Committee on Research (COR)
Wednesday, November 15, 2017
1:30 – 2:30 PM KL 397

Pursuant to the call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 PM on November 15, 2017 in Room 397 of the Kolligian Library, Vice Chair Roummel Marcia presiding.

I.   Vice Chair's Report
   a. Vice Chair Marcia updated COR members on the November 6 PROC meeting:
      i. The committee discussed possible incorporation of assessment in faculty teaching portfolios.
   b. Vice Chair Marcia updated COR members on the November 13 Academic Governance Cabinet meeting:
      i. UC Path is scheduled to be implemented in January 2018. Among the concerns raised about this new system is that certain payroll transactions will be much more difficult to accomplish on a retroactive basis when needed.

II.   Working Group/Committee Updates
   a. Committee member Scheibner updated COR members on the November 3 Budget Working Group meeting:
      i. The major topics of discussion included the instructional budget; UC Berkeley's "Common-Good Curriculum Initiative" that combines curriculum and budget information in the same planning process to allow the campus to monitor outcomes and adjust targets, and UCM's possible adopting of a similar model.
   b. Committee member Scheibner updated COR members on the November 2 LASC meeting:
      i. The major topics of discussion included a consultation with Director of Space Planning & Analysis Maggie Saunders and representatives from the Woods Bagot firm regarding new and backfill 2020 space; a discussion about the Library taking back space on the KL 3rd floor west wing, as no new space is being allocated to the Library under the 2020 plan; the Provost/EVC's endorsement of the campus signing the Open Access 2020 document; Division Council's endorsement of the spirit of the Library's space plan and the Council's transmittal of its endorsement to the Provost/EVC; $3,000 being provided to new faculty members in their start up packages for library purposes; the Provost's allocation of $60,000 to the Library for its budget this year, and, a discussion about quiet space in the Library for students' use.

III.   Consent Calendar
   a. **Action:** The November 15, 2017 agenda and November 1, 2017 draft minutes were approved as presented.

IV.   Campus Review Item
   a.   Value to UCM Assessment
      i.   The Provost/EVC has drafted proposed guidelines pertaining to the retention of UCM faculty. These guidelines are intended to develop best practices for evaluating individual retention cases in a fair and equitable manner, while also addressing the budgetary and FTE impact of such retention offers.
At the November 1, 2017 meeting, COR members voiced their approval for conducting a conversation on this topic, but due to time constraints, a full discussion was not feasible.

At today's meeting, COR members engaged in a fuller discussion. Members generally approved of the idea of a faculty retention policy, but highlighted the following points: 1) It is unclear whether the process listed in the guidelines will apply to every faculty member who requests retention, or if the process will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, it is not clear who initiates the process. 2) In parallel to implementing these guidelines, COR believes that the campus should focus on addressing faculty members' concerns before they go on the job market, especially given that many challenges faced by faculty can be resolved with less effort than a retention offer or hiring a replacement faculty member. 3) The guidelines would benefit from a description of the funding source for faculty retentions given that the campus does not currently have a line item in the budget for such costs. 4) COR is unclear on point 7 under "UC Merced Record and Achievement" that refers to "…end the cycle of retention battles?" Does this imply that a faculty member is allowed just one opportunity to present a retention case?
      ii.   **Action:** COR will issue a memo to the Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Friday, November 17.

V.   Revisions to the Evaluation Criteria for the Annual Senate Faculty Grants Program
   a.   Prior to this meeting, two COR members took the lead in reviewing the evaluation criteria for Senate faculty grant proposals and suggested various areas of revisions. Their comments were distributed to COR members in advance of today's meeting.

COR members discussed the goal of the Senate faculty grants; whether juniority and/or faculty who have never won this award should be prioritized; whether the proposal format should be revised to reflect one section on Intellectual Merit (tailored towards a more technical audience, such as the School Executive Committees) and another on Broader Impact (tailed towards a general audience for COR's review; whether COR is in the best position to appropriately judge the merits of proposals; and if the role of the School Executive Committees should include conducting a "pass/fail" ranking of the proposals. COR members agreed that if the committee revises the evaluation criteria and intends to prioritize rank/step of applicants, then this must be transparent in the Call for Proposals. Some members debated whether "evidence of need" should be the

main criterion on which to award proposals, given the challenges in judging proposals based on their merit.   Members agreed that the committee should strive to award an equal percentage of proposals across the three Schools, and this should be noted in the Call for Proposals.

Lastly, COR members agreed on an earlier timeline for this year's award process, so that faculty and graduate students can plan their summer projects in early spring semester if they are awarded a Senate faculty grant. (Traditionally, COR has selected awardees in late April, with notification letters sent to PIs in early May.) Suggestions for the revised timeline included issuing the Call for Proposals before the end of fall semester 2017, requiring proposals to be submitted to the Senate Office by the end of February, and COR selecting and notifying awardees in March.

b.   **Action:** Analyst to incorporate the suggested revisions into last year's Call for Proposals for review by COR members. This discussion will continue at the November 29 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Attest:
Roummel Marcia, COR Vice Chair