



A University-Business Learning Partnership

ENERGY INSTITUTE AWARDED GRANT FOR *BEST PRACTICES IN ENERGY SECTOR REFORM*

The Energy Institute was awarded Shell Interdisciplinary Scholars Program Grant. The five-year program is funded by the Shell Oil Foundation and aims at increasing multidisciplinary research efforts at UH. This is the second time Energy Institute was awarded a grant under this program.

The project team is led by the Energy Institute and includes participants from Colleges of Business, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences and Mathematics. **Dr. John Casey**, Professor of Geosciences, and **Dr. Michelle Michot Foss**, Director of Energy Institute and Assistant Research Professor, Decision and Information Sciences are Principal Investigators of the project. Other team members are **Dr. Paul Gregory**, Cullen Professor of Economics, **Dr. Everette Gardner**, Professor, Decision and Information Sciences, and **Dr. Gürcan Gülen**, Energy Institute Research Associate. The proposal abstract is provided below.

Proposal Abstract

Strong trends are emerging around the world toward market-based solutions for energy. How national governments approach energy sector reform is a matter of intense debate. We propose to join this debate in a significant way by addressing two research questions.

- *What are the critical variables that lead to success or failure of energy sector reforms?*
- *Is it possible to assemble a comprehensive database that leads to rigorous assessment and longitudinal, comparative study?*

Our unique approach and contribution to the debate will be the application of analytical tools typically used to evaluate the competitive positions of firms to that of countries, based on our premise that in implementing energy sector reform strategies, countries seek competitive positions with respect to worldwide capital investment. To our knowledge, this approach has not been attempted, at least in a way that provides access to results in the public domain. For this research effort we propose to assemble a team of faculty and students with broad experience in the oil and gas industries; to focus our research on oil and gas exploration and production and pipeline transportation; to investigate as our first sample of countries pairings that bracket general perceptions of success/failure with reform and importance with respect to oil and gas resource positions (U.S./Canada as the baseline, Mexico/Venezuela and Russia/Kazakhstan); to achieve as a specific outcome a National Science Foundation-competitive proposal for ongoing research; to provide specific and rich opportunities for student enhancement; and to provide, through the Energy Institute, specific and rich opportunities for linkages between UH faculty, staff and students and industry and government expertise in this arena.