(A3-3)
Regional Partnerships Involving Core Facilities
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This presentation will provide an update on two inter-institutional initiatives involving core facilities. The Open Access Initiative among Northwestern, the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois-Chicago was spearheaded by a study conducted by Huron Education. It resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding that allows researchers at each university to use each other’s core facilities seamlessly. This means that researchers are treated the same in regard to availability and pricing of equipment and services regardless of their home institution. The second initiative is the formation of a Core Facility Working Group among Big Ten Universities and the University of Chicago. The purpose of this Group is to share best practices, facilitate regional collaborations, and enhance professional development.

(A3-4)
Organization of a Regional NCI Cancer Center Core Network
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Institutional funding to support academic core facilities is increasingly more difficult to obtain. Grant funding is more competitive than ever. Should investigators lose grant funding, the impact to core facilities is far-reaching. Not only does the core lab lose user fees from that funded study, but the institution loses the indirect costs that support the institutional infrastructure, including core facilities, and the effect can be profound, reducing or eliminating institutional support for core labs and eliminating funds that allow development of new technology. To remedy this problem, a group of NCI-designated Cancer Centers in the Mid-Atlantic region established a ‘consortium’ that encourages collaborative interactions among the participating centers. Members of the consortium include the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center, Georgetown University Medical Center’s Lombardi Cancer Center, the University of Maryland School of Medicine’s Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center, and the University of Virginia School of Medicine Cancer Center. The function of the consortium is to develop a multi-center infrastructure to provide local NCI-designated cancer center members access to those shared resources not available at their home institution. This provides an alternative to each institution investing in their own resources, and helps strengthen existing resources. The consortium also addresses the recent changes to the NCI Cancer Center Support Grant guidelines, which now encourages collaborative links with other centers as well as demonstrating the impact and the value that these core services add to the research programs at all of these institutions.

(A4) METRICS OF SUCCESS FOR CORE FACILITIES
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Evaluation of core facilities is rarely something that is looked forward to by anyone. It is time consuming and often raises issues with no easy solutions. Core directors stiffen under the burden imposed by well-meaning but scientifically uninformed administrators. Institutional administrators struggle to find standard, objective data supporting continued investment in the core and shudder at the thought of working with administratively uninformed core directors. Standard financial metrics don’t always apply or may need to be weighted differently in the academic environment. However, as review and accountability is a necessary part of any effective and efficient operation, it is important for both the administration and the core leadership to come together to develop the most informative evaluation possible.

This session will be held as a panel discussion with short presentations by the panelists regarding different approaches and some useful metrics to develop an effective evaluation program. We expect audience participation by core directors and administrators alike to help develop a reasonable set of evaluation expectations and metrics by the end of the session.

(A5) CORE FACILITY FINANCIALS
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The financial success and sustainability of a revenue-based Core Facility is directly linked to the preparation and planning both before the facility is open and the continued review of the business metrics on an on-going basis.

This Session will focus on multiple facets of financial planning necessary for the start-up and continued monitoring of facilities. Initial considerations and examples for developing a Business Plan, including key elements to be included, a 3-year budget projection and the challenges that this process entails, will be discussed. Key components will be highlighted to determine the long-term viability of the operations.

Focus will then be on Rate Setting – what items will need to be addressed, internal vs. external revenues, program income considerations and compliance driving the calculations of the fees. Examples and calculation tools will be provided.

In conclusion, focus will be on reporting financials as the facility operates. Discussion will include information to be disseminated, suggested formats, comparison to other institutional recharge centers and an overview of an institution’s centralized service package.