

**Committee on Research (CoR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**April 12, 2023**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 pm on April 12 via Zoom. Chair Jason Sexton presiding.

I. Chair's Report – *Jay Sexton*

A. April 3 Divisional Council meeting

- Discussion about staff retention and morale and the relationship between staff and faculty.
- VPAAS Spitzmueller drafted a new campus mission and values statement. Divisional Council reviewed it and identified several areas of improvement. The discussion is ongoing.

B. April 10 UCORP meeting

- Continued discussion on the lack of funding which is a problem on all campuses.
- A work group on the future of doctoral programs will be established at the systemwide level and the UCORP chair will be a member.

C. Reminder to CoR award subcommittees

- a. Committee analyst sent the link to the nominations to both subcommittees on Monday, April 3 and again as a reminder today Wednesday, April 12. Subcommittees are asked to review the nominations in their respective categories and select one winner by **Monday, April 24**. The winners of all Senate awards will be announced at the spring Meeting of the Division.

D. Request from VCR Wilson for the Assistant Vice Chancellor & Export Control Officer to attend CoR meetings. The Guide to Senate Committee Membership is available [here](#). Please note the sections pertaining to guests and consultants.

**Action:** Due to time constraints and the VCR's absence from today's meeting, CoR will discuss the VCR's request via email.

II. Consent Calendar

A. Today's agenda

B. Draft minutes from March 15 meeting

**Action:** Due to time constraints, the committee analyst will ask CoR to approve via email.

III. Presentation from [1.1 Public and Scholarly Influence of Research Planning Team](#)

**Guests:** Assistant EVC/Provost Laura Martin, Planning Program Manager Sandra Cuevas-Lezama, Leigh Bernacchi from the Center for IT Research in Interest of Society, Associate University Librarian for Research Sara Davidson Squibb, and faculty representatives Dave Ardell and Michael Findlater.

After Assistant EVC/Provost Martin presented an overview of the strategic planning process and teams, Dr. Bernacchi presented a series of slides on the specific work of the Public and Scholarly Influence of Research Planning Team which was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

Objective 1.1: Expand the public and scholarly influence of the campus's research at regional, national, and international levels. Dr. Bernacchi briefly discussed the measures associated with this objective.

Dr. Bernacchi presented the team recommendations and logic for recommendations and focus on equity, justice, and inclusive excellence. There is a need for demographic data, a need for broad publication and presentation data, and a need for data around media presence, disaggregated by individuals, demographics, organizations.

Recommendations:

- Improve our reputation for research and undergraduate experiences
- Adopt inclusive approach to publications and support accounting of scholarly products
- Increase notoriety of faculty through nominations for awards, academies and legislative hearings
- Adopt inclusive approach to public influence and support accounting of public engagement.
- Increase the number and diversity of tenure-track faculty hired

The planning team asked the following two questions of CoR which were included on today's agenda:

1. Are the right priorities identified and are they appropriately sequenced? If not, what does CoR recommend be changed?
2. Who should the planning teams talk to?

A CoR member stated that in the past, campus communications would contact him and his colleagues after they published research papers and write stories on their accomplishments. Another CoR member recalled this and added that the campus found his publications on <https://www.eurekaalert.org/> and took the initiative to contact him. A CoR member also

suggested that faculty should be encouraged to self-nominate for awards and inquired whether staff could assist in this effort. Another CoR member wondered about the best way administratively to staff this (centrally vs within Schools).

**Action:** CoR members will contact the committee analyst if they have additional feedback on the questions posed by the strategic planning team. The analyst will forward the input to the planning team convener.

#### IV. Composite Benefit Rate for Postdocs – *Tao Ye*

The Composite Benefit Rate (CBR) for postdocs at UC Merced are higher than those at other UC campuses.

CBR information as provided to CoR by Graduate Council Chair Michael Scheibner was hyperlinked on today's agenda. His information was taken from this website:

<https://bfs.ucmerced.edu/departments/costing-and-policy/cbr>

**Background:** Former Interim Vice Chancellor & Chief Financial and Administration Officer Michael Riley attended a CoR meeting in spring 2019 to update members on CBR rates for postdocs. Former Interim VC Riley announced that as of July 1, 2019, the campus would be dividing post docs from faculty in the composite benefit rate calculations. Faculty were told to expect to see this change in the general ledgers in August or September 2019 as the modification had to be approved by the appropriate entity in the federal government. The new rate was meant to be made retroactive to July 1, 2019. (Other UC campuses also separate post docs from faculty in the composite benefit rate calculations, and UC Merced elected to do the same after analyzing the cost benefits to the campus.)

CoR members asked for the justification of the rate increase and asked what the proposed fiscal year 2024 rate will be for all UC campuses.

The CBR rate issue was brought up to EVC/Provost Camfield at the April 3 Divisional Council meeting and the EVC/Provost stated that he would look into it.

**Action:** The committee analyst will follow up with EVC/Provost Camfield and include VCR Wilson in the email (she was absent from today's CoR meeting).

#### V. Update on Revisions to the Centers Policy

The CoR policy subcommittee met on Monday, April 11 to begin revising the Centers policy.

Policy subcommittee members: Jay Sexton, Brad LeVeck, Mehmet Baykara, and VCR Wilson

The CoR policy subcommittee had access to all comments submitted by Senate committees and School Executive Committees in fall 2022 as well as CAPRA's follow up memo (drafted at the request of CoR) from February 2023. In that memo, CAPRA suggested that Senate input would be most valuable and warranted when funding for a center is coming directly from the Chancellor, presumably via the office of the VCR. Such centers would also tend to be larger and be spread across the entire campus, involving multiple schools. CAPRA suggested that when the funding for a center primarily comes via the VCR (at 51% or more of the budget), then CoR and CAPRA would review and provide input on the proposal for the creation of the Center. These committees would also be involved in subsequent center reviews and renewals.

**Action:** CoR Chair Sexton will revise the Centers policy and submit to CoR for review next week.

VI. Memo from Molecular & Cell Biology Department Space Committee – *Dave Ardell*

On April 5, the MCB department space committee submitted a memo to CoR and FWAf on Research Impediments from Increasing Costs, and Disparities in Costs, of Renovating Research Spaces on Campus. The memo was hyperlinked on today's agenda and shared with the Senate Office.

CoR member and MCB faculty member Dave Ardell summarized the memo which pointed out that ever-increasing burdens of cost and cost disparity are being shifted onto the faculty to maintain and expand essential research infrastructure on campus. The memo suggested that indirect cost returns from faculty federal grants should be used, along with other private and public revenue streams, to administratively subsidize the cost of essential research infrastructure.

CoR members recommended this memo be brought to Divisional Council's attention.

**Action:** The committee analyst will coordinate with the Senate Executive Director to place the memo on a future Divisional Council agenda.

VII. Systemwide Review Items

- A. Interim Clery Act Policy-Campus Safety and Security Reporting Documents were hyperlinked on today's agenda.

**Action:** Due to time constraints, CoR will decide over email whether to opine. CoR's comments, if any, are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 21.

- B. Presidential Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer

**DivCo has named CoR the lead review committee.**

**Action:** The committee analyst will identify a lead reviewer via email. CoR will discuss the lead reviewer’s comments via email and at the April 26 meeting. CoR’s comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 28.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm

Attest: Jason Sexton, CoR Chair