Status Report on Congressional Budget & Survey on 1994 Research

October 23, 2011
President’s FY 2012 request provides for TCRGP level funding at $1.805 million
House FY 2012 appropriations bill eliminates funding for TCRGP
Senate FY 2012 appropriations mark maintains TCRGP funding at current FY 2011 level: $1.801 million
House and Senate due to conference (negotiate and compromise) different funding levels
Contributing Factors

- Telling (selling) our story and justifying the value of TCRGP
- Full participation of 1994s in TCRGP that establishes the need for continued support (funding)
- Budget climate that makes small line items vulnerable to cuts
- PR challenge for “Agricultural Research”
Improving the TCRGP

- Understand what research our communities need, what we can do, and what we want to do
- Refine the RFA for maximum participation and impact
- Develop measurable impacts and an effective communications plan
- Consider alternative policy and legislative approaches (game changers)
The TCRGP survey

- **Purpose:** to determine TCU research capacity, interest & priorities, in order to strengthen the TCRGP
- Survey open for three weeks (Sept. 26 – Oct. 14)
- To TCU administrators, directors, faculty, staff
- Distributed by FALCON listserve, then shared within TCU
- 62 responses
Q1. Your college/university?

- 25 of 32 Land-grant TCUs represented
- Ranging from 7 responses per TCU to 0 responses
- So, analysis of data reflects respondents, not TCUs (i.e., data weighted toward those TCUs with higher response rates)
Q2. Primary type of work?

- 51% Administration
- 29% Teaching
- 17% Extension
- 7% Research
Q3. Position or title?

- Faculty/Instructors (n=12)
- Land-grant Directors (n=8)
- VPs (n=8)
- Other Directors (n=6)
- Department Chairs (n=5)
- Presidents (n=4)
- Development/Grants (n=4)
- Deans (n=3)
- Administrative/Finance (n=3)
Q4. Experience w/ TCRGP?

What has been your experience with the TCRGP? (Check all that apply)

- Never applied (Please comment: Why not?): 36.7%
- Applied, but not awarded (Please comment...): 12.2%
- Awarded, and successful research (Please...): 55.1%
- Awarded, and unsuccessful research (Please...): 8.2%
Q4. No experience w/ TCRGP comments?

- “Know very little about it.”
- “No experience with TCRGP...first I have heard of it.”
- “Do not have the facilities or staff yet to support research projects.”
- “Two reasons: Specific funded areas don't always match my expertise or teaching areas; and time to prepare a grant is not available to me; our university has no grant writers to assist.”
- “Most of the grants are big and we don't have the required facilities to do that high end research. However, the research we have done are with students in the field...”
Q5. Most successful partners?

- “...have been great partners.”
- “…project directly related to their work.”
- “…students involved and students were more engaged.”
- “…expertise and commitment to working with us as a 1994 institution.”
- “Took active role in research. Performed tasks we were limited in. Acted as a true mentor.”
- “They have been genuinely involved with our college.”
- “contributed resources both ways, willing to work on tribal lands with students and build our capacity.”
Q5. Least successful partners?

- “...faculty did not have adequate time to participate.”
- “…project not directly related to their work so very little interaction.”
- “…students were not as engaged in the research..”
- “…built their own research capacity while claiming to help us build our own. Minimal money and time invested.”
- “…just difficult to work with being so far away…”
- “Researchers that do not understand tribal colleges or communities.”
- “the required [1862]co-PI is attempting to dominate the project.”
Q6. non-TCRG research?

- NSF
- NIH
- EPA
- USGS
- Sea-Grant (NOAA)
- Intertribal organization
- 1862 Land-grant
- Tribal
- US Forest Service
- NASA
- DOD
- DOE
- HHS
Q7. Research Capacities?

For the following statements, check the appropriate response, ranging from "Disagree Strongly" to "Agree Strongly.

1. Our TCU has the FACULTY who are able to devote time...
2. Our TCU has the STAFF who are able to devote time to...
3. Our TCU research FACULTY has the necessary...
4. Our TCU research STAFF has the necessary...
5. Our TCU has the facilities, laboratories, field sites...
6. Our TCU students are INTERESTED in conducting high...
7. Our TCU students are CAPABLE of conducting high...
8. Our TCU has the necessary partnerships and...
9. Our TCU has the financial and administrative systems...
Q7. Research Interests?

For the following statements, check the appropriate response, ranging from “Disagree Strongly” to “Agree Strongly.”

- Our tribal community wants the TCU to conduct research...
- Our TCU leadership (Board, president, top...)
- Our TCU FACULTY want to conduct research that...
- Our TCU STAFF want to conduct research that...
- Our TCU students want to conduct research that...
- Our TCU partners want to conduct research that...
- Our TCU specifically wants to use TCRP as a...
Q9. What community groups interested in research?

- “…Environmental Protection Office, Tribal Health, and Head Start.”
- “…Tribal Health Department, Tribal Mosquito Control Program, Tribal Environmental Protection Program, Tribal Fish and Game…”
- “…Elders Groups, Tribal Government, Staff from IHS…”
- “…Elders, students….Boys and Girls Club…”
- “…Tribal divisions: Environmental, Game & Fish; Energy, Elders; Community Boards…”
- “…K-12 schools, surrounding tribal communities, extension office, other community colleges near by…”
Q7. Research Priorities?

