

Institutional Responses to the Hard Landing

- Bridge Funding
- Graduate Programs
- Keeping the Faith

Richard B. Marchase
Vice President for Research
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Investigators Who Have Suffered Lapses in NIH Funding Do Come Back

~1225		Number of investigators first funded by R01/R29/R23 in 1990
543	44%	Investigators first funded in 1990 with active NIH support in 2003
186	15%	Investigators with no lapse in NIH funding
357	29%	Investigators with gaps in their NIH support but with active support in 2003

Source: Zerhouni congressional testimony 2005

Is Bridging a Good Investment ?

2004 NIH Data – R01s

- Assumption: Medical School receives 1% of annual 2004 NIH awarded dollars
- 60 R01 Competing continuations submitted
 - 14 funded
 - 46 not funded
- A1 Submission of competing continuation
 - 8 funded
 - 38 not funded or not re-submitted
- A2 Submission of competing continuation
 - 3 funded
 - 35 not funded or not resubmitted

A Proposed Plan for Bridge Funding: A Shared Responsibility among the Investigator, the Department, and the School

- Investigators should be cognizant of the new climate and begin planning in the last two years of their grants for carry forwards that will allow some funding during a no-cost extension year
- If any returns to the investigator from the school/department are budgeted (IER or saved faculty salary), these should be managed thoughtfully and used as the first source of bridge funding
- The department should bear at a minimum the responsibility for the salary components of faculty and graduate students previously charged to the grant as well as space costs.
- The School should set aside funds that can be applied for as the original grant expires (after the first review) and/or nine months later (after the A1 review)

The Bridging Plan Was not Endorsed by Department Chairs and not Implemented

- It was clear that funds set aside in the Dean's Office would have to come from someplace
 - Funds that otherwise would go to the departments
 - If "new" money was available, it might have been more acceptable
- Department chairs have the best sense of what a faculty member needs and is likely to produce
- Strong departments were fearful that they would "lose"
 - Some had plans of their own in place
- Some departments wanted standardized guidelines to aid their decisions
- Use of reserves in faculty accounts were discussed as a departmental source, but the concept of a "loan" that would be repaid when needed inspired distrust
- What happens when departmental reserves are exhausted?

Bridge Funding: Issues for Discussion

- Mentoring with the pink sheet is critical to decision making.
 - When does it make sense to fund the re-shaping of a research program with the acquisition of new skills via an on-site or off-site sabbatical, rather than bridging?
- With loss of funding so likely, what strategies should chairs follow to maintain vital departments?
- Are we being wise in allocating huge resources to recruit “stars” from our colleagues/competitors?

Funding of Graduate Education

- Fewer admissions
 - More difficult to place students
 - Less faculty confidence in being able to provide three or four years of support
- More institutional support
 - Not for more students
 - Relief to departments to meet demands caused by funding shortfalls
- Morale crisis among students

Keeping the Faith

- Expectations of states, communities, and donors
- Increased prestige and economic development as rationales for increased support
- Leveraging of state and philanthropic dollars dependent on success at NIH

UAB: Driving the Birmingham Economy

- UAB's overall economic impact on Birmingham: \$3.1 billion
 - 1 to 12 yield on state investment of ~\$250 million for FY05
 - UAB is largest employer in Alabama; 18,000
 - Eight in every 100 jobs in the Birmingham area is related to UAB
- \$10 million IMPACT set-aside from UAB's state allocation to hire new faculty

Research Enterprise Enhanced by New Facilities

- Shelby Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Building dedicated last spring, attended by Sen. and Dr. Shelby, other community, state leaders
- Roughly 325,000 SF of research space
- Millions more annually in research funding has been promised
- Shelby II on the drawing board



Partnership for Alabama's Future

- UAB needs continued investment from state to further economic impact and move Alabama forward
- Average external funding per UAB researcher:
~\$670,000 annually
 - Provides support for 1-3 professional staff, 3-6 trainees
- Clearly, research is critical to leveraging resources; almost all funding coming into the state from external sources
 - Striking example from clinical division, Rheumatology: 7% from state, 10% from clinical income, 83% from external sources (mostly NIH)