Hogan announces plans to restructure

Seeks to boost research, promote collaboration

by Elizabeth Omara-Otunnu

A plan to reorganize the central administration has been announced by President Michael J. Hogan. The plan is intended to strengthen the University’s research and graduate education and foster greater collaboration between the Health Center and the Storrs campus.

Under the plan:
• the research enterprise of the entire University, including the Health Center, will be headed by a single individual. That person will hold the title of vice president for research and graduate education and dean of the Graduate School, and will report to both the president and the provost;
• all deans at the University, including those at the Health Center, will report to the provost. The vice president for health affairs will report to the provost in his or her capacity as dean of the medical school, but will continue to report to the president regarding clinical and administrative matters.

The changes, which involve amendments to the University’s bylaws, will be discussed by the Board of Trustees at its Jan. 22 meeting and are expected to be finalized at its February meeting. Searches to fill the top research post and the position of head of the Health Center have been modified to reflect the proposed changes, which will take effect with the new hires.

“We need to have one university, not two; one provost, not two,” Hogan says. “We need a unified mission when it comes to research, as well as education and the larger academic agenda. These changes must be made in order for the University to achieve its major goals.”

One of those goals is to expand the University’s research agenda and elevate the standing of the graduate and professional programs.

Hogan says the vice president for research will work with the provost to set a vision for the entire institution, leveraging all the resources, expertise, and skills at the University.

The changes were prompted by the

see Reorganization plans page 3

Glenn Ferguson, former UConn president, dies

by Sherry Fisher

Glenn W. Ferguson, president of the University from 1973 to 1978, died Dec. 20 in Santa Fe, N.M. He was 78.

Ferguson served as president from 1973 to 1978.

Janet Jones, who was Ferguson’s executive assistant, says he “cared deeply about issues and tried to resolve them in a positive fashion.”

Ray Buck, emeritus director of university publications, says Ferguson was “extremely interested in the welfare of the University. He listened to suggestions. He acted as best he could during very difficult times. He really had the University’s best interests at heart.”

Buck notes that Ferguson “worked hard to enlarge the role of the Foundation in the strengthening of the University.”

He describes the former president as gentle, soft spoken, and “quite shy,” and called Ferguson’s wife, Patricia, “an exemplary first lady.”

Ferguson was chancellor of Long Island University from 1969 to 1970, and president of Clark University in Massachusetts from 1970 to 1973.

After leaving UConn, he served as president of Radio Free Liberty-Radio Europe, based in Munich. He became president of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in 1983, and was president of the American University of Paris from 1992 to 1995.

Ferguson earned an undergraduate degree in economics in 1950 and a master’s degree in business administration in 1951, both from Cornell. He earned a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1957.

He held various posts in the administrations of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson between 1961 and 1969, including U.S. ambassador to Kenya, as well as positions with the Peace Corps and Volunteers in Service to America.

Ferguson was born in Syracuse, N.Y. He grew up there and in Bethesda, Md.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, two sons, a daughter, and four grandchildren.
Focus the Nation climate change awareness events set for Jan. 29-31

BY SHERRY FISHER

The University of Connecticut is participating in Focus the Nation, a nationwide climate change awareness and education event Jan. 29-31. More than 1,400 colleges, universities, and K-12 schools, faith-based organizations, civic groups, and businesses are taking part in the event.

On Jan. 29, at 7 p.m., there will be a screening of The 11th Hour, in the Student Union The- atre. An informal discussion will follow led by Anj Seth, research assistant professor in geography and Richard Parnas, associate professor of chemical, materials, and biomolecular engineering.

On Jan. 30 and 31, there will be a “teach-in” – whereby professors have agreed to dedicat e their class periods to a discussion of climate change within the context of their discipline. Most of the courses are open to UConn community members and the public. The list of classes is available at www.eco- husc.org/cfocathenation.

In an interactive webcast, The 2% Solution, will be shown at 8 p.m. in room 131 of the Biology/Physics Building on Jan. 30.

On Jan. 31, Vice Provost Veronica Makowsky and Greg Anderson will moderate a faculty panel discussion about UConn’s role as an institution of higher education in addressing climate change. The discussion starts at 5 p.m., in Conover Auditorium at the Dodd Center. A question and answer period will follow.

The next Calendar will include events taking place on Monday, Jan. 31, through Monday, Feb. 4. Those items must be in the database by a p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22.

In addition, special attention will be given to the climate change awareness and education event Jan. 31, through Monday, Feb. 4. Those items must be in the database by a.p.m. on Monday for inclusion in the issue published the following Monday.

Calendar

Frisco’s Brown Bag

Friday, 1/25 – Genetics & Genomics. Genomic Instability of the Histone Repeats in the Drosophila vitrills Group, by Cara Stet (adv.: Strausbaugh). 10:30 a.m., Room 209, Beach Hall.

Lectures. Preventing Falls in the Older Population: Recent Efforts to Apply Evidence-Based Practices to Community Settings, by Dr. Richard Fortinsky (adv.: mark J. Roy). 12:30 p.m., Ryan Building, Room 204.

