



Report of the Land Grant Panel on Technology Transfer September 2002

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Panel Members

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- John Alexander, CBORD Group
 - David BenDaniel, JGSM
 - Ronnie Coffman, CALS
 - Harold Craighead, Eng.
 - Charles Fay, Vice Provost
 - Paul Gould, Allan & Co.
 - Jay Steven Gross, Weill Medical Center
 - Jim Hunter, NYAES, Geneva
 - William Lesser, CALS
 - Suzanne Loker, CHE
 - James McLeod, CVM
 - James Mingle, University Counsel
 - Norm Scott, BEE

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Technology Transfer (TT) within the Context of Cornell

- Social problems seldom have technical solutions
- Technology transfer means little without
 - Good schools
 - Good governance
 - Good health care
 - Environmental quality

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Rediscovery and redefinition of the land grant mission:

- Knowledge for the benefit of the public good
- Knowledge that contributes to social and economic welfare

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Our Vision for Cornell

- Continue to excel in science and world class scholarship
- Directly benefit people through technology transfer and public scholarship

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Definition & Evolution of TT

- Organizational not a technical process
- Requires transfer of knowledge across disciplines, professions, sectors, regions, communities and societies
- Cornell lacks a strategically effective program in industrial extension needed to fulfill our land grant mission in the modern context

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Conflict of Interest & Commitment

- Defined for faculty in a university policy statement and an agreement that they (are supposed to) sign each year
- Interpretation of the policy in order to enhance TT is the challenge
- Core issue in considering how we fulfill our land grant responsibilities

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Venture Capital

- Major venture capital firms are not investing in Cornell technology due to
 - Remoteness
 - Cultural and structural problems
- We need to work jointly with our alumni in the major firms to remedy this problem

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University Policies

- Patenting and licensing policies are similar across all U.S. universities
- Implementation is the variable
- Need to adjust our institutional attitude toward entrepreneurship
- From the land grant point of view we need to move inventions from Cornell to the public faster, allowing easy access to discoveries so that knowledge is used for the public good

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Surveillance and IP Protection

- Internally
 - The extent of circumvention is unclear
 - University/CRF presumes good faith
- Externally
 - The extent of use without a license of Cornell technology is unclear
 - Rely on faculty inventors and their network to report infringements

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The Case of New York State

- New York State has lagged seriously behind other states such as Georgia, Illinois, Michigan and North Carolina in funding technology transfer
- Cornell has a special obligation to the state as a land grant institution and the state has a special obligation to us
- Jointly we are expected to transfer technology to benefit the citizenry
- Need to reexamine our partnership and restructure our approach to TT in New York

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Three Options

- Do nothing -- seems unwise based on concerns expressed by Cornell constituencies
- Tweak the current system -- unlikely to be effective
- Create a new, high-profile office of university outreach
 - Led by a vice provost
 - Would include OED and CRF
 - Relocate CRF to the main campus in a distributed model
 - Reorganize CRF administratively as a part of the university to emphasize the integration of outreach and technology transfer

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Selected Recommendations

- Continuously reexamine the land grant mission
- Strengthen our partnership with New York State
- Recognize a patent as an academic contribution
- Establish a special office for industrial outreach
- Emphasize the support of local business growth
- Provide for humanitarian use of our technology

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End