

# **Research Strategic Plan 2023-2027**

## **Research Vision**

To be recognized as an academic institution committed to promoting clinical and translational scientific discoveries and innovation with special emphasis on the diverse health issues affecting the community, minority health, and health disparities. We aim to increase our research profile and capacity in areas where interdisciplinary and collaborative contributions can lead to significant advances and impact community health.

## **Research Mission**

To contribute to improving community health and health equity through leadership and scholarly productivity, integrating research with education and service.

## **Research Strategic Plan**

This plan is the overarching document that outlines the Institution's direction toward increasing research productivity.

## **Goals:**

1. To build and sustain a productive research culture.
2. To develop and foster a research environment.
3. To enhance and enable access to research infrastructure.
4. To facilitate and increase research and scholarly productivity.

## **Benchmarks for Success**

The San Juan Bautista School of Medicine Research Center (RC) is responsible for facilitating, monitoring, and evaluating the outcomes to determine a successful Research Strategic Plan implementation. The Institutional Research Committee (IRC) is an internal Advisory Committee to the RC director to help assess the benchmarks for success, look into research policy, make appropriate recommendations, and help create conditions that stimulate quality research and scholarly productivity.

Each of the four goals has two strategies designed to accomplish the benchmarks for measuring the achievement of the outcomes. Consistent with the Institution's vision, mission, and goals, each strategy has three specific activities with at least two expected outcomes.

*Endorsed by the IRC on October 25, 2023*

*Approved by SJBSM President on February 27, 2024*

**Goal 1: To build and sustain a productive research culture.**

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine is committed to developing a productive research culture that will continue to support our faculty in building a research workforce that will advance the Institution's agenda in promoting clinical and translational scientific discoveries and innovation.

**Strategy 1.1: Recruit, retain, recognize, and reward research productivity**

1.1.1 Increase faculty recruitment in the research track, focusing on complementing and building research priority areas.

- Recruitment of one full-time research-track faculty member every two years.
- Recruitment of at least two full-time research-track faculty members by 2027.

1.1.2 Enhance faculty recognition and awards that showcase and reward outstanding research performance and leadership.

- Recognize faculty member(s) with the annual SJBSM Faculty Excellence in Research and Scholarly Activity Award.
- Provide an annual reward to researchers submitting successful grant applications for external funding.

1.1.3 Reward faculty research productivity with incentives.

- Provide salary incentives to researchers who obtain external grant funding with salary support.
- Approval of faculty requests for funding to attend research training activities or travel to present at national conferences.

**Strategy 1.2: Build capacity with initiatives that promote research competency, leadership, and collaboration**

1.2.1 Increase mentoring and targeted interventions to attract students to work with faculty on research projects.

- Disseminate faculty, alumni, and students' research achievements/initiatives such as presentations, publications, recognitions, and research projects.
- Disseminate the SJBSM Guideline for Research Activities and opportunities, including collaborating institutions and faculty research mentors and advisors.

1.2.2 Organize research activities, faculty research seminar programs, and networking events.

- Celebrate an annual Interdisciplinary Research Symposium.
- Offer at least two research-related seminars annually.

1.2.3 Offer professional development programs and coaching to assist faculty in scientific writing.

- Provide scientific writing reviews to at least five faculty members annually.

- Support annually at least five faculty members in submitting manuscripts to peer-reviewed journals.

### **Goal 2. To develop and foster a research environment.**

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine is committed to developing a productive research environment that will support our faculty in obtaining external funding to advance the Institution's commitment to integrating research, education, and service.

#### **Strategy 2.1: Encourage a team approach toward research**

2.1.1 Offer support for competitive research pilot projects.

- Support at least three research pilot projects annually.
- Support faculty requests for research materials, reagents, equipment maintenance, and other expenses.

2.1.2 Expand the list of qualified faculties to serve as mentors.

- Invite at least one external researcher annually to become an Ad-honorem faculty member with academic rank to serve as a research mentor.
- Support at least one teaching faculty member every two years to become a research mentor.

2.1.3 Promote the formation of faculty teams to co-author collaborative work.

- Disseminate the SJBSM Guideline for Authorship.
- Provide institutional support to cover publication costs.

