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

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 10:00 am on March 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 21 UCOLASC meeting:

-- Open Access policy. The implementation is proceeding apace. Deposit rates are somewhat low to date, but there has also been minimal outreach. There was discussion on increasing faculty participation. Publishers have abated with their requests for waivers. It is estimated that 12,000 e-scholarship articles are accessed each day. The California Digital Library is in contract negotiations to implement Data Share, an article management tool that links author information to article access. It is an incentive for authors to participate.

--Off-site storage facilities. The UC library storage facilities will reach capacity by 2017. There is no funding at this time to expand the facilities. It was mentioned that a new location in central California may be found for additional storage that would be accessible for UC Merced researchers. It would be expensive and would involve broad consultation and assessment at UCOP. The committee will continue to monitor this issue.

Chair Mostern then updated the COR members on the following topics from the February 24 Division Council meeting:

-- 2020 project and strategic planning. Strategic academic focusing efforts are continuing and the Provost wants strategic plans to be completed by the beginning of the next academic year.

--Proposed Medical Education Task Force. Division Council members discussed the draft charge and next steps for the task force.

II. Consent Calendar

ACTION: Today's agenda and the February 12 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

III. Portfolio Review Group (PRG)

PRG is the committee convened by the UC Office of Research that was tasked with reviewing all UC programs that are funded through the UC Office of Research. The PRG has issued reports that summarize its first and second cycles of review. (UC Merced's representative to the PRG is SNS Dean Meza.) The reports were circulated to COR members prior to this meeting. UCORP has asked each campus COR to review the reports and submit comments.

The reports list criteria pertaining to whether the research activities under review should be recommended for continued funding. The PRG reached consensus on which programs should be funded, reconfigured, or removed. From UC Merced's perspective, the significant aspect of the report is the PRG's enthusiasm about the MRPI program and the natural reserves. However, the PRG is critical about the California Institutes for Science and Innovation (CAL ISI) and this is concerning to UC Merced.

COR can reply to the PRG's request for comments by expressing support for the MRPI program, natural reserves, and Cal ISI. It was pointed out that Dean Meza should be invited to a future COR meeting to discuss his impressions of the report and COR should submit its comments to the PRG thereafter. A COR member emphasized the importance of sending a Merced faculty representative to the PRG next academic year.

ACTION: Committee analyst will invite Dean Meza to a future COR meeting to discuss the PRG cycle 1 and 2 reports.

IV. Indirect Cost Return

One of COR's goals this academic year is to examine the current indirect cost return (ICR) model and make recommendations on disbursement of funds to PIs. Prior to this meeting, the committee attempted to collect the distribution models on other UC campuses. At the February 12 COR meeting, VCR Traina mentioned that UC Merced's effective rate is 19%. This is comparable to other UC campuses. UCOP no longer takes a portion of the funds; it is an overall assessment of the campus. The 19% represents real earnings that are disbursed.

COR's goal is to encourage budgetary accounting transparency in the allocation of ICR and to ensure that the funds are used to support the campus's research enterprise. Discretionary funds – formerly called opportunity funds – are important to the faculty in light of the changing of the parameters of extending start up packages. Faculty need these other sources of funding to maintain their research programs. COR members discussed the various units on campus which may have information on the current ICR model, including Institutional Research & Decision Support (formerly Institutional Planning & Analysis) and Business & Administrative Services.

ACTION: COR will draft a proposal of ICR allocation models and submit to VC for BAS Michael Reese and VC for Planning & Budget Dan Feitelberg. The VCs will be invited to a future COR meeting to discuss the proposal. Upon conclusion of that meeting, COR will discuss whether to consult with other campus units.

V. Campus Review Items

COR members discussed the following campus review items at the request of Division Council:

--Proposed medical education task force charge. COR's continued goal is to preserve the integrity of the campus research mission. As such, the committee wants to ensure that that the medical education effort does not

create a cannibalizing effect on established campus research programs in terms of resources and funding. In addition, HSRI has already undertaken a significant amount of work in the exploratory phase of the medical education initiative. COR is concerned that the institute's energy has been diverted from its main function as a research entity. COR recommends the draft charge be revised to include two faculty members from each School.
--Senate-Administration Library Working Group report. COR endorsed the Working Group's recommendations in fall 2013 and is pleased to continue its support.

ACTION: Committee analyst will draft memos to be circulated among the committee for approval. Final memos will be submitted to the Senate Chair.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Attest: Ruth Mostern, Chair

Minutes prepared by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Senior Analyst