

Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
November 7, 2018

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 2:00 pm on November 7, 2018 in Room 397 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Michael Scheibner presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Scheibner reported the following:

- In response to his request to all department chairs and School Executive Committee chairs, he has received recommended topics for next year's Laboratory Fees Research Program from departments in SNS and SOE. Chair Scheibner will share these topics with UCORP at the next meeting, per the UCORP's chair's request. If CoR members would like to suggest additional topics beyond what was already received, they should send them to Chair Scheibner by next week, prior to the next UCORP meeting.

- Division Council meeting November 6. Major items of discussion included:
 - The interim Provost/EVC expressed a desire to strengthen communication with Senate faculty
 - New regulations with regard to China, if implemented, would be effective January 1, 2019. Graduate student recruitment will be impacted. The regulations will not affect faculty's existing grants unless they submit a budget change or realignment; if such a change is made by faculty members, then they are subject to the new regulations. VCORED Traina stated that next week, a communication will be issued to all faculty to remind them of the current reporting requirements. Systemwide Vice Chancellors for Research (including VCORED Traina) recently participated in an FBI briefing, and UCOP is being asked to organize similar briefings with campus Chancellors. It is as yet unknown if Chancellors will have a similar briefing.
 - Division Council consulted with the LASC chair and University Librarian on the status of negotiations with Elsevier. If negotiations break down, this may lead to a cancellation of contracts with the UC and a loss of UC faculty access to their publications effective January 1, 2019. The UC, as the largest part of Elsevier's base, is taking the lead on negotiations.
 - The new charge for the Academic Planning Work Group is still being developed.
 - Division Council consulted with VPDUE Whitt and the new chair of the General Education program. The General Education program chair is trying to populate the General Education executive committee which currently has no members from SNS or SOE.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: today's agenda and the October 24 draft meeting minutes were approved as presented.

III. ORU Policy

The two lead reviewers reported they have made progress in revising the 2014 Senate research unit policy with regard to the establishment and review of ORUs. One of the issues they will consider, at the VCORED's suggestion, is value added, i.e. what value does the ORU add rather than simply being a collection of faculty members' activities?

Action: a draft of the revised ORU policy will be added to the November 28 CoR agenda for review by the committee.

IV. Consultation with VCORED Traina

VCORED Traina consulted with CoR members on the following:

- Limited submission procedures
VCORED Traina has asked CoR to provide input on the campus limited submission procedures (currently handled by RDS) given that the campus has formed departments. Does CoR believe that authority for the selection of proposals should remain at the dean/school level, or should the departments and department chairs have the authority to review and select which proposals will go forward from the institution? CoR members inquired whether each department can put forward one proposal, but acknowledged that the total number of proposals that would subsequently need to be reviewed is high. Another issue is that the higher the number of proposals that get submitted, the greater the chances for conflicts of interest to arise thus making it difficult to find faculty to review the proposals.

CoR members pointed out that the timeline contained in the procedures is too restrictive. VCORED Traina replied that he is willing to extend the deadline for opportunities the campus already is aware of and for the ones that occur on a regular, predictable schedule.

Other issues to consider when revising the limited submission procedures is whether ORUs should play a role, and, if the proposals should be divided between those that require matching funds from the institution and those that do not require an institutional commitment.

VCORED Traina reported that faculty members gave him feedback on revising the limited submission procedures including prioritizing untenured faculty over tenured

faculty, and, for proposals that pertain to Hispanic serving institutions, the PIs must articulate how they serve the needs of their students. With regard to prioritizing untenured faculty, VCORED Traina pointed out that the campus would need to consider the goal of these proposals, i.e. is the goal to encourage only those senior faculty adept at writing proposals participate or to allow everyone to submit proposals? CoR members suggested that the procedures include language that states that when selecting which proposals move forward, reviewers should strike a balance between supporting new PIs and new ideas versus those of senior faculty with positive track records of funding.