#### **Strategy 2.2: Provide services tailored to the individual's research needs**

2.2.1 Carry out an annual survey to assess faculty research needs

- Researchers will submit a yearly Research Progress Report, including productivity and challenges, to the RC director.
- The RC director will meet at least once annually with each researcher to discuss their Progress Report to develop a plan

2.2.2 Offer research development activities in grantsmanship

- Maintain the Grantsmanship Independent Research Development (GIRD) program with at least two participants annually
- Offer at least one activity annually related to opportunities and grantsmanship

2.2.3 Provide individual coaching in the development of research proposals

- Provide individual GIRD writing schedules to at least two investigators annually
- Submit at least one research proposal annually

### **Goal 3: To enhance and enable access to research infrastructure**

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine is committed to addressing the faculty needs for the proper equipment, research tools, administrative systems, and staff infrastructure to support its growing research portfolio.

#### **Strategy 3.1: Target investments toward infrastructure and agile research support**

3.1.1 Develop agreements with other institutions concerning animal, clinical, and lab infrastructures to allow our researchers access to their facilities.

- Maintain at least three active collaborative agreements annually and disseminate the opportunities among faculty and students.
- Develop a new research collaborative agreement at least every two years.

3.1.2 Maintain an Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) to assist with pre and post-awards, information on funding opportunities, submissions, and process monitoring.

- Disseminate the SJBSM Guidelines for Pre-Award and Post-Award
- Prepare an annual OSR Progress Report, including announcements of opportunities, pre-award processes, submissions, and outcomes.

3.1.3 Convene meetings of the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) to oversee the development and implementation of the Research Strategic Plan.

- The IRC will meet at least six times a year
- The IRC will prepare an Annual Research Productivity Report

#### **Strategy 3.2: Provide high-level coordination, governance, and support for research infrastructure**

3.2.1 Submit research infrastructure and capacity grants.

- Provide at least one annual training for research infrastructure/capacity grant development.
- Submit at least one competitive research infrastructure/capacity grant every two years.

3.2.2 Maintain an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that oversees and approves the conduct of research by faculty and students on projects involving human subjects.

- Maintain all annual IRB accreditations and certifications UpToDate.
- Prepare an annual IRB Progress Report of all research proposals received, the type of proposal, and the outcome.

3.2.3 Expand the collaboration with the SJBSM Clinical Trials Unit ( CRU) and the SJBSM Puerto Rico Health Justice Center ( PRHJC).

- Participation of researchers as mentors of students during research rotations
- Participation of faculty in collaborative research projects

**Goal 4. To increase productivity through interdisciplinary and collaborative research.**

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine is committed to supporting research collaboration across disciplines, between universities, and the public and private sectors as an integral part of its research agenda.

**Strategy 4.1: Promote collaborations through internal processes and policies**

4.1.1 Provide institutional support and recognition for collaborations among faculty from different disciplines and departments within the Institution.

- Provide institutional support to a multidisciplinary research team proposal for obtaining data and publishing a manuscript.
- Provide institutional recognition to a research team proposal with at least faculty from three disciplines or departments.

4.1.2 Facilitate the process for students and researchers to be involved in interdisciplinary, collaborative research.

- Provide institutional recognition and funding support to interdisciplinary, collaborative research projects that include students.
- Offer at least one activity annually that promotes interdisciplinary, collaborative research,

4.1.3 Increase formalized adjunct appointments.

- Recommend appointing at least one adjunct research faculty member annually to serve as a mentor or advisor.
- Provide email access to Adjunct faculty to allow access to CITI, IRB, Library, and other resources to promote collaborations and mentorship.

**Strategy 4.2: Increase research productivity through research collaborations**

4.2.1 Formalize collaborative research agreements with other local and national academic institutions to support faculty scholarly productivity.

- Coordinate at least one meeting every two years between the RC director and the PIs of each collaborative research agreement to evaluate strengths, barriers, and outcomes.
- Formalize at least one new research collaborative agreement every two years.

4.2.2 Become a member of public or private organizations or groups with an agenda to advance research.

- Provide institutional support for membership fees so faculty researchers can participate actively in their scientific organizations.
- Provide institutional support for faculty to participate in research groups.

4.2.3 Provide financial support for joint activities that promote research collaboration and increase scholarly productivity.

- Co-sponsor at least one scientific activity every two years
- Provide financial support annually to a joint scientific activity