For the following statements, check the appropriate response, ranging from “Disagree Strongly” to “Agree Strongly.”

- TCU does not need to increase its capacity to conduct high-quality research.
- Our TCU is satisfied with its current capacity to conduct high-quality research.
- Our TCU needs to increase its capacity to conduct high-quality research.
- Conducting research is not a priority at our TCU at this time.
Q11. Areas that require greatest capacity increase?

- “We need support for professional development so that our investigators can build their research knowledge, skills and capacity. We also need expanded facilities and instrumentation to perform high-quality research.”

- “Facilities and staff (including faculty).”

- “Lab equipment, access to scientific journals and research papers, data analysis software.”

- “Additional faculty with research interests and qualifications.”

- “We need more lab space. We need to add to our lab equipment and certify our lab to meet EPA certification.”
Q11 (cont). Areas that require greatest capacity increase?

- “Establishing good research design, conducting analysis, preparing competitive proposals.”
- “Faculty and staff need to be able to have a percentage of their time dedicated to research if they were to participate in research. Training and professional development is needed in many cases…”
- “Scientific research (wet lab)...this means we need faculty (PhD level) that are competent in conducting research...which means we need to support them financially before we can ever get them in this area. The key here is qualified faculty or researchers…”
Q11 (cont). Areas that require greatest capacity increase?

- “Additional qualified faculty and staff are needed to increase capacity. Research capacity exists; however, these personnel are already overloaded with duties...”
- “There needs to be more faculty and staff with the academic credentials to conduct research. There also needs to be faculty and staff dedicated to research (as opposed to teaching). There also needs to be facilities and resources dedicated to research.”
- “We need better facilities and equipment. We also could use longer research time frames. Two years is insufficient to conduct high quality research.”
Q12. Research most interested? (1=most interested)

If your TCU is interested in research at this time, what areas of research are you most interested in pursuing? (Please rank from most to least interested)

- Leadership and governance: 2.50
- Sociology: 3.00
- Culture and language: 2.50
- Diet and nutrition: 2.00
- Health and wellness: 2.00
- Natural resources and environment: 2.00
- Community development: 2.00
- Economic development: 2.00
- Agricultural sciences: 2.00
- Other (specify in comment box): 3.00
- Other (specify in comment box): 3.00
Q12. Research most interested, other?

- “Green technology/alternative energy.”
- “Oil development environmental impacts: water, air, soil, habitat, and social.”
- “Social issues, i.e., violence and abuse against Indigenous women, retention and American Indian students, alcohol and drug use patterns among tribal college students, water quality issues for resident tribes, impacts of oil pipelines on tribal lands, etc.”
- “Research on...student success...Not enough students are graduating and continuing on. We strongly need to "grow our own".”
Q13. Research in institutional documents?

- “…research experiences all figure prominently in strategic planning documents and recent self-study reports. Faculty professional enhancement plans and performance evaluations also feature a research component in several instances.”

- “Research is specifically mentioned in its documented Vision & Strategic Plan Initiatives & Goals.”

- “It is not strongly identified in this respect, however we need to modify this so that it is identified and a priority.”

- “It is not identified per se.”
Q14. Other important issues?

- “Student participation is a key component of all our research activities. However, not all faculty researchers have the knowledge, skills or experience to be good supervisors/mentors. As a result, the quality of students' research experiences are inconsistent. “

- “Candid and seamless communications between TCRGP program managers (i.e. Washington DC) and the TCU principal investigators/project managers.”

- “The Tribal College being able to partner with some institution other than an 1862 institution.”

- “The primary issue that is of concern to our tribal college is the requirement that we partner with an 1864 or 1890 institute because they tend to get the award then resources are not shared on an equal basis and they tend to control the research and research findings.“
Q14 (cont). Other important issues?

- “Most faculty…hired to provide undergraduate education; in order for faculty to be involved in research, more faculty will need to be hired with research interests and qualifications. To date, staff…have been the drivers of almost all research activity.”

- “Funding size limits putting together quality proposals and attracting qualified partners. Limiting partners limits our research abilities.”

- “Research at tribal colleges needs not to model the…larger mainstream universities. The entire structure and impact of tribal colleges focuses on communities. Research at tribal colleges should contribute to problem-solving, collaboration between the TCUs, tribal government and agencies.”
Q14 (cont). Other important issues?

- “The need to understand that research in rural communities, especially at Tribal Colleges, should be focused on Language, Culture, and Economic Development since...these two root values are at the heart of [TCU] and every other Tribal College.”

- “Our college needs to develop a IRB & process especially dealing with human subjects. We need policies developed dealing with patents etc.”

- “An understanding of the culture of the community (not cultural heritage of the community) would help identify why the average K-12 student is substandard when compared to the average ND school district K-12 student.”
Discussion

- Questions?
- Reflections?
- What has worked well with the TCRGP?
- What can we do to make the TCRGP better?