A CoR member suggested that the procedures require faculty who have submitted proposals in the past and received good reviews but no funding explain what is different or improved about their proposals this time.

Action: VCORED Traina and a CoR member will take the lead on revising the current version of the limited submission procedures. The revised version will be placed on a future CoR agenda for review by the committee.

- Indirect cost return distribution
VCORED Traina reported that the UC has submitted a rate proposal to the federal government and is still awaiting a response. The proposal for distribution at the campus level may be 5% to faculty, 5% to Schools, and 5% to ORUs. However, the Chancellor has to approve it. If approved, the distribution would be effective January 1, 2019. The VCORED suggested that the Budget Work Group may implement an interim policy. He stated that he advocates for budget planning to include substantial, institutional commitment proposals from faculty (ones that require additional faculty FTE lines, additional staff, and establishment of new facilities). Right now, these large scale initiative proposals are handled by the campus on an ad hoc.
- Post award grant management
A CoR member stated that many faculty members have no reliable way of knowing their account balances which is extremely problematic.
VCORED Traina responded that there are two issues: 1) the campus currently has no reliable system for PIs to access and track their own accounts. He has received feedback from some individuals on campus who advised him not to institute an interim system, and to wait to invest in a permanent system even though that may take up to two years. 2) post-award management at the School level within the context of academic restructuring. Currently, each School handles the post-award process differently. At the very least, the campus needs to implement consistent procedures. VCORED Traina advocates for a team work atmosphere and cross training so that transitions are seamless if a staff member separates from the university or is on leave, and all staff members have access to all faculty members' accounts. This type of symbiotic system should be implemented regardless of who

the staff report to or where they are housed (centrally or within Schools). He also suggests improved training of staff and uniformity of minimum standards when conducting staff recruitment in this area.

A significant question is how to organize post-award grant management staff. If they report to the Schools, they will have access to all faculty funds including start up, incidentals, and grants. If they work for RDS, they would only have access to grants. Another option would be to house the staff under a service unit under the auspices of the administration where they would have access to all accounts and funds but they would not report to the Schools or RDS. Ultimately, faculty will have to decide which structure they want. Unfortunately, not all faculty are in agreement as to whether they prefer to deal with one staff member who has access to all their accounts, or if they are fine with working with multiple staff members when they have questions about their multiple accounts.

VCORED Traina stated that he will have additional updates towards the end of the semester.

V. Systemwide Review Item

Proposed revisions to Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-46 (Use of Vehicles and Driver Selection policy)

Prior to this meeting, the lead reviewer of this item provided comments for the committee's review. Due to time constraints, this item will be finalized via email.

Action: CoR to discuss the lead reviewer's comments via email. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, November 20.

VI. Campus Review Item

Principles to Guide the Conduct of Executive Session

Action: the Senate Chair will be informed that CoR declines to comment.

VII. Other Business

- Two-factor authentication policy.

Action: CoR chair to circulate a draft memo to members for review. A final memo will be transmitted to campus CIO Ann Kovalchick.

- UC Merced gift fee policy

Action: due to time constraints, this item was tabled for the next meeting

- Increased funding for Senate faculty research grants

The CoR chair shared his ideas on the most effective ways to advocate for the Provost/EVC to increase the funding for the Senate faculty grants. One option to is work with the Budget Work Group.

The VCORED suggested engaging with the council of deans and vice chancellors with whom the interim Provost/EVC meets regularly.

The CoR chair also suggested turning the Senate faculty grants into an incentive program to produce work that will generate revenue. And, each activity under this proposed work would be awarded a certain amount of funds. A CoR member suggested allowing for the funding to be used towards article publication costs, since many grants do not cover such fees. The problem with this idea is that once a faculty member is ready to submit his/her article, his/her grant funding may have already run out. An additional idea from committee members was to allow PIs to use the grant money for development activities such as allowing for a visit to the PI's program officer at a given funding agency in Washington, D.C.

Action: this item will be added to a future CoR agenda for further discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Attest: Michael Scheibner, CoR Chair