

Committee on Research (COR)
Wednesday, September 20, 2017
1:30 – 2:30 PM KL 362

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 PM on September 20, 2017 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair David Noelle presiding.

I. Chair's Report

- a.** Chair Noelle welcomed 2017-2018 committee members. He announced that Dr. Deborah Motton, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Compliance & Integrity, will serve as VCORED Sam Traina's proxy at COR meetings in the Fall semester, due to scheduling conflicts.
- b.** Chair Noelle summarized carry over items from last year's committee business, as well as committee goals for AY 2017-2018:
 - i.** Review Academic Senate policy on the establishment and review of ORUs. Chair Noelle pointed out that there are gaps in the policy, and COR should make it a priority to revise the policy documents prior to reviewing upcoming proposals for establishing ORUs and Centers. VCORED Traina's policy on ORUs can inform the revision of the Senate's policy.
 - ii.** Respond to SNRI external review report.
 - iii.** Review multiple proposals for ORUs and Centers.
 - iv.** Investigate problems with purchasing. The newly-hired Director of Procurement, Joshua Dubroff, was invited to the last COR meeting of Spring 2017, but that meeting was ultimately cancelled. AVC Motton stated that Director Dubroff is well aware of the faculty's challenges with purchasing and recommends that COR again invite him to consult with COR.
Action: COR analyst will invite Director of Procurement Dubroff to a future COR meeting to discuss faculty's issues with purchasing.
 - v.** Review new plans for staff support for extramural funding. COR's survey of faculty last year identified several serious issues in this area. Chair Noelle stated that VCORED Traina is considering ways to distribute resources, including staff support, in a manner that would better support the faculty. COR should comment on VCORED Traina's proposal when it is presented.
 - vi.** Review the criteria and procedures for the evaluation of proposals for the annual Academic Senate Faculty Research Grants program. Each year, COR members discuss the challenge of how to best review proposals given the lack of comprehensive expertise on the committee. Chair Noelle announced that the Provost/EVC has again allocated \$175,000 for the program.
 - vii.** Chair Noelle emphasized that this not a final list of committee goals, and he encouraged COR members to bring forward any additional issues that they wish to discuss.

II. Vice Chair's Report

- a.** Vice Chair Marcia briefed COR members on the August 28 PROC meeting. Major items of discussion included an outlining of the programs that are scheduled for review this year, identifying committee leads to serve as liaisons for each external review team, and a discussion about the finalizing of the ES review from the last academic year.
- b.** Vice Chair Marcia attended the September 18 Academic Governance Cabinet in Chair Noelle's stead. The Governance Cabinet, created at the request of the Chancellor, is comprised of Division Council members and senior administrators. At the first meeting, on September 18, Cabinet members discussed the three main campus priorities that arose from the August governance retreat: 1) academic planning, 2) school reorganization, and 3) budget. The Provost/EVC and Senate Chair have empaneled three work groups, with each tasked to develop a strategic plan with regard to one of the three priorities. Future Cabinet meetings will include a discussion about how to ensure communication between the work groups, since these three areas overlap substantially. COR will be expected to contribute to conversations on these campus priorities. COR member Scheibner is a member of the budget planning work group, and he will debrief COR members throughout the semester. (The budget work group plans on addressing budget policy development, instructional budget development, and revenue-generating programs.)

III. Consent Calendar

- a. Action:** The September 20, 2017 agenda was approved as presented.

IV. Sierra Nevada Research Institute (SNRI) Review

- a.** Chair Noelle reminded COR members that SNRI underwent a five-year review in AY 2016-2017. The external review team submitted its report to SNRI in May 2017, and VCORED Traina subsequently forwarded the report to COR for review. Per the VCORED's ORU policy, once COR generates a response to the external review team's report, the SNRI director will submit a response to the review team. Then VCORED and Chair Noelle will meet with SNRI leadership, and finally, the Provost/EVC will make a decision on the renewal of SNRI as an ORU as well as the reappointment of the SNRI director. COR members discussed the external review team report, and they identified the following issues: 1) Section 4 on Governance and Administration includes a recommendation to merge the administrative units of the Health Sciences Research Institute (HSRI) and SNRI, but it's unclear what is motivating this recommendation. COR members also highlighted the passage that refers to the lack of faculty participation in SNRI, and COR members support greater engagement by faculty members. 2) With regard to Section 2, on Evidence of Accomplishment, COR agreed with concerns over the lack of objective measures of the significance of SNRI in facilitating the contributions of associated researchers. AVC Motton suggested that COR recommend that SNRI consult with Institutional Research & Decision Support (IRDS), as this unit has the expertise and resources to provide a data analysis of SNRI's impact on the campus research mission.
- b. Action:** COR unanimously voted to submit a memo to the VCORED with the aforementioned comments on the SNRI external review team report.

V. Limited Submission Proposals Policy

- a.** Chair Noelle informed COR members that in AY 2015-2016, at the request of VCORED Traina, COR suggested several revisions to the existing policy on limited submission proposals which were subsequently incorporated by the office of Research Development Services (RDS). With an increase in faculty numbers this academic year, and greater interest in submitting such proposals (perhaps due to decreased federal funding opportunities), RDS is anticipating a higher number of submissions than usual. RDS has requested that COR review the policy again and provide any recommended changes. COR members discussed the passage in the policy that states that RDS will attempt to notify the faculty of pending opportunities at least 12 weeks before the sponsor deadline and 4-6 weeks before the internal deadline. COR suggested modifying this language to read that RDS will attempt to notify faculty of limited submission opportunities within five days of learning of the opportunities. Four weeks is not always a sufficient amount of time, given all that must be done in order to prepare competitive proposals. COR members also agreed that RDS should search for agencies/programs that offer limited submission proposals on a regular cycle, allowing RDS to make faculty aware of these competitions even before a formal call for proposals is made available for a given year.
- b. Action:** COR voted unanimously to review a draft response via email, finalize the memo at the October 18 committee meeting, and transmit the memo to RDS shortly thereafter.

VI. UCM Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve Dairy Cattle Grazing

- a.** A group of UCM faculty members contributed to a report, written by Reserve Director Monique “Mo” Kolster, that outlines the negative affect on research and educational programs caused by the grazing of dairy cattle on the Reserve. The report was submitted to the Senate and VCORED Traina. Chair Noelle reported that he had consulted with VCORED Traina, who recommended assembling a panel of individuals with expertise in relevant domains but clearly exhibiting no conflicts of interest, charging them with reviewing the report and providing recommendations for ameliorating the situation caused by the grazing habits of the dairy cattle. COR members agreed with this approach.
- b. Action:** COR members unanimously approved submitting a memo to the Senate Chair endorsing the VCORED’s recommendation.

VII. Review of Centers/ORUs

- a.** Chair Noelle summarized the ORU or Center proposals that may come before COR this academic year. The Center for Human Adaptive Systems and Environments (CHASE) ORU proposal is forthcoming. The Center for the Humanities submitted an ORU proposal during the last academic year, and Chair Noelle responded to the lead author of the proposal with a list of suggested revisions, including a reference to the requirements of the 1999 UCOP policy “Administrative Policies and Procedures Concerning Organized Research Units”, as the 2014 Senate policy on the establishment of ORUs failed to highlight these systemwide requirements. After this interchange, the Dean of SSHA requested PROC to initiate an external review of the Center for the Humanities. PROC

suggested to the Dean that the Center notify COR and VCORED Traina that it is ready to undergo a review. Finally, the UC Merced Alliance for Child and Family Health and Development submitted to COR and VCORED Traina a proposal for bridge or core funding. Chair Noelle reiterated that COR will have to revise the 2014 Academic Senate policy on the establishment of ORUs so that it can appropriately review the Humanities proposal and the CHASE proposal. Chair Noelle stated that he will speak to the lead author of the UC Merced Alliance proposal and recommend he consult with VCORED Traina to receive bridge funding. COR can review proposals for ORUs and Centers, but not proposals for funding.

- b. Action:** COR members unanimously agreed to table the discussion on the Center for the Humanities review and the establishment of CHASE, with the intention of continuing the discussion at the October 18 meeting. The COR analyst will redistribute the Senate’s 2014 policy on ORUs and VCORED’s ORU policy to COR members in advance of the October 18 meeting.

VIII. Systemwide Review Items

- a. Taskforce Report on the Negotiated Salary Trial Program**

In September 2016, former UC Provost Dorr empaneled a task force comprised of UC faculty and administrators to review the Negotiated Salary Trial Program piloted at Irvine, Los Angeles, and San Diego and to recommend whether to discontinue the program, continue it on a trial basis, or make it permanent. The taskforce recommended the program be extended for 4 more years and expanded to other campuses.

- i. Action:** COR unanimously voted to table this item and address it at the October 18 meeting.
- b. Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (Area D)**

In January 2017, the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools charged a faculty working group with proposing revisions to the area “d” (laboratory science) requirement, to align UC’s subject area expectations more closely with the new expectations for high school science curricula based on California’s adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards for K-12.

 - i. Action:** COR unanimously voted to table this item and address it at the October 18 meeting.

IX. Campus Review Items

- a. Draft Sustainability Strategic Plan**

The plan describes UCM’s comprehensive approach to ensuring that campus-wide sustainability goals are achieved. COR members noted that the plan features a list of potential goals that the campus could pursue to advance sustainability and ways in which progress toward these goals could be measured, but it lacks many of the features of an actionable plan. The report would benefit from a description of organizations – aside from the Department of Sustainability – that would play a role in pursuing the stated goals, along with sources of support. COR members agreed that it was difficult to evaluate this plan without an analysis of the resources that would be required to pursue the sustainability-related goals.

