

**Committee on Research (COR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**December 17, 2014**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 3:00 pm on December 17, 2014 in Room 324 of the Kolligian Library, Chair David C. Noelle presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Noelle updated COR members on the following updates from the UCORP meeting of December 8:

- Two new Regents were appointed by Governor Brown.
- The State of California's revenues are higher than projected and while there is enough money to buy out the tuition increase, the Governor rejected this option.
- Governor Brown still advocates for a three-year undergraduate degree and asked representatives from student government organizations to opine on this proposals. Student government leaders rejected the proposal with one reason being that Pell Grants do not support summer study (summer work would be required to achieve a degree in less than four years).
- The Regents called for increased efforts to attract the best graduate students to UC graduate programs, but they rejected a proposal to solicit philanthropic sources for funding to provide competitive graduate student offers.
- There will be a 3% increase in faculty salaries, but it has not yet been determined how this increase will be implemented, with the decisions likely being left up to campus administrations.
- Campuses will be asked to balance their resident and non-resident enrollment. Some campuses have overenrolled non-resident students who pay a higher tuition fee.
- President Napolitano is considering establishing a position similar to the previous Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies as well as an "outward facing" position to oversee her initiatives on innovation.
- Issues surrounding non-resident tuition for graduate students are being delegated to the individual campuses. There is still no systemwide policy on

reducing the negative impact of non-resident tuition on PIs. UCORP also discussed the importance of decoupling graduate education from undergraduate education so the Regents can better understand the unique issues of both.

--Individual campuses have begun taking over technology transfer procedures which were previously handled at UCOP.

--Individual campuses have instituted a variety of innovation projects including awards for student start-up companies. However, some campuses have reported obstacles in developing contracts with certain companies. UCORP is considering surveying potential corporate partners for the bureaucratic and legal issues that have hindered joint efforts.

--UCOP is attempting to increase the UC's web presence with regard to research but is experiencing challenges with funding for additional staff.

--UCOP is reviewing policy concerning the access and management of raw data collected by UC researchers. This issue was prompted by faculty who are separating from the university, introducing questions concerning what, exactly, those faculty can take with them, given that the university officially owns the data.

--The US Office of Management and Budget (OMB)'s Uniform Grant Guidance contains new rules that will take effect with federal awards made after December 26, 2014 (including additional funding increments to existing awards). Of particular importance is a section addressing what PIs need to know, and this will be disseminated to UC faculty. VCR Traina indicated that that he will provide a presentation for UCM faculty in January. VCR Traina also pointed out that the document's biggest potential impact on faculty (which is currently on hold) would be the requirement that all purchases of \$3,000 or more must have competitive bids. The current threshold is \$50,000. In addition, any item under \$3,000 will be considered a supply.

--UCORP opined on two systemwide issues: 1) policy for open access for non-Senate members. UCORP is requesting clarification on whether this includes graduate student TAs. 2) support for diversity and its role in the recruitment and advancement of faculty. Proposed APM revisions that encourage the consideration of contributions to diversity in the evaluation of

faculty members were seen as vague and confusing by UCORP, and it was recommended that they be rejected.

## II. Consent Calendar

**ACTION:** The December 3 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

## III. Reviewing CRU Bylaws

The manager of the Spatial Analysis & Research Center (SpARC) contacted COR Chair Noelle to inquire whether COR should review the center's bylaws. COR members discussed the request and concluded that the current cycle of initial CRU/ORU establishment and subsequent five-year review gives COR ample opportunity to review and comment on bylaws. COR members suggested that annual reviews of SpARC bylaws be completed by the center's Steering Committee who is in the best position to judge the appropriateness of SpARC's bylaws. VCR Traina pointed out that he requests that all research units submit annual reports. COR members agreed that these annual reports would provide sufficient information about the units' activities.

**ACTION:** COR to send memo to SpARC confirming that the committee prefers to only review bylaws at the time of establishment and five-year review. VCR Traina will begin posting research units' annual reports on his office's website.

## IV. Campus Review Item

Prior to this meeting, COR members reviewed, at Division Council's request, the proposed pilot program to establish undergraduate program chairs in SNS and SSHA. Committee members decided that this falls outside the purview of COR as the proposal does not hold significant implications for the campus research mission.

**ACTION:** COR to inform the Senate Chair that COR has no comments.

#### V. Faculty Research Grants

Prior to this meeting, the committee analyst compiled the responses received from prior faculty awardees of GRC/COR grants and the funding levels of other UC campuses for their Senate grants. Based on this information, a COR member drafted a graph to illustrate the declining trend of funding for Merced Senate faculty grants in relation to our growth in faculty numbers. Ultimately, this data will be included in the letter from COR to Provost/EVC Peterson to illustrate the importance of increased funding of the Senate faculty grants program.

The letter to the Provost/EVC should note that UCM's per capita funding rate is not significantly below that of other campuses, however, other campuses have more funding sources such as departmental funding and bridge funding. It is quite challenging for UCM faculty members to obtain large extramural awards so these Senate faculty grants can make a significant difference to faculty members' research programs. The letter should also mention that UCM faculty members do not have the safety net that exists at the larger, well-funded campuses. Also, other campuses distribute their funds in different ways. At UCM, some amount of funding gets distributed to school deans and graduate groups, but that is not sufficient to cover the research needs addressed by programs at other campuses, such as bridge funding. A lack of funds for research support can contribute to a decrease in faculty morale, and this fact should also be noted in the letter.

COR members then discussed how best to use the anecdotal information received from the survey that was conducted of previous faculty awardees. Members agreed that the responses should be divided into four main categories and analyzed further: 1) number of extramural awards received as a result of the Senate faculty grants, 2) number of publications generated from the grants, 3) number of presentations delivered due to the grants, and 4) number of graduate students supported. This data will be included in the letter to the Provost/EVC as well as a few stories from faculty members about the awards' positive impact on their research.

**ACTION:** Committee analyst will organize the faculty responses into the aforementioned categories and send to the COR member who is serving as lead on this project. The analyst will also determine the number of total applications from AY 2008-2009 to AY 2013-2014. The COR member will add a line to the graph that shows a projected increase in faculty numbers and will draft the letter to the Provost /EVC in advance of the January 14, 2015 COR meeting. The letter will consist of two sections: 1) summary of data received from previous faculty awardees as evidence for how bolstering this funding program could increase research productivity at UCM and 2) a discussion about faculty morale/campus climate issues that are occurring due to the decreasing funding trend.

#### VI. RDS and SPO Grant Submittal Timelines

Prior to this meeting, the respective directors of Research and Development Services (RDS) and Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) submitted their draft timelines for faculty submission of grant proposals. The directors requested COR's input on the feasibility of the deadlines.

After a brief discussion, COR members decided to postpone providing comments until spring 2015 when the School of Natural Sciences begins to use the new grants management system as a pilot project.

**ACTION:** COR analyst will notify the RDS and SPO directors that the committee will provide comments after the School of Natural Sciences begins the pilot project.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Attest: David C. Noelle, COR Chair

Minutes prepared by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Analyst