

Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
November 2, 2020

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 10:00 – 11:30 am on November 2, 2020 via Zoom. Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

- I. Consultation with AVC for Research Compliance and Integrity, Deborah Motton
 - A. Cybersecurity

The UC system is taking cybersecurity very seriously following the breach at UCSF where that campus had to pay a ransom for the retrieval of large, critical, data sets in public health. There will also be changes as to how data will be managed. Interim VCORED Zatz is serving on a systemwide task force on this issue and recommendations from the task force are forthcoming. UCM's Office of IT will be leading the transactional implementation of new cybersecurity measures. Each campus VCR will be asked to set up working groups with faculty to help ensure cyber safety measures and to determine the associated costs.
 - A. Human Subjects Research During COVID

UCM is in phase II of reopening which allows human subjects research to take place within COVID-19 precautions. Researchers can conduct human subjects research remotely but the IRB will approve some research to be done on campus as long as the appropriate COVID mitigation steps are taken (physical distancing and face coverings). However, the campus has health rules in place that the IRB cannot override. For example, the IRB has approved the operational plans of faculty who do human subjects research, but the faculty cannot conduct their work because state and campus health rules forbid the presence of non-UCM individuals on campus. (Community members are not allowed to be on campus at this time.) Faculty can work with UCM-affiliated individuals only. Field work is also not possible at this time. ORED is informing faculty that even though IRB approves their human subjects research plans, they may not be able to carry out this work on campus due to state and local health rules.
 - B. Potential international travel policy for UCM

AVC Motton explained that the idea for this policy was proposed by UCM Risk Services. Years ago, UC Davis enacted an international travel policy that prohibited the reimbursement of travel costs if the travelers did not register their travel in the UC travel system. The reason for this rule was that a UC Davis post doc died while working abroad on university business and their trip was not registered in the system. Because their trip was not registered, the university did not know where the individual was until they learned of the individual's death.

The individual died as a result of political violence caused by a coup in the country they were working in. UCM is considering such a policy and it would apply only to international trips that are taken on university business, not domestic travel. AVC Motton explained that the policy would not institute pre-approval travel process. The policy would just require university employees' international trips (taken on university business) to be registered in the appropriate UC system so that the university can brief employees on developments in their destination country. Developments can include issues such as the status of natural disasters or political unrest. If employees are using the Connexus system to book their international work travel, then their trips are automatically registered, and no further steps need to be taken. Another advantage to UC employees registering their international work trips is that if something happens to employees abroad (e.g. illness, injury, natural disaster, political unrest), the university will know where the employees are and will pay for the employees' extraction from that country and return them to the U.S. This has occurred at UCM where a researcher working abroad on university business had to be extracted due to political violence and returned to the U.S. AVC Motton also pointed out that the UC system has research collaborations with entities and individuals in comprehensively sanctioned countries. UC employees who travel to such countries on university business must have the proper license; failure to secure the license is a violation of federal law. If employees register their international work trips in the system, the UC system will be able to see their travel plans in advance and provide the employees with the proper travel documents.

C. Foreign influence over research

The federal government remains greatly concerned about foreign governments exerting too much influence over research. As a result, federal sponsors of research are increasing their scrutiny of disclosures filed by faculty and researchers. Researchers must be detailed and transparent in their disclosures about any foreign affiliations, both paid and unpaid, that are related to university work and business. If faculty members have any questions, they are encouraged to speak to either AVC Motton or Interim VCORED Zatz. Additional regulations are forthcoming that will forbid certain Chinese telecommunications from being used by UC networks.

II. Chair's Report – *Kara McCloskey*

A. Updates from October 23 Divisional Council meeting

- i. UCM's comments on the proposed curtailment program for AY 20-21 were transmitted to the systemwide Senate Chair.

- ii. Serious concerns over the administration's lack of consultation with the faculty on issues including the proposed medical education program and plans to privatize the ECEC even though faculty voiced their opposition in 2015.
- iii. Proposed policy on data and authorship disputes as drafted by Associate Vice Provost for the Faculty Valdez and Interim VCORED Zatz. Divisional Council requested that the chairs of CoR, GC, and FWAF review the policy and send comments to Divisional Council. The three chairs met and agreed that a broad policy on data and authorship is not feasible given the variances across fields and disciplines. The three committee chairs recommended to Divisional Council that each graduate group chair be tasked with developing data and authorship policies and share them with faculty and graduate students. Interim VCORED Zatz stated that she is fine with whatever the Senate recommendations; her main goal is to have policies in place. CoR Chair McCloskey pointed out that the campus committee that handles conflicts between faculty and graduate students does not include a CoR member and wondered if CoR representation is needed.

- B. Request from the Librarians Association of UC Merced (LAUC-M) for a representative to attend CoR meetings as a guest.

Action: The committee analyst will invite a member of LAUC-M to a future CoR meeting for introductions.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's agenda
- B. Draft minutes from October 19 meeting

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Consultation with Interim VCORED – *Marjorie Zatz*

- A. Status of UCM's ANR specialists

Interim VCORED Zatz explained that UCM has three ANR specialists who would like to become integrated with the campus community and the faculty. Currently, they do not even receive campus announcements and have missed critical emails such as those related to campus reopening and curtailment. Additionally, because ANR specialists are not Senate faculty, they are forbidden from chairing graduate student thesis or dissertation committees. They can only serve as a co-chair or regular member of graduate student committees with the permission of the VPDGE. Interim VCORED Zatz inquired with VPAP Matlock about placing ANR specialists in the Professor in Residence series but was told that was not possible.

Action: The committee analyst will research other UC campuses' practices regarding the status of ANR specialists.

B. Identifying instrumentation for the BSL-3 laboratory

Interim VCORED Zatz is empaneling a faculty committee to advise her on instrumentation needs for the new Biological Safety Level 3 (BSL-3) laboratory on campus. CoR Chair McCloskey agreed to serve.

Action: The committee analyst will determine whether CoC must appoint Senate faculty members to this committee or whether Interim VCORED Zatz can populate the committee herself.

C. Research relaunch update

Interim VCORED Zatz hopes that the reopening of labs will be at 20% this week or next week. The administration is also working on getting faculty members access to their offices.

V. Systemwide Review Item

A. Proposed Revisions to the Leave-Related Policies of APM 700

A CoR member volunteered to serve as lead reviewer.

Action: The lead reviewer's comments will be discussed at the November 16 CoR meeting. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, December 1.

VI. Campus Review Item

A. Pre-proposal to establish the Ernest & Julio Gallo School of Management

CoR discussed the lead reviewer's comments. The lead reviewer pointed out that key topics for the Central Valley such as agriculture economics, water usage, and management are not addressed in the proposal. The lead reviewer also expressed concern that the core faculty who contributed to the planning for the proposed schools consists of 6 men and no women. The leadership of the school should perhaps reflect the undergraduate student population which is anticipated to be composed of 49% women.

Another CoR member agreed with the comments from the dean of SSHA about unrealistic costs and unfocused thematics.

Action: CoR will continue this discussion at its next meeting of November 16. At that meeting, the committee will be joined by the Gallo pre-proposal's lead author Paul Maglio who will answer the committee's questions. CoR's comments on the pre-proposal are due by December 1.

VII. Draft AY 20-21 Senate Faculty Grants Call for Proposals

The Call has been modified to state that the total amount of funding to be allocated is \$275,000. In recognition of the recent advancement of UC Merced's overall rankings among public universities, and as a sign of their commitment to UCM's research mission and advancement to R1 Carnegie classification, the Chancellor and EVC/Provost have provided additional one-time institutional funding for AY 20-21 for the following programs per CoR's request in July 2020:

- Additional 100K to Senate faculty grants program
- New 200K to support instrumentation grants
- New 200K to support conceptualization grants

CoR members agreed to modify the Call for Proposals: each faculty member may now request up to \$10,000 in funding (revised from \$5,000) and joint proposals may request funding up to an amount which is a multiple of \$10,000 (revised from \$5,000). Awards will not exceed \$30,000 (revised from \$20,000).

Interim VCORED Zatz inquired whether CoR should discuss how to allocate the additional funding provided by the Chancellor and EVC/Provost for instrumentation and conceptualization grants. CoR members agreed to discuss this at their next meeting.

Action: The committee analyst will distribute the revised Call for Proposals to CoR members for review and approval via email. The deadline for approval is Tuesday, November 3. At the November 16 meeting, CoR members will discuss how to allocate the additional funding provided by the Chancellor and EVC/Provost for instrumentation and conceptualization grants.

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

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CoR chair