

Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
November 1, 2021

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 2:30 – 4:00 pm on November 1, 2021 via Zoom. Chair Jason Sexton presiding.

I. Chair's Report – Jay Sexton

A. Divisional Council meeting October 28

The main topics of discussion were:

- i. The campus plans to distribute an executive summary of transitional steps that will be taken if there is another COVID-19 surge.
- ii. Assembly Bill 1550 was signed into law by the Governor in October. This new law allows instructors who are currently in a bargaining unit to remain eligible for union representation if they become Senate faculty.
- iii. Plan to add 20,000 more students across the UC system by 2030. UC Merced and UC Riverside will see a significant amount of growth. UC Merced's new Health & Behavioral Sciences (HBS) building will be funded by the state and includes classroom space.
- iv. Consultation with Director of Division of Management and Information Paul Maglio and members of his Gallo School planning team about revisions to the Gallo School pre-proposal. The department of political science will join the departments of economic and business management, cognitive and information sciences, and management of complex systems, in the new Gallo School.
- v. Senate Chair Westerling is holding regular conversations with Interim CFO Kurt Schnier about the ongoing problems with Oracle. He reiterated to Schnier that the self-service model is untenable and purchasing transactions should be handled by staff.
- vi. The campus will increase staff hiring. There will be no new faculty hiring for next fall but it is as yet unclear if exceptions will be made for replacement and failed searches.
- vii. The Chancellor is allocating \$2 million from the MacKenzie Scott gift fund to the Graduate Division for fellowships to recruit PhD students. This is to further the campus goal of reaching R1 status. The Chancellor is also allocating \$1 million to the Academic Senate; the funds will be spent next year so decisions on how to spend them must be made this year.
- viii. The GC and UGC working group is discussing requests for online courses and how to track them.
- ix. The Community and Labor Center ORU proposal review will be re-started once the administration notifies the Senate.
- x. There is a systemwide proposal to increase faculty salaries.
- xi. GSRs are now unionized. UC Merced will need guidance given that TAs and GSRs are represented by different unions.

xii. The UC and the UC-AFT are back in negotiations.

With regard to the proposed Gallo School, a CoR member conveyed a concern from some faculty in the School of Natural Sciences about the name of the Master of Data Science and Analytics degree. The degree apparently does not require previous training in quantitative methods. The School of Natural Sciences Executive Committee and Director Maglio are discussing this issue.

CoR Chair Sexton reported that the EVC/Provost acknowledged receiving the research obstacles joint memo from CoR, FWAF, and GC and that his office is working on addressing the various problems.

II. Consultation with Interim VC Patrick Lenz

A. Updates on Biomedical Sciences and Physics (BSP) building

Interim VC Lenz reported to CoR members that he is actively addressing the various challenges around the BSP building. He explained that after 2008, the state ceased allocating funding for new buildings. The campus brought in a contractor who would handle the construction of the new buildings, the financing of the construction, and have a 30-year investment in maintaining the new buildings. Interim VC Lenz stated that the contractor was given a level of scope and approval that was quite large which meant the campus had a smaller role in the approval process. There were many serious code violations that were either ignored or not addressed in a timely manner. The most egregious example is that in the case of a fire, the doors of BSP would close but not re-open in a timely fashion. The fire marshal therefore red-tagged the building.

Interim VC Lenz explained that he spent the first month of his role at UCM determining all the building's problems. The next month was spent engaging with the state fire marshal which resulted in the BSP building receiving a temporary certificate of occupancy. This means the building can be used in a limited capacity. H and L labs, which are designated for multiple chemical use, can be used cautiously at the moment. (Certain conditions have to be established for the H and L labs to be fully used, such as the floors being fashioned in such a way that could contain a chemical spill.) In order for BSP to receive a full occupancy certificate, there will likely have to be some construction and remediation of the fire walls to get them code-compliant.

Interim VC Lenz informed CoR members that the timeline for getting the H labs compliant is not yet known. Interim VCORED Zatz stated that compliance for H labs is closer than for the L labs.

A CoR member pointed out that ORED's document on which BSP faculty use flammable chemicals is complete, as he uses such chemicals in his lab but the document does not indicate this. He added that faculty received an email asking if they would be ready to move in to BSP by mid-November. He and some of his colleagues did not respond in the affirmative because they want to avoid another situation in which they move into the

building then have to move out if more problems occur. Interim VC Lenz answered that he is working individually with faculty members on what is allowable under the temporary occupancy certificate. He asked faculty to contact him and Interim VCORED Zatz with any questions or issues.

III. Consultation with Interim VCORED Zatz

A. Path to R1.

Interim VCORED Zatz presented a series of slides on the path to R1. She explained that the raw data used by Carnegie are: 1) doctorates in humanities, social sciences, STEM, and professional; 2) research expenditures in STEM and non-STEM; and 3) research staff with PhDs.

