

**Committee on Research (CoR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**April 29, 2021**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:00 – 2:30 pm on April 29, 2021, via Zoom.  
Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

I. Chair's Report – *Kara McCloskey*

A. April 16 Divisional Council meeting

The major topics of discussion included:

- The EVC/Provost is optimistic about the state budget outlook and the future of the UC budget.
- The campus is working on issues surrounding the fall 2021 campus reopening as many employees wish to continue working remotely.
- Divisional Council previously transmitted a memo to EVC/Provost Camfield with several questions about the campus's ability to fund future ORUs. The EVC/Provost's response memo did not address the questions. Divisional Council voted to pause the review of the Community and Labor Center ORU proposal until such time as the Council receives the information they requested from the EVC/Provost.
- Divisional Council held an emergency meeting with the EVC/Provost on April 22 to discuss the problems with the BSP and SRE buildings. The Senate and Interim VCORED Zatz are holding a research town hall meeting on April 29 for faculty.

II. Consent Calendar

A. Today's agenda

B. Draft April 15 meeting minutes

**Action:** the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. Campus Review Items

A. Proposal for a Minor in Materials Science and Engineering

Due to a conflict of interest, Chair McCloskey will recuse from voting and from assisting in drafting CoR's memo.

CoR members discussed the lead reviewer's comments and had no additional input. In general, the committee supported the proposal as long as the lab resource problem can be sufficiently addressed.

**Action:** the committee analyst will transmit CoR's memo to the Senate Chair after today's meeting.

B. Draft Campus Strategic Plan (2021-2031)

CoR briefly discussed the two lead reviewers' comments. The committee agreed that many aspects of the Strategic Plan are concerning, and these concerns will be raised in CoR's memo to the Senate Chair. In addition, CoR members suggested that there remains a critical need for the campus to regularize some of the initiatives and develop a holistic strategy of research infrastructure investment.

**Action:** the committee analyst will distribute the draft memo to CoR members for additional comments. CoR's final memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair by Monday, May 3.

C. Proposed Name Change of the Literature and Languages (LAL) Department  
The LAL department proposes to change its name to Literature, Languages, and Cultures (LLC).

CoR selected a lead reviewer.

**Action:** The lead reviewer's comments will be discussed via email. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, May 7.

IV. Systemwide Review Item

A. MAPP 016 - Discipline

The Academic Personnel office has proposed a new MAPP 016 to supersede MAPP 2016, MAPP 2017 and MAPP 2056. The revisions propose to achieve the following:

- Renumber the policy as MAPP 016 to align with the system-wide policy APM 016
- Reformat the content to align with the system-wide policy outline
- Clarify steps of the disciplinary process

CoR selected a lead reviewer.

**Action:** The lead reviewer's comments will be discussed via email. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, May 7.

## V. Instrumentation Grant Proposals

In the last meeting, CoR members and Interim VCORED Zatz agreed on a list of meritorious proposals for the instrumentation grants. Interim VCORED Zatz issued award/decline letters to PIs.

At today's meeting, CoR discussed how to handle the proposals they and Interim VCORED Zatz did not rank highly. Should CoR prioritize the lower ranked proposals and request that the Chancellor fund them he allocates additional money for instrumentation next year? Interim VCORED Zatz favored this approach. One CoR member pointed out that while he supports maintaining a "waiting list" of proposals for future funding, there is value to refining the Call for Proposals to reflect the values that CoR is discussing according to the review rubric. He emphasized that it is important to be transparent and to provide guidance to PIs that could be useful when they apply for future funding opportunities. It is important for the campus to build shared instrumentation. If funding is made available again next year, perhaps CoR and the Interim VCORED should issue a new Call for Proposal as the faculty's needs evolve.

**Action:** a CoR member will take the lead on drafting feedback to PIs of proposals that were not selected for instrumentation funding at this time.

## VI. Consultation with Professor Jessica Trounstine

Professor Trounstine, who along with her colleagues in the department of political science is exploring the option of establishing a Center, attended today's CoR meeting to discuss the procedures.

In 2014, former EVC/Provost Peterson drafted a policy on the establishment of Centers. The Senate reviewed the policy which culminated in a Divisional Council discussion. Divisional Council transmitted the Senate committee comments to former Provost Peterson. Divisional Council did not receive a response and his draft policy was never enacted.

Professor Trounstine summarized the functions of her future Center and pointed out that the proposed Center would not constitute a major expansion; rather, it will bring together various functions and individuals under the same "umbrella".

Interim VCORED Zatz stated that Centers can be under ORED, within ORUs, or within a School. Professor Trounstine stated that there needs to be a clear line of authority and designation. CoR members agreed that the creation of a Center does not need to go

through the Senate, but the policy on establishing a Center should be approved by the Senate.

**Action:** the committee analyst will distribute the aforementioned 2014 draft policy on Centers to CoR members for their reference.

VII. Other Business

A. CoR Vice Chair Sexton informed the committee that he and his colleagues want to form a greenhouse Core Facility. The committee analyst shared the Senate's Core Facilities policy with committee members.

**Action:** the committee analyst will work with Chair McCloskey, Vice Chair Sexton, and Interim VCORED Zatz to confirm the procedures for the establishment of Core Facilities as outlined in the Senate's Core Facility policy.

B. Interim VCORED Zatz Updates

- i. The campus is addressing the emergency issues in the various research buildings.
- ii. Deans and Vice Chancellors have put forth 147 critical staff positions (either reclassifications, backfills, and new positions). Some portion of these positions will be funded. Interim VCORED Zatz is not sure whether the Greenhouse manager position will be funded. She is exploring alternatives, including part time assistance. A CoR member pointed out that many universities employ graduate students to work in Core Facilities which is useful for their workforce development. (This idea was proposed by former CoR Chair Scheibner in a memo to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost in the last academic year.) Interim VCORED Zatz agreed with the idea but pointed out that the campus still has to pay the graduate students' tuition, so it is a significant cost to employ them in this role.
- iii. Interim VCORED Zatz received approval to recruit for a Tech Transfer Director. She hopes to also be able to recruit for a staff member to temporarily fill the opening in Entrepreneurship. In the future, she would also like to hire an Industry Relations staff member. To assist with the campus's pressing needs, Interim VCORED Zatz has located a staff member from another campus to work with UC Merced once a week for several months on tech transfer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CoR chair