UAB's School of Health Professions' (SHP)
REsearch ACceleration Holistic Program: REACH

The SHP Office of Research and innovation (SHP-R&I) is intensely committed to supporting junior and mid-career faculty in academic research and scholarly development. To honor this commitment, we have launched a new program to provide structured mentoring, coaching, and grantsmanship training. This program, designed to promote **re**search **ac**celeration through a **h**olistic approach (**REACH)** gives SHP faculty—junior *and* senior—the tools to find their own unique paths to becoming fully funded scholars and researchers.

REACH is designed to create a supportive and collegial research culture in the school at large while helping individual faculty at different stages of their career trajectories accomplish their goals. REACH is not a generic "one size fits all" workshop designed to speak to everyone (which too often ends up being useful to no one). Instead, **REACH** works with the diverse needs and strengths of SHP-R&I's heterogeneous faculty by tailoring its approach to individual researchers.

Who is REACH for?
The **REACH** program applies equally to tenured, tenure-track, and faculty who have 100% appointments in the SHP, regardless of whether their role is principal investigator (PI) or co-investigator (Co-I).
   REACH-trained faculty are:
   R responsible, respected, and research-proficient
   E engaged, empowered, and energized
   A agile, accomplished, and accelerated
   C connected, collegial, and creative
   H holistic, honed, and high-performance

Early- and mid-career faculty:
REACH supports faculty who are trying to establish steady funding for their research groups. Its usefulness to early-career faculty is obvious. At SHP-R&I, we fully understand that early-career academics are usually overwhelmed and time-strapped. Many faculty feel that no matter how hard they work, they can never keep up. **REACH** will use a combination of mentoring, coaching, and training to help faculty manage the stress and feeling of hopelessness that can come with looming deadlines and multiple commitments. A productive and sustainable research program is within **REACH**.

Senior faculty:
REACH supports senior faculty who wish to take their research endeavors to the next level, developing program grants, training grants, or grants with multiple coordinating projects. Established investigators who wish to create consortiums, apply for program/ center grants, or propose multiple projects for funding will find that REACH can be tailored to their needs.

REACH Opportunities:
REACH offers structured mentoring, coaching, and training opportunities to SHP faculty in research and innovation.

Mentoring provides guidance in career development, while **coaching** offers insight and actionable ideas toward creating sustained (and sustainable!) research productivity. **Training**, on the other hand, is the *hard skill* part of the **REACH** program—it teaches the technical process of grantsmanship, instilling the skills needed to identify, write, assemble, and submit competitive grants at every career and funding level.

In *mentoring*, senior faculty members will draw on their experience and wisdom to guide, support, and facilitate early-career academics who are actively engaged in and committed to fostering their own growth and knowledge—the faculty that the REACH program is designed for. Done well, mentoring is a reciprocal and collaborative relationship. In *coaching*, early-career academics choose to work with expert coaches (another faculty member or an external consultant) to design and achieve intentionally chosen personal

or professional goals—in this case, sharper, more developed research acumen. Coachees must want to do the work. They must step up and *step in* by challenging themselves to deepen their self-awareness in areas of growth or strength. This will involve confronting the *blind spots* that we all have (we don't know what we don't know!) and remedying them. This is hard work, but it is work that must be done to **REACH** your potential. Healthy productivity promotes emotional and mental health, and vice versa. Achieving goals enhances your self-confidence, fulfillment, and well-being, which in turn helps you achieve further goals— a cycle of reinforcement that improves overall research performance and productivity and career success.

In grantsmanship training, early-career, mid-career, and senior faculty will have access to expert training in the skills needed to write successful grants. Early- and mid-career faculty likely need help with the more basic elements of grantsmanship such as identifying grants that are a good fit, writing in clear and convincing ways, and meeting expectations of granting committees. Senior investigators will have access to more advanced grant writing skills training, working with writing consultants and grant budget experts and having access to staff to help assemble and submit complex proposals with many moving parts. Senior investigators will also be plugged in to the broad network of other REACH senior investigators—a network that will be very helpful in taking research to the next level by bouncing ideas off one another or collaborating on mutually beneficial projects.

What does REACH involve?
Your experience with REACH will be tailored especially for you. SHP-R&I will meet with faculty members individually to determine which of the program's offerings would benefit you most—mentoring, coaching, grantsmanship training, or all three. Together, we will create a professional development plan, including timeline and deliverables. The intent is to support individual faculty's research productivity in order to effect a significant positive change throughout the school by creating a continuous flow of talent at all stages through the research pipeline. REACH seeks to grow a community of independent investigators from diverse backgrounds who will benefit from a holistic approach to research. **REACH** will accomplish this in the following specific ways.
- It will provide the *soft skills* that help you manage your own time and make research sustainable in your own life without burning out. In the form of mentoring and coaching, it will also provide the skills required to run a research group, including:
  - Laboratory and research development, management, and leadership
  - Creating a positive lab culture (hiring the right people, navigating difficult conversations, ensuring creativity and confidence among lab members so that they can do their best work)
  - Building team connections and trust while equitably managing the logistics of allotting time and shared equipment for faculty, students, and trainees
- It will provide the *hard skills* related to grant application preparation by training you directly in researching, writing, and submitting grants and by connecting you to existing on-campus grant writing resources, including:
  - GRIT Program
  - GRIT Writing workshops
  - BERD + consultation for statistical design

Faculty feedback
We will invite you to review the program's effectiveness 12 months after implementation and will continue to iterate and refine it to ensure that **REACH** provides the tools SHP faculty members actually need. SHP-R&I ensures the program will remain fresh, innovative, and on target to support faculty in performing and producing sustainably at high levels—to help you *reach* your academic goals and your true professional potential.