

Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
March 13 2019

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 2:30 pm on March 13, 2019 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Michael Scheibner presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Scheibner updated CoR members on the following:

- DivCo meeting March 4.
 - Proposed revisions to Senate Regulations pertaining to Master's Degree requirements; the EVC/Provost's proposed enrollment strategy committee charge; the second systemwide review of the open access policy for theses and dissertations; and the status of the negotiations between the UC and Elsevier.
- UCORP meeting March 11.
 - The status of the UC-Elsevier negotiations and the effects of the impasse.
 - Art Ellis, UCOP's Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, is retiring and UCOP has begun the process to search for his replacement.
 - Academic Council endorsed the letters from UCORP and UCAP on the politicization of research funding and science.
 - A UC faculty member is questioning the accuracy of the UC policy on the use of drones with regard to the FAA.
 - Possible accommodation for incarcerated students who cannot attend courses on campuses.
 - VP for ANR, Glenda Humiston, provided an update on the implementation of recommendations provided in the 2018 Huron Report. A governing council has been empaneled which includes Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs Michael Brown and Professor Josh Viers from UC Merced.
 - The RFP for the UC Laboratory Fees Research Program will be issued on April 1st. The topics will be accelerator research, quantum information science, and wildfire-related research.
 - The handling of conflicts of interest versus APM 025 conflicts of commitment by federal funding agencies.
 - Concern about the broad interpretation of laws in China regarding ownership of data by the Chinese government.

- Academic Planning Work Group (APWG) updates.
 - APWG continues to incorporate feedback received from faculty in the recent town halls. The three subcommittees are continuing their work and report periodically to the APWG as a whole.
- PROC updates.
 - Chair Scheibner was invited to the PROC meeting held today (March 13) to hear PROC members' input on the Core Facilities policy drafted by CoR last year and subsequently approved by Division Council. PROC members expressed concern at PROC's role and workload with regard to Core Facilities as outlined in the policy. Chair Scheibner shares that concern and suggested that CoR should rethink whether it is appropriate to review every Core Facility, how frequently, and whether there are sufficient resources. PROC also suggested that Core Facilities be enfolded into academic reviews of the relevant School or ORU in order to judge how well the Core Facility is carrying out its mission. Another alternative is to create a review process for multi-user facilities across campus to assess whether the campus provides adequate resources and research infrastructure for the faculty to produce UC-quality research. This assessment would be salient to the current discussion on the APWG whose overarching goal is the implementation of a coherent, streamlined campus budget process going forward. Chair Scheibner announced that PROC will formally send CoR their comments on the policy.
- Chair Scheibner announced that CoR's ORU policy was submitted to Division Council for review by the Senate, ORUs, and deans. Comments are due to the Senate office by April 22.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: The February 27 meeting minutes were approved as presented. Today's agenda was approved pending the removal of VCORED Traina's updates as he is absent from today's meeting. CoR will discuss the limited submission procedures revisions as its own topic, but will table the remaining items until the next meeting when the VCORED is present: COGR Report on Institutional Resources for Promoting Research Quality and UC Merced's composite benefit rates for post docs. Chair Scheibner stated that UCORP will issue a letter on composite benefits rates and he plans to discuss UC Merced's rate policy with VCORED Traina in a separate meeting.

III. Award Subcommittees

Prior to this meeting, suggested memberships for the Early Career Research award subcommittee and Distinction in Research award subcommittee were presented to CoR

members after taking into account spousal and departmental conflicts of interests, and balanced representation across schools. Members of both award subcommittees voiced no objections to their roles.

Action: committee analyst will provide both award subcommittees with the nomination packages. Each award subcommittee must select a winner by Friday, March 22.

IV. Limited Submission Procedures

In previous meetings, CoR members discussed ORED staff's suggestions for revisions to the campus limited submission procedures. Prior to this meeting, CoR developed responses to each of ORED's suggestions in conjunction with VCORED Traina. CoR members approved the responses.

Action: committee analyst will transmit CoR's comments on ORED's suggestions for revisions to the campus limited submission procedures to ORED staff.

