

MINUTES
Committee on Research
September 24, 2013

Present: Judith Habicht Mauche (chair), Pranav Anand, Yat Li, Jason Nielsen, Paul Roth, Matt Wagers, Steve Whittaker, Fitnat Yildiz, Matt Robinson (Committee Analyst)

Absent with Notice: Sharon Daniel

Committee Business

Chair Habicht Mauche welcomed all of the members to the committee and briefly presented the COR charge and confidentiality policy. No objections were raised to the confidentiality policy.

COR 2013-14 Proactive Agenda

Chair Habicht Mauche gave a brief overview of the 2012-13 COR investigations into the distribution of internal research support at UCSC. Last year's committee consulted with the divisional deans, the Vice Chancellor of Research (VCR), and the Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC) about the use of the University Opportunity Fund (UOF). This year's committee reviewed the distribution of overhead on campus. At UCSC, ICR funds go into three "buckets": Off-the-Top Fund; University Opportunity Fund; and General Fund Support. The percentage of the ICR that goes to each bucket (20%, 36%, and 44% respectively) is a systemwide policy. The Off-the-Top Fund and the General Support Fund have been reviewed by the Senate, but the UOF is distributed via a formula that has not undergone Senate review. The committee discussed a redistribution of the UOF to bring money back to faculty that are raising the external funds. COR will continue to explore this issue in consultation with the Deans and the EVC.

The committee also discussed the current state of research support and infrastructure at UCSC after many consecutive years of budget cuts. The committee would like to build on the work of the 2012-13 COR consultations with the Deans to conduct an audit of the research capacity lost due to the cuts.

Reflecting on the failed VCR search in 2012-13 and the cancelled external review of the Office of Research (OR), the committee considered ways in which it could collect useful feedback data on faculty interactions with OR. In a meeting with Chair Habicht Mauche, Interim VCR Scott Brandt expressed his desire to repair OR's relationship with faculty. Dependable data on faculty interaction with OR would be particularly useful in this endeavor. The committee also discussed the current organization of OR and the potential benefits of consulting with the directors of OR's units: Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP); Office of Research Compliance and Administration (ORCA); Office for Management of Intellectual Property (OMIP).

The committee also questioned the status of campus plans for graduate growth. This topic is closely tied to research and COR and the committee would like to examine the results of the first two years of additional funding received by UCSC.

Consultation with Interim VCR Scott Brandt

Interim VCR Brandt introduced himself to the committee and gave a brief history of his fourteen years at UCSC as a professor of computer science and associate dean of Engineering. Interim VCR Brandt explained that EVC Galloway has asked him to encourage transparency in OR and build a stronger relationship with the Senate and COR in particular. He also provided an overview of the current OR structure, explaining that on October 1st OR will begin overseeing the University Affiliated Research Center (UARC). The UARC partnership with NASA Ames laboratory was a ten year agreement that was extended into an eleventh year in 2012-13. Interim VCR Brandt will be overseeing UCSC's bid to continue this research partnership through a new five-year contract. COR asked about faculty involvement in the renewal proposal and Interim VCR Brandt answered that this involvement is key to the success and growth of the partnership.

Interim VCR Brandt presented his major goals to COR, which include better cooperation with COR in the administration of internal research support on campus and moving OR away from an excessive focus on compliance. COR asked how the committee could assist with these goals. Interim VCR Brandt responded that COR would be an ideal vehicle to refine ideas to improve OR.

COR asked if OR could help to make faculty aware of all of the resources and facilities available at UCSC. Often, proposals could be stronger if faculty could leverage the facilities and equipment already on campus. Interim VCR Brandt agreed that this would be worthwhile. COR also asked if Interim VCR Brandt saw overlap between the portions of the UOF that go to the divisions and the VCR. He replied that in his opinion there is high overlap, as the VCR portion of the UOF often goes to support divisional priorities.

COR asked about the data reporting capabilities of OR, specifically whether OR is able to produce a profile of UCSC grant proposals to see which disciplines are doing well and which are not. Such a profile could identify particularly successful faculty members who could help other faculty with their proposals. Interim VCR Brandt explained that one of the major problems he has encountered in his short time in OR is their lack of reporting capability due to an outdated database system. One of his major projects will be a complete revamp of the OR data system.

Interim VCR Brandt proposed an idea to create awards for Ph.D. research. This could be done jointly with Graduate Council (GC) or the Graduate Division and would not only raise UCSC's research visibility but also help the graduate students who receive the awards. COR agreed that this would be a good idea to explore this year.

Post-Consultation Discussion

The committee agreed to extend a standing invitation for Interim VCR Brandt to attend the second hour of COR meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm