

Committee on Research (COR)
Tuesday, February 13, 2018
10:30 am – 12:00 pm, KL 360

Pursuant to the call, the Committee on Research met at 10:30 am on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 in Room 360 of the Kolligian Library, Chair David C. Noelle presiding.

- I. Chair's Report
 - a. Chair Noelle updated COR members on the February 2 Academic Governance Cabinet meeting:
 - i. The meeting largely consisted of break-out sessions in which groups were asked to brainstorm solutions to challenges related to academic planning, space allocation, and campus reorganization.
 - b. Chair Noelle updated COR members on the February 6 Division Council meeting:
 - i. The Provost/EVC recently announced his resignation effective June 1, 2018. An Interim Provost will be named, and the Chancellor will be conducting conversations with faculty and other campus stakeholders regarding the organization of the Provost/EVC's duties and the possibility of these duties being distributed in a different manner.
 - ii. The recent Regents meeting was rather contentious. Due to tension between members of the Legislature and UC President Napolitano, some campus Chancellors have gone to the Capitol to discuss budgetary matters with legislators instead of relying on President Napolitano to conduct these negotiations. The UC system still has no budget for the upcoming year. Also, Division Council members briefly discussed the report from Huron Consulting Group Inc. that was generated as a result of the recent review of UCOP's functions. One of the outcomes of the report pertains to those systemwide units that are located on individual campuses. There are efforts to formulate a plan to move the budgets of these units to the individual campuses in order to avoid the perception of an inflated UCOP. (One of these units is UC Health, the entity that provides leadership for the five UC academic medical centers.) Division Council also discussed the ongoing issue of UC faculty salary scales being too low in relation to comparator institutions.
 - iii. Division Council reviewed committees' comments on the proposed Presidential Policy for Open Access for Dissertations and Theses. The proposed policy was met with some resistance from those scholars in fields that rely on book publications for the dissemination of their work. These scholars face various challenges from publishers who are opposed to open access due to potential loss of revenue. Some faculty are requesting a compromise with respect to the embargo contained in the proposal, changing it from two years to six or more, or, to allow scholars to opt out completely.
 - iv. Division Council endorsed the second round of revisions to the APM sections pertaining to the re-designation of the L(P)SOE series but will convey to the systemwide Senate the various comments from Merced Division committees.

- v. Members of the WSCUC steering committee attended the Division Council meeting to discuss the upcoming site visit in support of the campus's reaccreditation effort. Division Council will be meeting with the review team.
 - vi. Division Council discussed the implementation of the recently approved General Education program, discussing a critical memo from the School of Natural Sciences Executive Committee regarding resources for the program, with an emphasis on Spark seminars. To attempt to work out differences, a meeting will be scheduled with School Executive Committees and chairs of certain Academic Senate committees.
- c. Chair Noelle updated the COR members on the February 12 UCORP meeting:
- i. Most of the duration of the meeting was spent with the directors of the UC Institute for Transportation Studies (ITS), a multicampus research unit (MRU) with branches on four UC campuses. The ITS is undergoing its five-year review. ITS has clearly been quite productive in terms of publications and technical reports, impact on policy at the state and national levels, and funding from CalTrans, the Legislature, and other sources. UCORP previously inquired why ITS is functioning as an MRU rather than a collection of ORUs at the various UC campuses. At the February 12 meeting, UCORP members learned that ITS actually has been functioning as a collection of ORUs and are under review at their own campuses in addition to being under review as an MRU at UCORP. UCORP's review will likely focus on ways that ITS can create greater synergy across different campuses.
- II. Vice Chair's Report
- a. Vice Chair Marcia updated the COR members on the February 12 PROC meeting:
 - i. Much of PROC's discussion focused on the upcoming site visit for the campus's reaccreditation effort. The Provost/EVC gave an update on mid-year items.
 - ii. There was a discussion concerning next steps for the periodic review of the Center for the Humanities. VCORED Traina stated that review of ORUs should fall under his office's purview, but not reviews of Centers, as the reporting line and budgetary decisions of Centers belong to the deans of the corresponding schools. Vice Chair Marcia confirmed that the review of the Center for the Humanities will not be conducted by COR, and that PROC is considering what steps to take to conduct the review. Chair Noelle reminded COR members of the Committee's previous discussion concerning the revision of the 2014 Academic Senate policy for the establishment and review of research units. Language will likely be added indicating that COR will decide at the time at which a center is established whether the Committee will play a role in that center's future reviews.

