

Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
November 2, 2022

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 9:30 am on November 2 via Zoom. Chair Jason Sexton presiding.

I. Chair's Report – *Chair Sexton*

A. UCORP meeting October 10

- It has been several years since the UC established a new multi-campus research unit (MRU). UC Vice President for Research & Innovation Theresa Maldonado inquired whether the UC should create a new MRU given the state's interest in climate initiatives.
- UC Riverside is implementing Oracle.
- Discussion of the UCOP survey of UC faculty and instructors on the effects of the pandemic.
Action: CoR Chair Sexton will send the survey results to the committee analyst who will share them with CoR.
- UCOP created an anti-discrimination policy.

B. Divisional Council meeting October 18 and November 1

- The UC is negotiating with three unions representing TAs, GSRs, and postdocs.
- DivCo members hope that the administration will send review items to the Senate in a timely manner, so the Senate has sufficient time to review and respond.
- Interim CFO Schnier and Controller Nelson discussed updates on Oracle.
- The EVC/Provost will send a memo to the Senate to request the formation of a committee that will reexamine the campus policy on establishing new Schools.
- The EVC/Provost is aware of the delays in hiring technicians and postdocs.
- CoR Chair Sexton updated DivCo members on CoR's draft call for proposals for the annual Senate faculty grants program and the draft call for proposals for an instrumentation grants competition. He also updated DivCo on the draft proposal that CoR sent to VPAP Hansford on October 28 on the allocation of potential COVID mitigation funds.
- VCR Wilson spoke with DivCo about climate research funding opportunities. She stated that a Request for Proposals is being drafted and will be issued to the campus in December.

- DivCo discussed the Senate committee comments on the Interim Procedure on Assurance of Laboratory Safety Compliance. The general feedback is that the procedure is punitive against faculty and that there is a lack of guidance and assistance from EH&S. DivCo will transmit the Senate’s feedback soon.
 - DivCo supported the creation of a Philosophy department. DivCo will transmit the Senate’s feedback soon.
 - SNS Dean Betsy Dumont and Medical Education Program Director Margo Vener attended to update DivCo on medical education.
- C. CoR’s draft COVID mitigation funds proposal was transmitted to VPAP Hansford on October 28.

II. Consent Calendar

- A. Today’s agenda
- B. October 19 draft meeting minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. Senate Faculty Grants Program

The draft AY 22-23 Call for Proposals was linked on today’s agenda.

Prior to this meeting, CoR members edited the draft Call for Proposals. CoR Chair Sexton observed that the main issue is whether CoR should award individual grants at \$5,000 or \$10,000 to make a larger impact. Some CoR members suggested a compromise of \$7,500 for individual awards with the rationale that the UC Merced Senate faculty grants program has made \$5,000 individual awards for several years and perhaps it is time to factor in inflation. Other CoR members suggested revising the Call to state that faculty can apply for “up to” \$10,000 for sole PI awards with a maximum of up to \$30,000 for teams of four.

CoR members agreed to revise the Call for Proposals as follows: individual awards will be \$7,500 and multi-PI awards will be capped at \$30,000 for a group of four faculty members. CoR members also agreed that the deadline for submissions will be Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

Action: The CoR chair will finalize the Call for Proposals. The committee analyst will distribute the Call to CoR members for one last round of review before issuing the final call to Senate faculty next week.

IV. Instrumentation Grants

The draft Call for Proposals was linked on today’s agenda.

CoR members discussed awarding fewer grants at larger dollar amounts or more grants at a smaller dollar amount. VCR Wilson asked CoR members to take instrumentation

service contracts into account. The last time faculty received funds for instrumentation, the funds did not cover the cost of service contracts and ORED does not have the funds to assist. VCR Wilson added that the campus needs to encourage communication between ORED, faculty, and core facility managers so that everyone is clear on ORED's resources. It is critical that the campus takes into account the long-term maintenance of research instruments.

A CoR member advocated for shared instruments and suggested adding pathways to the call for proposals for faculty to share and maintain instruments. He pointed out that the last time CoR and ORED issued a call for instrumentation grants (AY 20-21), core facilities applications fared the best. VCR Wilson stated that the campus needs to conduct a comprehensive and fiscal review of campus core facilities in collaboration with faculty. Another CoR member pointed out that UC Merced does not have enough of a grant base to support instruments on recharge. Other campuses' core facilities have more commercial and external users that pay a higher rate. It is difficult for UC Merced faculty to acquire enough grant funding to support the large, multi-user instruments. VCR Wilson agreed and stated that the campus needs to help faculty use their instruments sustainably.

Action: CoR members will continue editing the draft Call for Proposals for instrumentation grants. CoR will finalize the Call at the next meeting.

V. Consultation with VCR Wilson and Former Interim VCR Zatz

Former Interim VCR Zatz discussed the challenges of incorporating social justice research into the current climate funding opportunities. She asked for CoR's input on what aspects of social justice and environmental justice/ecology/regenerative agriculture research could be incorporated.

VI. Systemwide Review Item

A. Proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices.

Linked to today's agenda were the following: summary of key revisions and the tracked changes copy of the revised policy.

A CoR lead reviewer was identified. The lead reviewer will send their comments to the committee analyst by November 9 for inclusion in the November 16 CoR agenda. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by November 29.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Attest: Jason Sexton, CoR Chair