



IUPUI

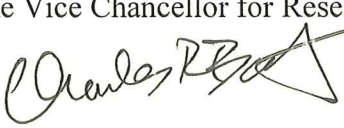
**OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR**

INDIANA UNIVERSITY—PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Indianapolis

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: IUPUI Faculty Council  
Faculty/Staff of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research

FROM: Charles R. Bantz, Chancellor 

DATE: December 19, 2013

RE: Administrative Review, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, Kody Varahramyan

This memo summarizes the report of the Administrative Review Committee on the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR), Kody Varahramyan.

Simon J. Rhodes, Professor of Biology and Dean, School of Science, chaired the committee. Its members in alphabetical order were Philip Goff, Professor of Religious Studies and American Studies, School of Liberal Arts; Vincent Herring, Graduate Student, School of Science; Anna M. McDaniel, Chancellor's Professor of Environments for Health, Associate Dean for Research, School of Nursing; David J. Russomanno, Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Dean, School of Engineering and Technology; Peter J. Schubert, Director, Lugar Center for Renewable Energy, Professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering, School of Engineering and Technology; Etta M. Ward, Director of Research Development, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research; Eric R. Wolf, Undergraduate Student, School of Engineering and Technology; Mervin C. Yoder, Director, Herman B. Wells Center for Pediatric Research, Richard and Pauline Klingler Professor of Pediatrics, Assistant Dean for Entrepreneurial Research, Distinguished Professor, School of Medicine; Domenick T. Zero, Professor and Chair, Preventive and Community Dentistry, Associate Dean for Research, School of Dentistry.

Noting that there have been significant structural changes at the university and campus level since the hiring of the VCR, the committee began its research by carefully identifying representatives from schools, other campus- and university-level academic and administrative units, members of the business community, and others for personal interviews who could reasonably be expected to have knowledge of the OVCR's work and scope of activities. Similarly, the Survey Research Center at IUPUI, using questions suggested by the Review Committee, solicited responses from two groups: staff/faculty and students.

The committee found that the OVCR has significantly raised the profile of research at IUPUI by improving resources available to faculty—including workshops, information about grant opportunities, proposal preparation support, seed funding, and connections for research

commercialization. The office has also championed new programs to improve diversity and initiated awards recognizing faculty for outstanding research. The OVCR was praised for improving the visibility of faculty and student research via Research Day and for making good hires, including the associate and assistant vice chancellors who have strong ties to health and life sciences, to enhance collaboration between the School of Medicine and the rest of IUPUI. Vice Chancellor Varahramyan is viewed as being intelligent, humane, approachable, and team oriented. The committee concludes that the OVCR “has made strong progress under the leadership of” Vice Chancellor Varahramyan.

The committee also posed constructive suggestions for areas of improvement. Among the issues emerging from the review was a perceived need for a detailed strategic plan. Another was the need for the OVCR to more visibly promote its activities. The committee also found a lack of transparency with respect to the selection and evaluation of Signature Centers. There is also confusion about the role of the OVCR with respect to the university-level Office of the Vice President for Research.

Vice Chancellor Varahramyan has responded to these concerns by saying that his office has raised its prominence through frequent events and means of communications, including reports and online communications; and that he has identified and worked to remedy problems he inherited with the selection of Signature Centers after the initial rounds of funding had been distributed.

It is my recommendation that Vice Chancellor Varahramyan continue working closely with Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer Nasser Paydar to develop an updated plan that creates both significant buy-in and significant awareness and that it be developed in conjunction with the IUPUI Strategic Plan, the School of Medicine’s new research plan, and the IU Vice President for Research’s university-wide strategy. It is essential there be a sustained effort to communicate the plan and progress made under the plan’s direction. The communication needs to include transparent reporting of investments made with OVCR resources, including the Signature Centers initiative.