has also prepared new forms, which will go on-line in the near future to demonstrate the impact of core facilities not currently supported on grants. CAS Core facilities are used regularly to generate preliminary data that enhance new proposals, support current faculty and student research as well as sponsor classroom projects. These new forms are intended to better track analyses that bolster such projects and ultimately lead towards increased grant productivity, publication and student success but are either fully or partially subsidized by the labs. This will allow for better accountability of the impact of core facilities on USF's research program.