

**Committee on Research (CoR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**November 19, 2019**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 pm on November 19, 2019 in Room 232 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Michael Scheibner presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Scheibner updated the CoR members on the following:

- UCORP meeting November 12. The main items of discussion were:
  - Proposed, revised Presidential Policy on Copyright Ownership
  - The search for the new UC President is ongoing. A campus day was held at UCLA in November. Participants emphasized the importance of graduate research.
  - UC pension and the issue of employee contributions
  - Continued discussion on cohort tuition, whereby the tuition rate for a cohort of students who begin at a UC would remain constant until they graduate (for up to six years). Such a policy would require approval by the Regents, but each campus will need to begin considering it.
  - If the General Obligation bond is passed by voters in next year's elections, the UC is set to receive \$2 billion in funding, however, the UC's total needs are approximately \$20 billion.
  - The UC Merced Chancellor's search is progressing.
  - Update on Standardized Testing Task Force regarding standardized admissions tests.
  - UCORP is reviewing two multicampus research units this year: UC Observatories and Bioengineering Institute of California.
  - The UC Labs Fee Program awards were announced. A UC Merced graduate student received one of the fellowships, and a proposal with UC Merced as a collaborator was funded.
  - Karen Oegema, a UC San Diego faculty member and member of the UC Cancer Research Coordinating Committee, attended the meeting to update UCORP on the program's next funding cycle.
- Division Council meeting November 13. The main topics of discussion were:
  - The EVC/Provost provided updates on medical education. UCSF-Fresno will eventually grow to offer four-year programs which PRIME students may join in the future. If the General Obligation bond is passed by voters in next year's election, UC Merced will seek to use its portion of the funding to build a behavioral health sciences building that will partly be used for medical education activities (as well as psychology and public health). CAPRA, GC, and CoR may be asked to develop a vision of medical education at UC Merced.
  - The UC system is set to receive \$2 billion if the General Obligation bond is passed, however, the total amount of UC's needs are approximately \$20 billion when seismic retrofitting and deferred maintenance are taken into account.

- The Senate Chair reported that Interim Chancellor Brostrom attended the recent California Economic Summit. The Summit focused on the Central Valley with references to UC Merced.
- Across the UC system, students have reported a low level of satisfaction with the UC, but the opposite is true with students at UC Merced.
- Discussion on the proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy on Copyright Ownership.
- Discussion on the proposed faculty advisory committee on IT (Chair Scheibner mentioned to Division Council that the advisory committee may benefit from appointing a faculty member as co-chair).
- Discussion of Phase II of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Sustainability.
- Approval of the proposed M.S. degree in CIS.
- No updates from VCORED Traina. CoR Chair Scheibner will meet with VCORED Traina in two weeks.

**Action:** Committee analyst to invite the campus medical director to a CoR meeting in early spring semester, given that CoR is one of the committees tasked by Division Council to develop a vision of medication education at UC Merced.

## II. Consent Calendar

- Today's agenda
- November 5 draft meeting minutes

**Action:** Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

## III. ORU Policy Revisions

The ORU policy subcommittee continues to make revisions to the ORU policy in response to the comments received from Senate committees, School Executive Committees, and ORU directors in spring 2019.

**Action:** Committee analyst will add the revised ORU policy to the December 3 CoR meeting agenda.

## IV. Indirect Cost Return and Research Enhancement

Interim Chancellor Brostrom and EVC/Provost Camfield are scheduled to participate in the December 3 CoR meeting to discuss their nascent indirect cost return policy. Prior to this meeting, CoR members were asked to develop questions and talking points about indirect cost return.

CoR Chair Scheibner also distributed a draft proposal containing measures that target the enhancement of research creativity, productivity and output in direct support of the stated goal of the campus to reach R1 status. CoR members discussed the recommendations in the proposal which included: increase the per capita funding level of the Senate faculty grants program; offer a more diverse portfolio of

discretionary internal funding in order to address the diverse research needs on campus; instrumentation grants for shared equipment in order to enhance and/or maintain the existing research infrastructure; and arts and design projects to enhance the campus internal environment with the goal of providing individual research groups with the support to create and maintain professional outward-facing appearances. CoR members also discussed ideas for funding these programs, including utilizing a higher fraction of indirect cost collected on grant projects; unused start up funds; and hiring graduate students in positions related to maintenance of research instrumentation or departmental administration work which would help relieve faculty members from doing these tasks while providing graduate students with valuable experience. Some CoR members suggested that faculty could be rewarded for engaging in sustainability research and practices.

CoR members emphasized that the campus needs funding to hire staff to help faculty develop large-scale Center proposals including drafting budgets and assisting with negotiations with the EVC/Provost.

The overarching question to ask the Interim Chancellor and EVC/Provost is, how can a new indirect cost policy help enhance research support at UC Merced? Other questions to ask are, what will the increased indirect cost return be used for specifically, and should CoR provide comments on the policy or take a more active role in helping to develop a policy?

CoR members then discussed ways to potentially modify the Senate faculty grants program. Members debated whether the grants program should continue in its current form in the Senate or if it is more effective to give a lump sum of money to the Schools and allow them to allocate to departments at their discretion for travel; instrumentation; media design for faculty webpages which may attract collaborators, donors, and potential graduate students; or other research-related needs.

**Action:** CoR members to submit to the committee analyst additional questions and talking points to discuss with the Interim Chancellor and EVC/Provost regarding indirect cost return at the December 3 meeting.

#### V. CoR Membership for Spring Semester 2020

CoR's current vice chair is on sabbatical in spring 2020. CoR has been asked by the Committee on Committees to identify another member to serve as vice chair in the spring.

A CoR member offered to ask his departmental colleagues if they are interested in serving on CoR in a vice chair role. Another CoR member tentatively volunteered to serve as vice chair.

**Action:** CoR members will submit to the committee analyst names of colleagues who are interested in serving as CoR vice chair for spring semester. The committee analyst will forward the names to the Committee on Committees. If this effort is unsuccessful, then the CoR member who volunteered to serve as vice chair will be recommended to the Committee on Committees for endorsement.

## VI. Campus Review Item

- Resolution to Address Climate Change

UCM Professor Roger Bales and his colleagues involved with UCs Carbon Neutrality Initiative, Global Climate Leadership Council, “California Collaborative for Climate Change Solutions”, and “Bending the Curve” initiated discussions with the systemwide Academic Council on a formal statement on UCs role in climate solutions. They have drafted this resolution for approval by the Merced Division before submitting to Academic Council to consider for systemwide adoption.

Prior to this meeting, the lead reviewer’s comments were distributed to CoR members. CoR members supported the resolution but had two concerns. Point 2 of the resolution “Support co-ordination and faculty engagement in addressing the challenge of climate change” suggests the establishment of a Senate task force. CoR members were unclear what role this proposed task force would play in relation to the already-existing Faculty Advisory Committee on Sustainability. Members suggested that since the sustainability goals of FACS and the proposed Senate task force appear to align, the functions of both committees be combined. Also, the resolution states that UC Merced has pledged to become carbon neutral in its campus operations and purchased electricity by 2020 and that the UC system has pledged carbon neutrality by 2025. CoR members asked whether the campus has the appropriate resources to achieve these goal by the stated deadlines, especially with regard to promoting faculty participation in climate-change mitigation and the recruitment of faculty with climate expertise.

**Action:** The committee analyst will distribute a draft memo containing the aforementioned comments to CoR members for review and approval. The final memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair by Monday, December 2.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Attest: Michael Scheibner, CoR chair