

**Committee on Research (CoR)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**September 12, 2018**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 2:00 pm on September 12, 2018 in Room 397 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Michael Scheibner presiding.

I. Chair's Report

- Chair Scheibner welcomed new and returning members, and briefly reviewed the CoR manual including committee member responsibilities and assigning of lead reviewers to each campus and systemwide review item.
- Chair Scheibner identified the following goals for AY 18-19:
  - Continue revising the 2014 Senate policy on research units with regard to the establishment and review of ORUs in anticipation of the Senate receiving proposals for ORUs. (Chair Scheibner reminded the committee members that in the last academic year, the committee revised the policy to include procedures for the establishment and review of Core Facilities including Centers.)
  - Work with Vice Chancellor for Research & Economic Development (VCORED) Sam Traina on his effort to restructure the campus contracts and grants process.
  - Continue engaging in issues surrounding research enhancement including indirect cost return distribution and research infrastructure. VCORED Traina pointed out that the Budget Work Group will have indirect cost return distribution on its agenda this year.
  - CoR members agreed to pursue the aforementioned goals this year, and Chair Scheibner encouraged members to suggest additional goals at their discretion.
- Chair Scheibner updated committee members on the August 14, 2018 governance retreat with Senate leadership and members of the administration. Various campus priorities were identified including continuing the efforts of academic planning, academic restructuring, and budget.
- Chair Scheibner updated CoR members on the August 28 and September 11 Division Council meetings. Major topics of discussion included: enrollment management; the continuation of the three major campus initiatives of academic planning, academic restructuring, and budget; proposed revision to the Division bylaws with regard to the expansion of LASC membership; and planning for the upcoming proposal to establish the Gallo School of Management.
- In the absence of a CoR representative on PROC, Chair Scheibner attended the September 12 PROC meeting. Major items under discussion included: different

elements of administrative reviews versus academic reviews; the Psychological Sciences self-study that referenced the issues caused by the lack of grant support for faculty; and a discussion of the review of the English undergraduate program.

II. Consent Calendar

**Action:** today's agenda was approved with the addition of the discussion of the September 12 PROC meeting; the May 1, 2018 minutes were approved as presented; and the draft CoR conflict of interest policy was approved as presented. The conflict of interest policy will be transmitted to the Senate Chair and posted on the Senate website.

III. CoR Representation on Campus Committees

CoR representatives are sought for PROC, the Budget Work Group, the Academic Planning Work Group, and the Export Control Work Group (the latter is being convened by the Office of Research).

**Action:** CoC will be notified that the CoR nominee for the Budget Work Group is Anand Subramaniam. CoR member Miguel Carreira-Perpinan will serve on the Export Control Work Group.

IV. Campus Review Items

- Committee on Rules and Elections' (CRE) revised "Recommended Voting Policies in Academic Personnel Cases".

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

- University Extension's proposal for non-degree certificate in child development and care.

**Action:** a lead reviewer was assigned, and his comments on the proposal will be distributed to CoR members via email by Monday, September 17. CoR to discuss the comments via email. CoR's memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair by September 20.

V. Consultation with VCORED Traina

VCORED Traina summarized for CoR members his efforts - and the efforts of the Deloitte firm - in the last academic year to reexamine the campus contracts and grants process to identify opportunities for change.

VCORED Traina stated that he aims to construct and submit a survey to Senate faculty members to elicit the 1) type of grant support they need and 2) what they would find useful in all aspects of the grants process from inception to pre-award support to constructing a budget to managing their grants. It is anticipated that needs will vary widely across disciplines. VCORED Traina also acknowledged that staffing levels is another aspect that needs to be rectified.

The Office of Research will soon issue an announcement to the campus about internal contracts and grants restructuring efforts.

VCORED Traina also pointed out that there are several grant opportunities on campus that faculty do not utilize because of the lack of capacity to manage the grant process. He went on to state that the Grants Work Group that he is convening will be tasked with helping him identify and prioritize the various aspects of the contracts and grants process that need to be improved. The plan is to implement improvements in phases over the course of the next few years, and to establish a model that is sustainable and meets the mission of the university.

VCORED Traina then debriefed CoR members on a concerning situation currently under discussion in several federal agencies. A bi-partisan faction of Congress, as well as certain lobbying groups, are of the opinion that U.S. intelligence with regard to China is a cause for concern. Some members of Congress may seek to restrict research collaborations between the two countries, including, but not limited to, revising the length of student visas for Chinese nationals who work in the U.S. UC researchers are dismayed by this sentiment from Congress; if restrictions are implemented, faculty who conduct research in China will be negatively affected, as will Confucius Institutes at several UC campuses (Confucius Institutes were established to promote educational exchanges and cooperation between the UC and academic institutions in China). The UC, as a leading research university, has been asked to undertake a leading role in education and communication to assuage Congress's fears. UCOP has begun the effort, and VCORED Traina continue updating CoR members on this issue.

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

Director Ireland stated that the campus policy on the assurance of laboratory safety (reviewed by the Senate in the last academic year) is still in its interim form. She inquired whether the policy should be distributed for another Senate review before being finalized.

Director Ireland announced that laboratory-related trainings have been added to the campus's online learning center and have been utilized by several individuals. New trainings including hazardous materials, fire safety, and controlled substances have been

or will be added. She also shared that the campus's laboratory safety compliance rate has increased. Finally, she related that EH&S will meet with deans, assistant deans, and department chairs about laboratory safety issues.

**Action:** the Senate Chair to be consulted on whether the interim policy on assurance of laboratory safety should again be circulated for Senate review before it is final.

Biosafety Officer (BSO) Sengupta, who joined UC Merced earlier this year, introduced herself to CoR members and distributed information on federal regulations and UC Merced's varying compliance. Much of her time has been devoted to identifying compliance gaps in UC Merced's Biosafety Program and prioritizing by risk level. One of her main accomplishments thus far is re-establishing the Institutional Biosafety Committee. After the campus's Biosafety Program is in compliance, BSO Sengupta will shift her focus to strategic planning in anticipation of the containment laboratories coming online for 2020.

VCORED Traina suggested to BSO Sengupta that she meet with faculty in bioengineering, molecular cell biology, and quantitative systems biology, as they are the most engaged with biosafety issues.

**Action:** CoR to invite BSO Sengupta to a meeting in spring semester for updates on additional compliance efforts.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Attest: Michael Scheibner, CoR Chair