Thursday 1/24 – Comparative Pathology Seminar. “The Human Papillomavirus DNA Diagnosis and Management of Cervical Cancer,” by Dr. David Hillyard, University of Utah. 8 a.m., Room 402, Alwett Laboratory.


Sunday, 1/27 – Connecticut State Museum of Natural History Workshop. Phil Graham, anthropology, will discuss the use of papier mache as paper for tests and art in ancient Egypt. 2 p.m., State Museum of Natural History, Hillside Ave. Admission registration required, 860-486-4460. Admission $20 ($15 for members).
Researcher share findings during Musculoskeletal Research Day

The second annual New England Musculoskeletal Institute Research Day was held recently at UConn Health. The event is an opportunity for scientists and clinicians to present their latest research findings.

“This is an important event for the New England Musculoskeletal Institute because it not only promotes scientific collaboration throughout the Health Center but gives clinicians and scientists an opportunity to interact,” says Dr. Jay Lieberman, director of the New England Musculoskeletal Institute and professor of orthopedics.

“Our ultimate goal is to move our research from the bench to the bedside to enhance the care of patients in this region and throughout the nation, and this Research Day promotes that mission.”

This year, the program focused on three topics that are critical elements in the Institute’s strategic plan: tissue regeneration and repair; cell and molecular biology; and clinical and translational sciences. More than a dozen researchers from both the Storrs and Farmington campuses made presentations during the day. The researchers represented several different research environments, including vascular biology, reconstructive sciences, materials science and engineering, and orthopaedic surgery.

“You can come away with certain ideas or understandings that may help you in your research or spur you to collaborate with others on some new idea,” says Hector Leonardo Aguila, assistant professor of biomaterials. Aguila is part of a research team studying how embryonic stem cells could help rebuild cartilage, bone, fat, and muscle. “For instance, I was very impressed with Tim Hila’s research presentation (Hila is a professor of cell biology and the director of the Center of Vascular Biology). Because he’s in a completely different field of research, he offers a different vantage point, but at the same time, I can see commonalities in our research that may help me draw different conclusions in my own research.”

Reorganization plans

Recognition that the future of research and scholarly work may be affected by reorganization and collaboration, he says, and that the University needs an organizational structure that will facilitate such work.

For points to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program as an example. Researchers at the Health Center and Storrs are currently preparing to apply for one of these awards.

The program, now in its third year, is intended to speed up the translation of scientific research into practical applications in the medical field – “bench to bedside science.” The NIH is expected to distribute half a dozen grants of about $14 million this year.

“The CTSA reflects the new way NIH is looking to allocate funds for research,” he says. “A CTSA is a vehicle to help us become more competitive for extramural funding from NIH and other funding agencies.”

Hogan says there are already some good models of collaborative research involving faculty at the Health Center and at Storrs: stem cell research, for example, for the Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention (CHIP), and nano medicine and nanotechnology.

“We want to encourage more of that,” he says, “because that is the future. Students coming to this institution will need to gain experience working in cross-disciplinary team environments, and this organizational change will also help us provide opportunities for students to learn in such environments.”

As provost at the University of Iowa, Hogan helped carry out a Clinical and Translational Science Institute that led to a successful CTSA proposal involving a broad range of disciplines in arts and sciences, social sciences, and engineering, as well as biomedical science.

A CTSA application is currently being prepared by a committee headed by Judith Fife, a professor of family medicine and director of the Ethel Donahue Group for Translating Research into Practice and Policy, and Dr. Peter Albertsen, professor and chief of urology and medical director of the UConn Medical Group, the Health Center’s physician practice. The committee includes several faculty members from Storrs.

The target date for submission is June.

The proposal will involve a number of specific research projects, but will be characterized by an organizational model for cross-disciplinary work. It will include a plan both for training students and for connecting with physicians in the community.

Hogan says the success of the medical and dental schools is closely connected to UConn’s standing as a research and teaching university. But, he notes, the trend toward cross-disciplinary work is not limited to health sciences.

“We will see more interdisciplinary collaborations involving scholars in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, too,” he says. “Now is the time to ensure that we will have the academic and research infrastructure in place to support this far-reaching trend.

“The success of the research enterprise affects everybody in the University community,” he adds. “Building our research will enable us to bring in more resources, and attract outstanding faculty and students. It will be good for the University and good for the state.”

Research Foundation large grants, fall 2007

The Research Foundation’s fall 2007 Faculty Large Grant awards were announced recently. The goal of these awards is to help faculty move into a better position for and receive extramural funding for their research and scholarly activities.

For the Faculty Large Grant competition, the Research Advisory Council received 65 proposals totaling more than $2.4 million, and made 38 awards totaling more than $544,000.

The proposals were peer-reviewed by members of a standing review panel.

Award recipients are:

Karl Adams, Human Development/Family Studies, Early Parenting Expectations and Their Influence on Parental Identities and Behavior, $20,925.