V. Systemwide Review Item

- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 636.E.
The proposed revisions pertain to how UC students are allowed to satisfy the University's Entry Level Writing Requirement

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

VI. Future of Senate Faculty Grants Program

CoR members continued their discussion on a possible restructuring of the Senate faculty grants program.

In 2015, CoR requested that then-Provost Peterson increase the funding for the grants program, providing him with anecdotes obtained from previous grant recipients of the benefits of the program. The Provost agreed to increase the total amount of funds to \$175,000 from \$123,000. That additional funding enabled the Senate to spend an appropriate amount of money on faculty per capita. Since that time, however, the campus has hired several new faculty members, and data reveal that the grants program is now expending a little more than \$600 per capita. CoR should now decide whether to simply request more funding from the current EVC/Provost and maintain the current grants program or request more funds to convert the program into an incentive program.

Chair Scheibner reviewed other UC campuses' faculty grants programs and discovered several variations: some campuses award travel grants, others give grants to faculty who teach a certain number of credits per year, some campuses award funds to

emeritus faculty, and one campus provides funds for instrumentation needs. Chair Scheibner suggested that UC Merced's grants program should be flexible enough to serve the various needs of different fields and should promote research development efforts in support of the overarching goal of helping the campus reach R1 status.

CoR members then held a discussion on possible incentives. One suggestion is to award funds to a faculty member when he/she submits an extramural grant proposal. That money could be used by the faculty member as discretionary funding, i.e. invite a collaborator to campus, or for travel to visit a program manager at a funding agency. Another suggestion was related to incentivizing the publication of research in prestigious venues, i.e. faculty members would be awarded funds that is 100 times the impact factor of the journal in which the papers appear. If the lead author of a journal article is a student, then the student would receive a stipend that is 100 times the impact factor of the journal.

CoR members raised additional questions, including whether funds could be used by faculty to pay page charges and how to incentivize publications for faculty in book fields.

Chair Scheibner mentioned that he has learned that the Deans' Council is discussing a similar type of faculty incentive program.

Chair Scheibner stated that he will draft a proposal for the restructuring of the faculty grants program for committee members to review at the next meeting.

Action: upon completion of the chair's proposal, the committee analyst will distribute to CoR members for review and add to the April 3 meeting agenda.

VII. Consultation with Campus Biosafety Officer Aparupa Sengupta and Director of Policy & Accountability Sheryl Ireland

Dr. Sengupta summarized for CoR members the high risk areas in which the campus is now compliant. The compliance rate is currently 98%. Dr. Sengupta is in the final stages of implementing the Bio occupational health program and once that is completed the campus will reach 100% compliance. Dr. Sengupta is also in the process of working on recombinant DNA/viral vector/gene editing risks and management training (online module).

A second campus biosafety officer joined the campus in February 2019.

Dr. Sengupta is working on resource development for high containment labs, and updating the EH&S webpage (for the bio program) for easy navigation of the program and resources. Finally, Dr. Sengupta shared that the campus has implemented a new shipping program under EH&S for shipping bio-dangerous goods with DOT and IATA regulations. PIs and their students are being trained on the shipping procedures.

Director Ireland then updated CoR members on the lab safety policy that was previously circulated for Senate review. The campus has been operating under an interim policy,

but the final policy is nearing completion. Director Ireland intends to add a flowchart to the policy before it is published on the campus website. She reported that there has been improvement in the process of getting PIs into compliance by completing required trainings and addressing languishing items. Current compliance rate for training is at 85%. Languishing items are now tracked electronically, and she is working with EH&S on ways to be more proactive in identifying areas that are out of compliance.

A CoR member asked how students will receive reminders about lab safety training if they are only working in labs for course credit. These students are not working with dangerous substances, but they are nonetheless working in labs and need to undergo safety training. Director Ireland replied that she will work with Dr. Sengupta to address this, and that faculty PIs/advisors should also receive reminders about the students' lab trainings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Attest: Michael Scheibner, CoR chair