UCM's current data points:

- AY19-20 # PhD completions = 63
- AY20-21 # PhD completions = 56 (decrease nationally due to COVID-19 pandemic)
- FY20 research expenditures = \$45,966,000 (\$43,421,000 in STEM)
- FY20 research staff = 95
- FY20 ladder rank faculty = 290
- FY20 research expenditures/# research faculty = $\$45,966,000 / 290 = 158,503$
- FY20 # research staff/ # research faculty = $95 / 290 = 32.76$

Interim VCORED Zatz shared a [UCOP website](#) where faculty can log in to run various simulations according to different numbers of faculty, research expenditures, and number of PhDs.

The proposed, immediate next steps are:

- PPFM train school financial staff to ensure all possible research expenditures are coded as 44
- Ensure proper count for research staff in UC Path
- Increase PhD admits in certain programs for fall 2022 and fall 2023
- Develop Analytics Roadmap to integrate data sources and create dashboards
- Expand Cayuse capabilities for tracking purposes
- Analyze grants landscape and facilitate proposals for large center grants
- Encourage more grants where we are lead institution
- Learn from campuses that recently crossed R1 threshold

Interim VCORED Zatz informed CoR members that Carnegie will release their rankings in December or January so we will be able to see how UCM has moved. She understands that some faculty are hesitant to discuss R1 given the serious problems with procurement and grant administration. However, the campus needs to start moving toward the goal of R1 status because some of the

initiatives require five or six years to achieve. She also pointed out that UCM has been very successful in increasing research expenditures but needs to focus on the number of PhDs awarded even though UCM's PhD student retention rate is quite positive compared to most institutions. A CoR member asked about advocacy efforts with UCOP to ensure that UCM receives equitable financial consideration. Interim VCORED Zatz replied that the campus's new MOU with UCOP was a significant accomplishment and the terms of the new MOU are favorable for UCM.

IV. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's agenda
- B. Draft October 18 meeting minutes

Action: the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

V. Systemwide Review Items

- A. Proposed Presidential Policy on Integrated Pest Management

The policy is newly proposed to address the following key issues:

- The issuance of the Integrated Pest Management ("IPM") Policy intends to establish the University of California's requirements for the implementation of an IPM Program at every UC location as recommended by the UC Herbicide Task Force formed by former President Napolitano with support from the Regents.
- Exemptions to the policy include the use of pesticides in research, the use of antimicrobials for hygienic purposes (e.g., disinfecting sprays or wipes, pool treatments, and drinking water treatments), and the use of chemicals for the purpose of sterilizing medical products or equipment.

The lead reviewer recommended that CoR decline to opine. CoR members agreed.

Action: the committee analyst will inform the Senate Chair that CoR declines to opine.

- B. Proposed revisions to APM-759 (Leaves of Absence/Other Leaves Without Pay)

In May 2021, the Regents Working Group on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship recommended in its final report that APM-759 be revised to explicitly state that a leave without pay can be used for innovation and entrepreneurship pursuits. The proposed revisions to APM-759 are responsive to the Regents Working Group recommendations.

The committee discussed the lead reviewer's comments.

Action: the committee analyst will distribute a draft memo to CoR members for review and approval via email. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Friday, November 19.

C. Proposed Presidential Policy on Abusive Conduct/Bullying in the Workplace

The proposed Presidential Policy is responsive to a request from the Regents and the Academic Senate for a systemwide policy that addresses the University's responsibilities and procedures related to abusive conduct/bullying.

CoR identified a lead reviewer.

Action: CoR will discuss the lead reviewer's comments at the November 15 committee meeting. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Friday, November 19.

VI. Other Business

- Some CoR members agreed that the campus needs a more collaborative approach to the review of proposals for new schools. One CoR member pointed out that there is not a consensus in SSHA over the establishment of the proposed Gallo School.
- A CoR member asked if the administration will once again allocate funding to faculty for conceptualization and instrumentation grants like last year. VCORED Zatz replied that CoR agreed last year to pause this year in order to determine how the funds were spent. She added that several faculty members who received these grants last year have asked for extensions. She reiterated that the Chancellor allocated \$1 million from the MacKenzie Scott gift fund to the Academic Senate. CoR Chair Sexton recommended that the committee discuss at the next meeting some ways for the Senate to spend those funds. For example, should the funds be used for more conceptualization and instrumentation grants? Should additional funds be given to the annual Senate faculty grants program?
- A CoR member stated that the campus needs centralized instrumentation support given that many instruments are used by researchers across campus. The burden of repairs and maintenance would therefore be shared. VCORED Zatz responded that the campus already provides centralized support for many of the instruments. CoR members agreed that that the campus needs a functioning, well-maintained core facility infrastructure. Last year's survey of faculty was informative as it revealed the current gaps on campus.

Action: At the next meeting, CoR will discuss potential ways to spend the \$1 million in funding given by the Chancellor to the Academic Senate.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Attest: Jason Sexton, CoR Chair