

**MINUTES**  
**Committee on Research**  
**October 22, 2013**

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

**Committee Business**

Chair Habicht Mauche provided a brief update from the October 14, 2013 University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP) meeting. The committee discussed UC's plan to move to composite benefit rates for grant-funded positions. Currently, UCSC charges grants a specific rate based on the position being funded. Throughout 2012-13, UC Office of the President (UCOP) worked to create a set of composite rates to simplify the process of charging grants. There is an abundance of misinformation surrounding this issue, and COR plans to work as much as possible with UCORP to ensure faculty input as composite benefit proposals are updated.

The minutes from the October 8, 2013 COR meeting were approved as written.

**Graduate Awards Proposal Update**

In conjunction with Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR) Brandt, COR has been exploring the creation of graduate dissertation awards. The committee examined the structure of UCSC's Undergraduate Deans', Chancellor's, and Steck Awards, which are given each year to students with the most outstanding thesis projects. The goal of the graduate awards would be to recognize the outstanding work of UCSC graduate students and to provide a "feather in the cap" to young academics.

COR discussed the difficulty of judging dissertations from different disciplines against each other. The committee already engages in this type of adjudication, though, during the annual Faculty Research Grant (FRG) and Special Research Grant (SRG) cycle. COR suggested a required two page summary in non-expert language to accompany an application for a graduate dissertation award. COR also discussed the need for a deadline for applications, setting up a twelve month cycle in which graduate students who have submitted their dissertation are eligible. Finally, COR discussed the need to advertise the winners to the campus and larger community, possibly through display in the library and incorporation into the graduation ceremony. The committee will draft a proposal and share with Graduate Council (GC) and other relevant committees.

**Consultation Planning for Divisional Deans**

The committee finalized a letter to the divisional deans asking for a five-year summary of divisional use of the University Opportunity Fund (UOF). COR began an investigation into the use of the UOF in spring 2013 and will plan consultation with the deans based on the responses to this letter. Responses from the divisions are requested by December 6, 2013.

**Review of Graduate Incentive Fund Survey**

The committee determined that the specifics of this purview were outside of COR's purview, as masters students are not integral to the research environment of the university. Certain

programs, though, may be adversely affected by this incentive proposal because block grant support is needed for departmental TA-ships. COR recommended that these types of programs not lose their block allocation through this program. These programs are primarily in the arts division.

**COR Consultations with VCR Brandt**

Having met with VCR Brandt during the previous two meetings, the committee took an opportunity to consider the topics covered in consultation. The committee views this year as an important opportunity to build a strong relationship between the Office of Research (OR) and the Senate. VCR Brandt has indicated several times that he would welcome COR input on the distribution of research support funds from his office. The committee discussed the need for more specific data on the VCR's priorities for research support. The best data would be that which shows effective (or ineffective) uses of support funds. Some of this data could come from VCR Brandt's investigation into OR's recent funding history. Other data could come from a bottom-up effort from COR to survey faculty on the effectiveness of OR processes.

The committee also discussed the VCR's desire to implement a new database system for OR. The prospect of this process taking more than two years is worrisome to COR, as many short term solutions should be available to gather necessary data to make the best strategic decisions. The committee does not want to see a two year stall in OR processes as the new system is being developed.

For the next consultation with VCR Brandt, the committee will set a more detailed agenda, focusing on the specifics of the OR budget and the VCR's opportunity funds for research support.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm