

University Research Council

Revised

Minutes

Monday, January 29, 2007

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Greenville Centre 1200

Present: Deirdre Mageean, Margaret Bauer, Michael Bassman, Richard Best, Kris Borre, Jack Brinn, Wayne Cascio, Joe Chalovich, Lisa Clough, Reide Corbett, Susan Beck-Frazier for Jeff Elwell, Marti Engelke, Paul Gemperline, Joe Houmard, Anne Jenkins, Cynda Johnson, Jeff Johnson, Angela Lamson, Suzanne Sparrow for Susan McCammon, James McCubrey, Pat Pellicane, Dorothy Spencer, Mark Taggart

Absent: Rebecca Benfield, Michael Bosse, Susan DelVecchio, Chris Duffrin, Brent Hendrixson, Timothy Jones, John Lehman, Richard Williams

Dr. Mageean called the meeting to order. Dr. Cynda Johnson has joined the Division of Research and Graduate Studies as the Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Clinical and Translational Research.

I. New Business

A. Institutional Review Board Activity – Suzanne Sparrow. The IRB office has been busy. Submissions for 2006 were 789 compared to 662 for 2005. Of the 789 submissions, more than 30% were students or were in training status. So far, for the month of January, there have been 81 submissions and more are expected with deadlines coming up. Dr. Mageean noted that the IRB staff are often overworked and we are very thankful for them. There is always a need for good people to serve on these boards. Faculty should think about joining these boards. Anyone that submits proposals and is in an “exempt” status is **NOT** required to do an IRB module. **If they are expedited or have to go to full committee, they are required to do an IRB module.**

B. NIH on Research Grants – Dr. Mageean. The NIH report in the *Chronicles of Higher Education* stated that the average age of faculty receiving their first NIH grant is 47-48. NIH awards are becoming harder to acquire. It is hoped that NSF awards will be easier. ECU needs to do a better job of exploring other areas of funding. The Division of Research and Graduate Studies had a nice lunch with new faculty last Friday at Sweetheart's.

- C. Financial Information on Grants – Joe Chalovich. Since NIH funding is hard to come by, we do not want to lose the ones we do have, which makes it more important that the reports we make at this time of year are accurate. Dr. Chalovich would like to explore the possibilities of how to obtain better and more accurate information. Will Banner do this? Anne Jenkins noted that there is a grants module in Banner that can be used. Chris Duffrin and his staff are familiar with this and can help. Anne Jenkins also noted that when Banner HR comes online, there is an option for encumbering salaries. Dr. Mageean is interested to see the results of hiring of SPA positions for research support. Kris Borre mentioned that Agromedicine is using Microsoft, Project Manager. This will help maintain grant budgets. Dr. Mageean is convening a meeting to discuss integration of all software packages into Banner. More discussion is needed on how to get databases to interface. Chris Duffrin and Richard Best are working on training for faculty members with their budgets. A suggestion was made to train the faculty when they are hired.

Follow-up information after the meeting from Anne Jenkins. The University system has received flexibility legislation which does provide more flexibility when purchasing with grant dollars. This means that when using grant dollars, a person may choose to purchase off of state contract provided the price, including delivery, is less than state contract, AND, the quality, service, and warranty is the same or substantially the same as the state contract price. The State also requires that we keep documentation when we utilize this flexibility. Materials Management believes the biggest issue will be that the purchaser can document that they are getting a comparable product for better pricing. The purchaser would also have to provide the file documentation. Materials Management has always felt that the University should use the flexibility on a case by case basis when justified, but not try to use it to completely circumvent state contracts. The Materials Management Office is available to offer guidance when it is felt this legislation should be used. Also, this flexibility legislation does not change the purchase of items not covered on state contract that requires bidding if the purchase is \$5,000 or more.

- E. University Instrumentation List – Reide Corbett. Dr. Corbett wanted to know if there is a list of equipment located in labs that can be shared. A list with direct links is needed on the website. Dr. Gemperline noted that our website should be able to go “live” in a few weeks. On the website is a section of Core Research Facilities. These facilities list contact people with a list of instrumentation in the labs. Dr. Gemperline showed a draft of the website with the “old” Core Facilities.

