The Review of Reviews

LTER renewal proposals 2006-2010

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The question: Have reviews been consistent over the years?

• 2010 seemed a bit harsh...
  – Of 12 proposals reviewed, only 4 were renewed unconditionally
    • 1 site terminated
    • 2 put on probation, another recommended for probation
    • 4 required to submit addenda

• In 2006 + 2008, 11 of 15 proposals were renewed unconditionally; 1 probation

• We reviewed Panel Summaries as well as numerical scores for 2006, 2008, 2010 rounds
Numerical ratings: Means by site
Numerical ratings: Distribution

![Bar chart showing the distribution of proposal scores from 2006, 2008, and 2010. The x-axis represents proposal scores from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating excellent. The y-axis represents frequency (% of total scores).](chart.png)
The three most commonly cited faults in the 2010 renewal proposals

• Responses to mid-term reviews were inadequate
• Need better integration among research areas and team members
  – Breadth/depth tradeoff causes tension
• Conceptual model (and other models) must clearly link to research activities
  – ISSE as a model variably praised or criticized depending on how well it fit the site
What else was often cited as lacking?

• Lacked new and exciting research ideas/theory
  – Need “greatest hits” in Results of Prior Support
• Need to do research that is uniquely possible in a long-term program
• Microbial ecology, food web theory, human dynamics cited as inadequately treated in certain proposals
  – Recruitment of new co-PIs often suggested as solution
• Quantitative modeling: Necessary, but can attract criticism
What else was often cited as lacking?

• Management issues
  – No leadership transition plan
  – No external advisory committee

• IM efforts not up-to-date or up to standards
  – Data not fully available through LNO repository

• Publication productivity: Judgment seemed subjective

• Education and outreach, IM efforts generally drew praise