

**Committee on Research (CoR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**October 25, 2023**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 9:00 am on October 25, 2023, in the Administration Building Room 344. Chair Tao Ye presiding.

I. Chair's Report – *Chair Ye*

A. Divisional Council meeting October 12

- Updates from the Senate Chair on the Congress on Graduate Education.
- Presentation from AVC for Interdisciplinary Research & Strategic Initiatives Josh Viers on UC Merced's Agricultural Experiment Station designation.
- Consultation with the Chancellor on a variety of topics including campus financial systems. The Chancellor's response to Divisional Council and CoR's recent memos was shared with faculty in the October 13 edition of the Senate email digest.

**Action:** The committee analyst will forward the October 13 Senate email digest to committee members

II. Consent Calendar

A. Today's agenda

B. Draft October 11 meeting minutes

**Action:** Due to time constraints, the Consent Calendar will be approved via email after the meeting.

III. Systemwide Review Item

A. Proposed APM Section 672 - Negotiated Salary Program

The purpose of the NSP is to provide a mechanism for participating campuses to augment faculty compensation basis according to the competitive requirements of academic disciplines.

Hyperlinked on today's agenda were the following documents:

- Explanatory cover letter from UCOP
- Proposed policy
- UC campus comments on previous iterations
- CoR's May 2022 memo
- The lead reviewer's comments

CoR discussed the lead reviewer's comments and supported them. Members offered a few suggested revisions.

**Action:** The committee analyst will distribute the draft memo for additional edits and approval. CoR's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, November 3.

#### IV. Centers Policy

**Background:** In conjunction with the former VCORED and campus administrators, CoR revised and submitted the Centers policy to Divisional Council in AY 21-22 which were linked on today's agenda. CoR received comments from Senate committees in fall semester 2022. All fall semester 2022 comments were linked on today's agenda.

Former CoR Chair Sexton requested that CAPRA clarify their fall 2022 comments. CAPRA's updated comments dated February 14, 2023 were linked on today's agenda.

Prior to this meeting, CoR members reviewed and edited the Centers policy. The updated policy was linked on today's agenda.

CoR members discussed the revisions made to the sections of the policy on the establishment and review of Centers. Members requested additional time to edit.

**Action:** The committee analyst will add the revised Centers policy to the next CoR meeting for further discussion. The updated Centers policy should be transmitted to Divisional Council for review by the end of the fall semester.

#### V. Draft Call for Proposals for Annual Senate Faculty Grants Program

The draft AY 23-24 call was linked on today's agenda. CoR traditionally has issued the Call for Proposals in early or mid-November with a submission deadline by the end of January. CoR will have 1.5 months to review the proposals. Awardees are usually announced in mid-March.

CoR members discussed the draft call in the context of an item later in the agenda, the allocation of the COVID mitigation funds. See below discussion and action item.

#### VI. COVID Mitigation Funds

**Background:** in AY 22-23, former EVC/Provost Camfield agreed to provide \$50,000 to the Academic Senate for CoR and FWF to allocate to faculty to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID pandemic. FWF drafted a call (linked on today's agenda) but due to various other pressing issues, FWF and CoR did not finalize the call or allocate the funds. At the end of the spring 2023 semester, VPAP Hansford confirmed that EVC/Provost Camfield was willing to allow the funds to roll over to AY 23-24, but with two strong recommendations: 1) these funds need to be allocated in fall 2023 and 2) CoR should allocate the funds in a manner similar to the annual Senate faculty grants competition.

VPAP Hansford informed the Senate office that Interim EVC/Provost Zatz confirmed she will still allocate the \$50,000 to the Senate office. However, she also suggested that CoR consider

using that amount to augment the Senate faculty grants program instead of administering a separate competition for COVID mitigation.

CoR members were supportive of the idea of rolling the COVID mitigation criteria into the existing call for proposals for the annual Senate faculty research grants program. However, there was much discussion on how to incorporate these new criteria. CoR members pointed out that it would be stressful for faculty members to have to discuss their professional and personal challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and include them in their grant proposals. It would also be extremely difficult for CoR members to evaluate those proposals, as the committee would have to determine which applicants were most significantly impacted during the pandemic. A CoR member suggested that instead of asking applicants to discuss their pandemic challenges in detail, they could instead check a box on the application form to self-identify that they are applying for COVID mitigation funds.

A few CoR members suggested using the extra funds from the Interim EVC/Provost to simply top off the normal Senate faculty research grants program with no additional considerations for COVID mitigation.

Two CoR members agreed to take the lead on revising the draft call for proposals for the Senate faculty research grants program to incorporate language about COVID mitigation.

**Action:** The committee analyst will add the revised call for proposals for the Senate faculty research grants program to the next CoR meeting for the committee's review and approval.

#### VII. Consultation with VCR Wilson

Per the aforementioned memo from the Chancellor in response to Divisional Council and CoR's recent memos on the continuing financial systems problems, VCR Wilson informed CoR that she and CIO Nick Dugan were tasked with establishing a task force. The task force includes four Senate faculty representatives from Divisional Council: CoR Chair Ye, At-Large member McCloskey, At-Large member Khatri, and AFAC Chair Eaton. It also includes representation from DFA, IT, ORED, EVC/Provost's office, and deans' offices. The task force has not yet met. VCR Wilson stated that the task force will consider the following main issues and prioritize: governance, workforce and organizational development, tech training, user experience, and reporting and report development. VCR Wilson and CIO Dugan will issue a memo today about the task force and anticipate sending regular memos moving forward.

CoR Chair Ye pointed out that the Senate Executive Director inquired whether the task force should have one of the faculty representatives as co-chair since this is a Senate-Administrative effort. VCR Wilson replied that she is supportive of this suggestion but wants to ensure she follows the appropriate policy.

VCR Wilson stated that she will ask the four Senate faculty members on the task force if they would be willing to walk the other task force members through their own processes of purchasing, account balances, etc. for informational purposes.

A CoR member pointed out that having dashboards for faculty would be beneficial for communication, morale, and for the accuracy of account balances.

#### VIII. Core Facilities

In AY 20-21, CoR and ORED collaborated on a survey to faculty on core facilities and instrumentation. The survey questions, results, and CoR's analysis of the results were linked on today's agenda.

VCR Wilson reiterated her statement from a previous meeting that she is forming the search committee for the replacement director of core facilities and is also working on the job description.

A few CoR members discussed whether it is appropriate to send a new survey to faculty at this time. Other CoR members believed a survey would be beneficial as it would inform future action.

CoR members agreed that if a new survey will be issued to faculty on their core facilities/instrumentation needs, then the survey needs to explain the outcome of the AY 20-21 survey so that faculty are aware that their previous input was used efficiently.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 am.

Attest: Tao Ye, CoR Chair