

Committee on Research (CoR)**Minutes of Meeting
September 14, 2020**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 10:00 – 11:30 am on September 14, 2020 via Zoom. Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

I. Chair's Report

- Chair McCloskey welcomed new and continuing members and asked them to review the guide to Senate committee membership and executive session that is posted on the Senate website.
- With regard to this year's campus and systemwide review items, reviewers on CoR will be assigned alphabetically by last name unless a reviewer has a conflict of interest. CoR members were asked to review the committee's conflict of interest policy which is available on the Senate website.
- CoR members were asked to read the email sent by the EVC/Provost to faculty and staff on September 8 regarding space prioritization for AY 20-21.
Action: CoR members to send any comments on the EVC/Provost's email to the committee analyst.
- AY 20-21 CoR business
 - Cyberinfrastructure and Research Computing (CIRT)
A proposal from faculty is forthcoming to establish a Core Facility within IT. When the CIRT proposal is submitted to CoR for review, CoR will work with interim VCORED Zatz to determine what type of Core Facility is being proposed. This will determine the approval authority, i.e. CoR, interim VCORED, etc.
 - Should CoR revise the Senate's Core Facilities policy to add designations, naming conventions, and specific language on approval authority? CoR members agreed to review the policy for potential revisions.
Action: A lead reviewer from CoR was identified. The committee analyst will provide the reviewer with the suggestions from last year's CoR chair on potential revisions to the policy.
 - The annual Call for Proposals is scheduled to be issued to Senate faculty in mid-November 2020. CoR submitted two memos to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost in July, approved by Divisional Council, one of which proposed an increase in funding to the grants program. The second memo advocated for additional internal funding as one of the potential measures to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on UC Merced's research endeavor. Both memos were made available to the CoR members for review prior to this meeting. The Chancellor and EVC/Provost did not respond to CoR memos. The Senate Office will send them a reminder this week.

CoR members discussed the possibility of inviting the EVC/Provost to a future committee meeting to discuss a funding increase to the Senate faculty grants program.

Action: This discussion will continue at the next meeting. The committee analyst will provide last year's Call for Proposals for the Senate faculty grants program.

- Guests to invite to CoR meetings: Aparupa Sengupta, Campus Biosafety Officer, EH&S; AVC of ORED Debbie Motton (already scheduled); SPO Director Jue Sun.

Action: The committee analyst will invite Director Sun and Biosafety Officer Sengupta to a future CoR meeting.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. UC Merced Community and Labor Center

A proposal was submitted in April 2020 by a group of faculty in SSHA to establish the UC Merced Community and Labor Center as an ORU. The proposal was made available to CoR members prior to this meeting. This semester, CoR and the interim VCORED will review the proposal to ensure that it adheres to the Senate's ORU policy. After reviewing the proposal, CoR and the interim VCORED will send it back to the proposal's authors with a list of requested revisions. CoR and the interim VCORED will then review the revised proposal.

Action: two lead reviewers from CoR were identified and will begin reviewing the proposal. The proposal's author will attend a portion of the next CoR meeting to answer committee members' questions.

IV. Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC)

PROC's charge calls for a member of CoR to serve on the committee. This CoR representative would be asked to attend monthly PROC meetings and provide brief updates to CoR members.

CoR members did not identify a representative to serve on PROC. Chair McCloskey stated that she will attend one PROC meeting this semester.

Action: The committee analyst will inform the Senate Office that CoR did not identify a PROC representative but that the CoR chair offers to attend one PROC meeting this semester.

V. Consultation with Interim VCORED Marjorie Zatz

Interim VCORED Zatz presented to CoR members baseline data on research expenditures by faculty, by funding source, and by field. She also presented data on number of proposals and

awards by fiscal year, total award funds by fiscal year from 2018 – 2020, and percentage of awards by sponsor type for fiscal year 2020.

Interim VCORED Zatz pointed out that 34% of the campus awards are federal. She wants to incentivize those grants for faculty members as they are the biggest source of money.

A CoR member asked interim VCORED Zatz about the bottlenecks in the Sponsored Projects Office (SPO). Zatz answered that she is hiring five new staff members this week and invited CoR members to wait a couple of months to see if the bottlenecks are eliminated. Another CoR member stated that the campus needs cutting edge facilities in order to obtain more federal grants, as UC Merced is competing with larger institutions. Instrumentation and staff support are needed to achieve R1 status. Interim VCORED Zatz replied that faculty need to write more instrumentation grants and she is working with Development on funding opportunities. She also pointed out that the more indirect cost return she receives, the more she can offer faculty for cost-sharing.

