Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
April 26, 2023

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 pm on April 26 via Zoom. Chair Jason Sexton presiding.

I.   Consultation with FWAF Chair David Jennings and FWAF Member Justin Yeakel

Linked on today's agenda was CoR's memos in 2021 and 2022 on research infrastructure and the administration's March 2023 response memo.

FWAF Chair Jennings informed CoR members that Interim VC/CFO Schnier attended the April 21 FWAF meeting to discuss the ongoing problems with Oracle and grants management. Interim VC/CFO Schnier ascribed many of the problems to various campus constituents and clarified that his office is only in charge of a much narrower band of responsibilities. He also informed CoR that his office has provided trainings, but many staff are not utilizing them. Interim VC/CFO Schnier suggested that some of the issues that faculty and staff are raising are out of date, and that the situation has improved recently.

FWAF Chair Jennings added that FWAF Member Yeakel has drafted a document containing details from faculty and staff on the problems around Oracle. FWAF is concerned that these problems are negatively impacting faculty members' ability to acquire more grants in the future. FWAF is also concerned by the legal ramifications with federal funding agencies if faculty grant balances are being mishandled. FWAF Member Yeakel pointed out that if multiple parties are overseeing Oracle, it is unclear who the point of contact is and who is in charge of ensuring that all the pieces fit together. It is easy to sidestep responsibility when the responsibility is so diffused. He added that faculty have to readjust their active grants to account for the new costs that resulted from the new union contracts and faculty can only do so if they have accurate account balances.

VCR Wilson stated that she has contacted DFA to set up communication between them and RAs, because the RAs she speaks with have told her they are unable to obtain the information they need to support their faculty.

CoR Member Ardell provided the following points which were determined within the Oracle Advisory Committee and which he suggests CoR convey to DivCo and FWAF:
- Oracle is here to stay, and is what campus needs to support growth in its research enterprise.

- Second, our instance of Oracle is mostly functional and mature for its core internal use by DFA, and there will not be significant further investment to reprogram Oracle except for DFAs ongoing needs.

- Third, Oracle cannot and could never be reprogrammed to have the flexibility, convenience, or integration with other systems that staff and faculty expect. Our instance of Oracle was deployed under a bare bones self-service model. It is too expensive and unsustainable to fix and maintain Oracle under a service model. Also, many problems and needs lie outside of Oracle and can't be fixed through Oracle reprogramming alone.

- Fourth, in order to address staff and faculty needs for a more service-oriented model for research support, one like our sister campuses have, CoR should propose to DivCo to establish a new joint standing committee, perhaps called the Research Data Infrastructure Advisory Committee, to better support our research enterprise. Like the Oracle Advisory Committee, this proposed new standing committee would include staff, faculty and admin stakeholders including at least ORED, OIT, and DFA. The joint committee could leverage campus-wide expertise to find cost-effective, scalable and resilient solutions for our research support needs.

FWAF Chair Jennings suggested that these issues be elevated to not only DivCo, but the systemwide Senate, too, because UCSD is also experiencing problems with Oracle.

Action: CoR will continue this discussion at the May 10th meeting.

II. Consultation with 1.2 Research and Creative Activities Strategic Planning Team
Guests: VCR Gillian Wilson, SoE Dean Rakesh Goel, Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Infrastructure Andy Boyd, and VPAAS Christiane Spitzmueller

The strategic planning team presented a series of slides which were provided to CoR prior to this meeting.

The strategic planning team's work focuses on these two goals in the campus strategic plan:

- Goal 1.2: Grow UC-quality research and creative activities by strengthening the infrastructure for, and levels of, extramural funding.
- Goal 1.3: Increase contributions of students and staff to research and creative activities.

The sequencing logic is to improve fundamentals (improve Administrative Services to minimize faculty time spent on grant administrative function and coordinating workflow/processing between administrative entities, create a stewardship mentality for shared physical resources, and create operational and financial stability through consistent funding models), focus on existing opportunities (invest in operations and assets that are close to launch that will improve administrative functions, prepare for large scale, multi-institution administration, and cultivate partnerships with national laboratories, HSI institutions and other institutions), and new programs

and investments through academic planning (plan to support new Departments, ORUs and Centers as they arise from the Academic Planning process within the schools, and additional core laboratories to expand research capacities).