- III. Budget Working Group Update
 - a. COR member Scheibner updated the committee on the February 8 Budget Working Group meeting:
 - i. The Budget Working Group has nearly finalized its proposed course buy-out policy which will soon be distributed for campus review.
 - ii. The Group continues to work on issues regarding enrollment, courses eligible for TAs, and financial implications. There are subtle issues be taken into account with regard to the number of TAs for courses, including the differences in discipline norms. Unit 18 lecturers also still need to be taken into account with regard to this policy, and salary recovery will also be considered. Members continue to discuss whether the model should consider faculty members' salary or the salary of the lecturer who is being hired to teach the course.
 - iii. The Working Group is also discussing indirect costs, specifically, the allocation of funds and the transparency of the allocation process.
- IV. Consent Calendar
 - a. **Action:** the February 13, 2018 Agenda and the January 30 Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.
- V. Revision of the Senate Policy on the Establishment and Review of Research Units
 - a. The COR members who previously volunteered to take the lead in suggesting revisions to the relevant Academic Senate policy updated the Committee on their progress. They plan to follow the recommendation that arose at the last COR meeting and begin by revising the Centers and Core Facilities component of the policy. They stated that they plan to adapt some of the language from UC Santa Barbara's policy on non-ORU centers, merging it with the current UC Merced policy. They intend to offer a draft for COR members' review at the February 27 meeting.
- VI. Consultation with VCORED Traina
 - a. VCORED Traina discussed his response to COR's Fall 2017 memo on indirect cost return. He reiterated that indirect costs on extramural grants are funds that the campus collects to cover expenses that have already been made. The average recovery of these costs across the UCs, including UC Merced is 20%. This year, UCM should see about \$4.5 to \$5 million in indirect cost return by the end of this fiscal year. Historically, all funding went to UCOP for dispersal to the campuses, with 1/3 of the indirect cost recovery allocated to the Provost or Chancellor's office and the remainder kept for discretionary and research purposes, in addition to allocation to cover general budget costs. In recent years, UCM proposed a new model whereby 5% of the indirect cost recovery would be allocated to the deans, 5% to ORUs, and the remainder to the Provost's office. This model has not been fully implemented, due to a budget short fall. VCORED Traina stated that the Budget Working Group is addressing indirect cost return. The VCORED also repeated comments from his memo to COR, indicating that he has gathered information on indirect cost recovery allocation models from other campuses, and he has found that

the models vary widely. UCM has the freedom to determine how to use indirect cost recovery, and VCORED Traina reiterated that he is a strong advocate for using this money to support the campus research mission. He also stated that, with the permission of the Budget Working Group, he will share the Group's documents on indirect cost return with the COR membership.

VII. Research Computing Support

- a. In previous meetings, COR members agreed that serious problems exist with regard to current support for research computing. Members have discussed various ways in which the Committee could raise awareness of this problem so as to facilitate the formulation and implementation of viable solutions. The committee previously agreed that one method would involve collecting anecdotes from faculty members whose research is computer-intensive, transmitting this information to the appropriate academic and administrative leadership. VCORED Traina shared that a new position for research support is being created, and it will be housed in IT. He inquired whether COR should form a subcommittee on research computing to advocate for more resources. COR members pointed out that at least two faculty members in the School of Natural Sciences have already formed an advisory committee to CIO & AVC of IT Kovalchick. COR members agreed that these faculty members should be consulted on the status of their group, pursuing opportunities to influence policy to so as to improve research computing support.
- b. **Action:** The COR chair will informally contact the two identified faculty members in order to convey COR's recent discussions on the need to establish a body to advocate for improving research computing support and to inquire into the operations of their faculty group.

VIII. Campus Review Item

- a. Revised Guidelines from the Committee on Rules and Elections (CRE) for Voting on Faculty Personnel Cases at the Unit Level
 - i. Originally proposed in AY 16-17, CRE revised the guidelines in response to comments from Academic Senate committees. (COR declined to comment on the original proposal.) COR members agreed to decline to comment on the revised guidelines.
 - ii. **Action:** The Academic Senate Chair will be informed that COR declines to comment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.

Attest: David C. Noelle, COR Chair