Dorothy Spencer noted that it would be a good idea if we had cross links for this. Dr. Gemperline will e-mail members the URL address so faculty can go in and look at these core research facilities.

(Note: The Research website has gone live: <http://www.ecu.edu/rgs/>)

F. Faculty Retention – Early Promotion and Tenure – Reide Corbett. Dr. Corbett wanted to know if it were possible to get early promotion or tenure. Dr. Mark Taggart noted that this has always been allowed according to Appendix D. Two reasons to reduce the probationary period are 1) use as a bargaining chip when being hired, or 2) by special request to the Unit Personnel Committee to accelerate one's probationary period. The probationary period can also be extended, but only in rare extenuating circumstances. Please contact the Faculty Senate Office if you have any questions.

H. PACE – Pat Pellicane. Dr. Pellicane distributed a campus PACE initiative form that departments can use to suggest ways to increase cost savings and efficiency that is required by President Bowles. The Chancellor would like this feedback by the time he goes to Chapel Hill in February. Departments should take these estimates seriously. Please return suggestions to Dr. Pellicane by the end of the week. Dr. Taggart noted that President Bowles was disappointed that this information is not coming in sooner. President Bowles is very serious about this and has used his office as an example. Jack Brinn noted that ITCS will save approximately one half of a million dollars by multi-purchasing once or twice a year. Also, Housing has removed phones from all dorm rooms (80% of the students have their own cell phones) and left two phones on each floor at a savings of \$400,000 per year. Dr. Mageean noted that the Graduate School has reduced the number of graduate students supported on graduate assistantships the past four semesters, which has released money to give assistantships to more students. There was a suggestion that maybe state contracts should be investigated. Dr. Pellicane will e-mail the form to all members.

III. Announcements

A. The Search for the Director of Grants and Contracts position has been reopened. One candidate has been interviewed. The other two candidates called for interviews withdrew their applications. Dr. Mageean is uncomfortable with just one candidate. The Search

Committee is actively recruiting applicants by sending invitation letters to prospective candidates. Screening will begin March 1, 2007.

- B. The Office of Sponsored Programs will position a new person in John Lehman's office to work with clinical trials. This position will be under Sponsored Programs but will be physically located in Brody. Dr. Cascio mentioned that communication between PCMH and the Medical School was a problem. He suggested trying to establish a committee where all key stakeholders meet. The accounting process is a major obstacle for clinical trials. A suggestion was to talk with John Lehman to find resources where help can be found.
- C. Dr. Mageean noted that she had the opportunity to meet with the new lobbyists from Washington. They are very supportive of our aspirations to grow as a research institution. If you need their contact information, please see Dr. Mageean. Researchers should contact the Division of Research and Graduate Studies before contacting the lobbyists. The lobbyists have been hired for one year. They are not working for any other university in the UNC University system. You will be hearing more about this and workshops in the near future.
- D. ECU does not have clear policies on research space. The Research Division is working with Bruce Flye to develop policies and plan for future expansion of research space.
- E. Dr. Taggart had been requested by a faculty member to ask about High Performance Computers. The investigators are unhappy about the time it is taking to get this computer set up. Jack Brinn mentioned that the machine was in place waiting for the interface software to be installed. This installation will be done by the researchers.

II. Old Business

- G. Research Computing – Jack Brinn. In regards to the question on HPC computers, Jack Brinn gave a complete status report on the timeline and events surrounding the installation of the server. ITCS had a power failure and did not have the power this server required. The power issues in the building are still not fixed. Facilities Services has allocated \$650,000 to fix the power problem. This piece of equipment requires 10 tons of cooling capacity and takes one half of the cooling capacity of the ITCS room.

D. Support for Research Computing – Paul Gemperline. Dr. Gemperline is working with a committee to develop strategic plans for research computing. The three areas that are being addressed are:

- 1) HPC
- 2) Desktop laboratory computing
- 3) Statistics and statistical consulting

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.