The team's summary of anticipated work is as follows:

1. Fix and Enhance Financial System
    *   Need capability to monitor account balances and expense tracking, for both accurate reports to sponsors and enabling full use of research funds.
2. Appointment Process for Hiring Research Personnel
    *   Academic Appointments: Post Docs, Graduate Students, etc.
    *   Staff Appointments: Research Scientists, Research Administrators, etc.
3. Streamline Purchasing and Contracts
    *   Make process intuitive and minimize time to make and fulfill basic purchases.
4. Invest in Shared Physical Assets and Equipment
    *   Maintenance, renewal and ongoing management of equipment and facilities
5. Invest in Staff Support for Research Activities
    *   Includes institutional grants, administrative support within ORUs and Centers

The team is also addressing equity, justice, and inclusion. Initial findings and recommendations are intended to benefit the full academic community.

In response to a CoR member inquiring about staff support, SoE Dean Goel replied that once new staff are hired, they will receive training before they are deployed. A CoR member stated that some staff in DFA are unclear about their responsibility to communicate with faculty or with ORED and asked how the campus get all the staff to share the same vision. Dean Goel responded that the Chancellor has approved each School to hire a financial analyst whose jobs will be to work on project reports and gift funds and will work closely with DFA to ensure seamless communication. This will not happen quickly, but the campus is moving in the right direction.

III. Chair's Report – *Jay Sexton*
  A. Updates from April 17 Divisional Council meeting
      Divisional Council issued a memo to the campus with CCGA's feedback on the Gallo School pre-proposal. Divisional Council voted to not endorse the pre-proposal so that it can be returned to the proposers for revisions. Campus leadership has hired an external facilitation team to assist with the issues about the potential Gallo School.

  B. Update: Memo from Molecular & Cell Biology Department Space Committee
      CoR discussed this memo "Research Impediments from Increasing Costs, and Disparities in Costs, of Renovating Research Spaces on Campus" at the April 12th meeting. FWAF intended

to discuss the memo at their April 21 meeting but ran out of time. The memo is scheduled for discussion at the May 1 Divisional Council meeting.

C. University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction Memo: Best Practices for Using Chat in Virtual Academic Senate Meetings

The memo was linked on today's agenda. Senate committees are invited to review the recommendations and make any comments.

Action: Per CoR's request, the committee analyst will distribute the memo via email. CoR's comments, if any, should be submitted to the CoR analyst by Monday, May 1st. CoR's comments will then be shared with the Senate Chair.

IV. Consultation with VCR Wilson
   A. Request for ORED staff member to attend CoR meetings. The Guide to Senate Committee Membership was linked on today's agenda. CoR was asked to note the sections pertaining to guests and consultants.

   VCR Wilson explained that she would like her Chief of Staff to attend CoR meetings with her to help keep her on track. In addition, VCR Wilson hopes that her Chief of Staff could serve as her alternate if she is unable to attend a given CoR meeting. Per the Guide to Senate Committee Membership, the Chief of Staff would not be present during CoR executive sessions. CoR Chair Sexton stated that time permitting, CoR will discuss this under executive session later in today's meeting.

   B. Request from Faculty Member
   Guidance on how to pay extramural funds back for salary and benefits that were received while employees were on strike.

   Prior to this meeting, a faculty member contacted VCR Wilson and CoR Chair Sexton about this issue. VCR Wilson briefly and generally summarized for CoR that other faculty members are likely having the same issue, i.e., a union member attests they worked during the strike but the faculty member attests they did not. She suggested that all UC campuses need to address this issue. She spoke with Interim VC/CFO Schnier, and it was agreed that APO needs to take the lead in creating a process. She reiterated the requirement that effort reporting to the federal government must be accurate. ORED cannot make a unilateral decision, so it is important to collaborate with Interim VC/CFO Schnier and APO. This may take time, as the campus is currently going through the budget call, staff evaluations, climate action seed funds process, and the VC/CFO and VPAP searches. The next VC/CFO and VPAP both need to be part of the process with ORED and APO.

V. Consent Calendar
    A. Today's agenda
    B. Draft minutes from April 12 meeting

    Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

VI. 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

    CoR Chair Sexton stated that the policy subcommittee reviewed all the Senate committee comments from fall 2022. CAPRA and LASC had the most substantive suggestions. With regard to LASC's request about consulting with the Library before Centers are proposed, CoR members agreed that they could revise the policy to state that it is recommended that Center consult with the Library on needed resources.

    Action: CoR Chair Sexton will revise the Centers policy for CoR's review.

VII. Systemwide Review Item
    A. Presidential Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer – *Anand Subramaniam*
        The policy and the lead reviewer's comments were linked on today's agenda.

        CoR discussed the lead reviewer's comments and had no additional comments.

        Action: CoR's memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 28.

VIII. Executive Session – voting members only
        No minutes taken.

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

        Attest: Jason Sexton, CoR Chair