Carol Atkinson Palumbo, Geography, Investigation of Spatial Variation of the Impact of Land Use Change and Values in Rapidly Growing U.S. Cities, $7,535.


James Boster, Anthropology, Cross-Language Comparison of Emotion Lexicons, $15,000.

Raymond Brown, Molecular & Cellular Biology, Molecular Determinants of the Erythrocyte Factor GATA 3 in Human Disease, $8,950.

Ann Buczinski, Marine Sciences, Ecological Genomics of a Marine Planctonic copepod, $24,000.

Douglas Casa, Kinesiology, Intravenous versus Oral Rehydration: Medical and Performance Considerations, $14,900.

Hedley Free, Nutritional Sciences, The Role of the Zinc Transporters ZIP1 and ZIP4 in the Endocrine Responsiveness of Breast Cancer Cells, $21,350.

Pudan Gao, Chemical, Materials, & Biomolecular Engineering, Large Scale Synthesis of Semiconductor Heterojunction Nanowire Arrays, $23,884.

Jean Givens, Art & Art History, Subnational Project: Making Modern Sweden and “Swedish Modern” Design in the 1930s, $14,900.


David Grant, Pharmaceutical Science, Role of Soluble Epoxide Hydrolase in a Mouse Model of Atherosclerosis, $22,000.

Sharen Hertel, Political Science, Human Rights and Media Coverage: From Atitudes to Action, $22,811.

Jeong-Ho Kim, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Fractional Factor of a Functionally Graded Protein Exchange Membrane: Modeling and Experiments, $25,884.

Nicholas Leadbetter, Chemistry, In-Situ Monitoring as a Tool and a Probe in Microwave-Promoted Synthesis, $23,499.

Dmitry Leykekhman, Mathematics, Junior Faculty Fellowship, $3,985.

Baikun Li, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Integrated Study of the Interactions between Biofilms and Electricity (MICs) to Improve Power Generation, $23,884.


Thomas Meyer, Natural Resources Management & Engineering, Spatial Modeling to Support the Characterization of Environmental Hazards and Exposure from Herbicide-Resistant Bt Grisses, $10,264.


Thomas Morris, Plant Science, Improved Methods to Stack Mannose and Compase Off, $12,205.

Michael O’Neill, Molecular & Cellular Biology, Leucin-Specific Impairing on the Mammalian X Chromosome, $8,000.


Karen Ryker, Dramatic Arts, Subnational Activity: Directing Mozart’s Opera “The Magic Flute” and Actor Training for Opera Singers at the Dublin Institute of Technology in Dublin, Ireland, $2,169.


Nancy Sheehan, Human Development/Family Studies, Community-Based Long-Term Care: How Residential Setting and Living Arrangement Influenced Elderly Puerto Rican’s Knowledge and Use of Long-Term Care Services, $15,930.

Helena Silva, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Side-Gated Ultra Narrow Channel Silicon MOSFETs, $3,884.


Robert Weiss, Chemical, Materials, & Biomolecular Engineering, Poly(Lactic acid) Ionomers, $23,935.

Yudong Wu, Computer Science & Engineering, Algorithms and Applications of Inverting the Mosaic Patterns in Populations, $15,000.


Susanne Yelli, Physics, Negative Index Materials Based on Atomic Coherence, $15,248.
Ohio administrator appointed new director of residential life

BY KAREN A. GRODA
A veteran housing director from Ohio State University has been named executive director of residential life at UConn.

Steve Kremer, former assistant vice president for student affairs and director of university housing at The Ohio State University in Columbus, joined UConn on Jan. 18. He was selected after a national search.

At UConn, Kremer will oversee a student housing program with 11,700 beds. The University houses about 70 percent of the undergraduate student body and has one of the largest student housing programs in the United States.

“Steve is particularly well suited for the UConn position because he has more than 20 years of successful leadership, management, and program development at Ohio State,” says John Saddlemire, vice president for student affairs. “He has demonstrated his ability to connect diverse groups to achieve common goals.”

At Ohio State, Kremer was responsible for directing all services related to undergraduates, graduate, and family student housing for 11,000 residents on four campuses. During his tenure, he led the design and development of more than $80 million in construction, including six housing renovation projects and a new 500-bed, four-building residence hall complex.

Kremer also created 30 residential learning communities that have been a hallmark of campus social and intellectual life at Ohio State. UConn has several living learning communities, and hopes to expand the number next fall.

“The tradition of UConn as a residential campus is a rich one and there already exists a strong sense of mission with noble goals,” Kremer said. “I am hoping to bring a fresh set of eyes, and am especially happy about the interest UConn has in further development of learning communities in residence halls. This is an exciting opportunity to leverage an existing process of student learning through collaboration between academic and student affairs.”

Kremer received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and holds a master’s in theology from St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana. He is a member of the American College Personnel Association, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the Association of College and University Housing Officers, and the Society for College and University Planning.