

NOAA SAB Review of CIRES

Review Panel

- Dr. Jack Calvert, Chair NCAR, Boulder
- Dr. Vera Alexander, SAB Representative
- Dr. Walter F. Dabberdt, Vaisala, Boulder
- Dr. Jerry Mahlman, NCAR, Boulder
- Dr. Wade R. McGillis, Woods Hole Ocean
- Dr. William Prescott, USGS, Boulder
- Dr. Kelly Redmond, Desert Research Institute, Reno

CIRES can be considered a
poster child for how a
cooperative institute can function

CIRES Central Question

- How well can we understand and predict the effects of natural and anthropogenic perturbations on the earth system and how can we use this knowledge to protect the health of the earth system

Strengths of the CIRES

- High standard of excellence—a pioneer in interdisciplinary earth system science
- Is responsive to NOAA's needs—provides a vehicle to transition results of university basic research to application and implementation
- Strong educational component

Success of the NOAA/CIRES Interaction

- The structure of CIRES is diverse and flexible
- High quality research
- A strong symbiotic relationship has evolved among CIRES, CU and NOAA—facilitate NOAA's move into human dimensions
- CIRES has started flagship outreach programs
- Of great value to NOAA—catalytic

Success measures cont'd

- Unique position to deal with crisis research
- Provides efficient use of government funding
- Takes advantage of the strength of the Boulder scientific community

Administrative Comments

- CIRES has strong leadership.
- Research planning procedures and processes appear to be robust
- Block funding provides stability, and is a major factor in the success
- New annual plan will request funding for projects rather than individuals

Programmatic

- The panel was supportive of the Innovative Research Program
- The visiting Fellows Program is important to the vitality of CIRES
- Student and Teacher Training is also an important component

Research Themes

- Advanced Observing and Modeling Systems
- Climate System Variability
- Geodynamics
- Regional Processes
- Integrating Activities
- Planetary Metabolism

Areas that Require Attention

- Perceived and real differences in the status of government employees versus CU employees in the laboratories
- Rigidity within CU
- The threat of a shift towards contract versus grant research
- The perception of CIRES in funding agencies

Other Considerations and Concerns

- The panel supports the contemplated extension into biological sciences
- The panel found the idea of an Environmental Technology Center attractive
- There should be a CIRES Employee Handbook

Panel Recommendations

- Retain current format of cooperative agreement
- Retain and strengthen the current program structure
- Continue innovative research and visiting fellows programs
- Address the problem of rigidity within departmental structure

Panel Recommendations Cont'd

- Add more biological scientists to CIRES
- The employee award system should recognize a greater fraction of those doing outstanding work
- Establish a new Environmental Technology Center within CIRES
- Prepare and employee handbook for CIRES
- Continue te current Outreach programs and consider expansion to serve as a clearing house for selecting and recommending the use of scientifically accurate environmental classroom materials and public information