Interim VCORED Zatz also presented her priorities:

- Establish structures, systems, processes to position UC Merced to triple research expenditures within the next 10-15 years.
 - Organize R1 data committee
 - Assess how the campus codes research expenditures to maximize reporting of expenditures
 - Review and revise plans for IRDC distribution
 - Pre- and post-awards: Centralization, growth, and training of staff; agency and disciplinary expertise and backup
 - Coordinate with PPFM for contracts & grants financial administration, faster establishment of FAUs and invoicing; later - establish liaisons to help faculty manage grants
 - Increase extent to which we are primary awardee rather than getting subawards
 - Encourage faculty to collaborate on large grants
 - Expand Faculty Strategic Initiative (FSI) workshops
 - Encourage faculty to write instrumentation grants that will benefit sign. numbers of faculty
- Communication and Culture of the Office
- Manage research relaunch
- Expand IP/commercialization initiatives as appropriate, entrepreneurship on campus
- Natural Reserves - Address seismic renovations at field station, and vernal pools

CoR Chair McCloskey inquired whether the faculty's needs are being met with the current core facilities. Interim VCORED Zatz replied that she does not have a good sense of faculty priorities in this area. She stated that she, too, would benefit from knowing what the gaps are in the core facilities and what faculty need (e.g. instrumentation) to get to R1 status. A CoR member suggested conducting a survey of faculty to ascertain

their instrumentation needs and priorities with regard to core facilities. Another CoR member pointed out that in the social sciences and humanities, the priority for many faculty is staff and graduate student support rather than instrumentation. Interim VCORED Zatz suggested that the appropriate ORU could provide this support.

Action: The committee analyst will research the possibility of conducting a survey of the faculty and will keep the CoR members informed.

VI. Consultation with APAPB Kurt Schnier

APAPB Schnier updated CoR members on indirect cost return and his simulation model.

- Current Effective Indirect Cost Return (IDC) is 21.29% (BWG 2018-19)
 - Overhead cost per grant \$ is ~\$0.91/(grant \$)
 - Campus absorbs the additional ~\$0.70
- Flow of IDC to campus
 - Currently only fully encumbered (55%) grants generate IDCR for campus (remainder retained central)
 - 19.9% of total IDC on fully encumbered grants support sponsored research (minimum mandated by OP)
 - 80.1% of fully encumbered and 100% of less than fully encumbered returned to central campus
 - Current IDCR is 20% - 5% to research for cost-sharing; 5% PI; 5% Dean or ORU; 5% Provost

The recent grant dollars per faculty is approximately \$134-135,000 (federal and non-federal).

APAPB Schnier's simulation model:

- Central IDC is used to support capital projects (i.e., 2020)
- Uses a ten year time horizon
- Uses as a base the central budget expectations for IDC to meet these needs
- Determine simulated growth needed to maintain central expectations:
 - Base is the grant dollars generated per a faculty member (mean \$134,358 – std. \$4,845)
 - Extrapolates faculty growth based on historical growth patterns (mean 16.75 – std. 9.76)
 - Curbed growth
 - Flexibly varies IDCR across PI, Deans, EVC/Provost & VCR
 - Utilizes distribution of grant IDC rates and allows for partial support
 - Conducts simulation using 100,000 draws
 - Determines necessary growth in grant dollars per-a-faculty to meet IDC capital needs

APAPB Schnier pointed out that indirect cost return is one of the “greenest” sources of money on the campus which means it can be used to support several areas of capital planning.

When discussing the required, annual per-faculty grant growth, a CoR member asked about the realistic goals per department. APAPB Schnier inquired whether the campus should give some portion of indirect costs to the departments in order to incentivize bridge funding for faculty. Another faculty member advocated for more indirect costs to be returned to the faculty on both fully and partially encumbered grants in order to incentivize faculty to pursue all grant opportunities and not just those grants that pay full indirects. Interim VCORED Zatz confirmed that under APAPB Schnier’s proposal, faculty would receive a pro-rated amount of indirect costs on a partially encumbered grant. APAPB Schnier stated that he could suggest to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost that department chairs be included in the indirect cost flow.

A CoR member stated that it would be useful to have department or discipline-specific measures for how well the campus faculty are doing in obtaining grants. Faculty sometimes apply for smaller grants that fund GSRs; those grants are no less helpful to faculty just because they are not large grants. APAPB Schnier replied that UCOP’s website contains this data by discipline.

APAPB Schnier ended his remarks by summarizing that CoR members are in favor of a pro-rated model of indirect cost return and want department chairs to be included in the indirect cost return flow.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CoR chair