



The Value of Professional Development - A VC's Perspective

By Darrell Bazzell

Learning is at the center of all activities at a university. As members of a university community, we are engaged in teaching both students and colleagues and also in learning from those same individuals. The sharing of informa-

tion, facts, and opinions is at the heart of a university education. At a research institution, a critical part of the learning takes place when faculty and staff discuss, debate, analyze, and ultimately create new knowledge that is

By Brian Herman, University of Minnesota VPR, on NCURA Professional Development

“Rapid, in depth understanding of regulatory changes and the ability to compare and discuss novel approaches with our peers is key to facilitating an effective research enterprise,” says University of Minnesota Vice President of Research Brian Herman. An accomplished scientist, researcher, and academic administrator, Herman has both system and campus administrative leadership experience.

Herman said he appreciates the fact that his Associate VP for Research, Pamela Webb, can pick up a phone or send a few emails to her colleagues around the country and get an immediate “read” on how institutions similar to Minnesota have approached an issue or are considering implementing a new regulation. “It is clear,” says Herman, “that NCURA fosters a sense of community among its members. Sharing, rather than competing, seems to be the order of the day.”

Herman knows that staff in the units reporting to him, as well as departmental administrators throughout the Minnesota system, take advantage of many of the training opportunities offered by NCURA, including the “NCURA TV” series and sharing of the weekly “You Tube” videos. “These locally-available, skill-building opportunities are particularly appreciated and valuable today, given today’s intense pressures on administrative budgets, ever-expanding workloads, and the ongoing

concern about the intensity of the faculty administrative burden related to research,” says Herman. “Knowledgeable staff who are able to stay current on agency issues and processes are not only fundamental to regulatory compliance and to provide outstanding service to faculty, but can also help the institution better align its policies and procedures to manage current and emerging (rather than historical) risks.”

In addition to increasing competency in research oversight, Herman remarked, “in an era where many campus staff development programs are having to be trimmed, having University of Minnesota staff take on leadership roles in their professional organization, or who teach workshops and sessions at national and regional conferences provides career experiences that make these staff more valuable to the University.” “In addition, their contributions are also helping to bring greater awareness of the strength of the University of Minnesota into the national arena.”



PHOTO BY: RICHARD ANDERSON

Dr. Brian Herman is the Vice President for Research at the University of Minnesota and has primary responsibility for the overall vitality of the university-wide research environment, including supporting evolution of new research, maintaining a competitive research infrastructure, developing and managing campus-wide research policies, and overseeing administrative management of all sponsored research activity. He is also responsible for technology commercialization activities and for the administration of regulatory offices associated with research.