

**Committee on Research (COR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**February 12, 2014**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 10:00 am on February 12, 2014, in Room 324 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Ruth Mostern presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Mostern updated the COR members on the following topics from the February 10 UCORP meeting:

--the Portfolio Review Group (PRG), the committee that was tasked with reviewing all UC programs that are funded through the UC Office of Research, has issued a report that summarizes their first cycle of review. (UC Merced's representative to the PRG is SNS Dean Meza.) The report was circulated to COR members prior to this meeting. UCORP has asked each campus COR to review the report and submit comments.

-- Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI). OP acknowledges that MRPI is drastically underfunded but the UC Office of Research recognizes its worth. OP is allocating \$3 million for the program this year and at least \$6 million over the next two years. This is enough funding to move forward with RFPs which have until recently been on hiatus. Two-thirds of the funds will be earmarked for four-year programs that are renewable (via a peer-reviewed process) and one-third is earmarked for two-year, cross campus research intended for seed funding leading to extramural funding. The RFP call will be issued in April but funds will not be available until this fall. It is believed that there is enough money in the MRPI to request bridge funding.

--President Napolitano's office is preparing to announce her technology commercialization initiative, whereby, she is aiming to make UC inventions more visible and competitive in commercially viable industries in California. There is nothing for COR to circulate at this time.

**ACTION:** COR members will review the PRG report in advance of the next COR meeting on February 26.

II. Consent Calendar

**ACTION:** Today's agenda and the January 29 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

III. Indirect Cost Return

Due to the absence of COR member Chen, who was scheduled to lead the discussion, VCR Traina gave a brief overview of the history of indirect cost return (ICR) at Merced. ICR money is discretionary and relatively unrestrictive so the campus has some freedom on how to utilize it. The money we receive for the Senate faculty research grants comes from ICR; in addition, the money that former EVC Keith Alley allocated to supporting graduate education also came from ICR funds. ICR is also used to cover emergency funding gaps on campus.

Currently, UC Merced's ICR effective rate is about 19%. This is similar to other UC campuses. A COR member announced that Berkeley has begun a new practice this year in which their Senate faculty grants are funded entirely by ICR instead of Senate money. Each Berkeley faculty member who applies is given \$3,000 which he/she is allowed to save up to \$12,000. Another COR member inquired about other sources of discretionary funds besides ICR. VCR Traina responded that gift money and summer instructional funds (a fraction of the latter is discretionary and goes to the deans) are other sources. Another significant source of discretionary funds is an extension program and while UC Merced has not maintained such a program, Chancellor Leland has expressed interest in establishing it. The ultimate goal of any extension program is for it to be self-funding. VCR Traina also related that campus administrators want to maximize the flexibility of the ICR funds. VCR Traina also mentioned that campus administrators are interested in addressing ICR as soon as possible as they recognize the importance of this issue. A COR member pointed out that faculty request transparency with these funds since they are the generating force behind them.

**ACTION:** ICR will be added back on the agenda for the next COR meeting on February 26. COR's goal is to formulate a memo, by the end of the spring semester, that recommends the way forward in terms of reporting to faculty about ICR budget and recommending methods to utilize the money to advance the campus research enterprise. The COR analyst will invite Provost Peterson and VC for Planning & Budget Dan Feitelberg to the COR meeting in March.

IV. Campus Research Safety Committee

VCR Traina will circulate among COR members a revised charge for this committee next week.

**ACTION:** This item will be placed back on the agenda for the March 12 COR meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Attest: Ruth Mostern, Chair

Minutes prepared by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Senior Analyst