

MINUTES
Committee on Research
May 22, 2012

Present: Scott Oliver (chair), Elisabeth Cameron, Sri Kurniawan, Debra Lewis, Nathaniel Deutsch, Deborah Letourneau, Barbara Rogoff, Hamid Sadjadpour, Mary-Beth Harhen, Senate Director

Absent with Notice: David Koo

Guest: VC Research Bruce Margon

Chair's Announcements, Member's Items

The COR minutes of May 8, 2012 were approved as written.

As with most campus programs, COR funds have received significant cuts in the past few years. While protected from the one-time cuts effective 2012-13 by using the Academic Senate Office budget, COR funds are at an unprecedented low. COR approved a draft letter to the EVC requesting a modest restoration of COR funds over a three year period.

COR noted with appreciation the thank you messages from faculty receiving award letters since normally the committee only sees the complaints.

Member Debra Lewis reported on the ACIT meeting (Advisory Committee on IT) where there was a discussion of developing policies about using Ecommons for instruction, specifically what types of information/data could be posted there.

Chair Scott Oliver reported that he will be sitting on a sub-committee of system wide task force that will develop principles on how to allocate research dollars controlled by UCOP. There is a portfolio committee that will adjudicate the funding selections. The committee noted that the membership of the Portfolio Committee will be appointed by the Vice President Research.

Chair Oliver notified the committee that the COR annual report draft will be circulated in August.

UC Astronomy Board

Following the recommendation for a new governance structure by the UCO External Review committee and the UC Academic Council, the Vice President of Research at UCOP has released a draft of the charge of a new UC Astronomy Board. UCORP has asked for feedback from UC Astronomers and campus CORs. The Board will advise on how funds that support Astronomy in the UC system should be spent. The composition of the Board appears to be very heavy with administrators and all appointees will be selected by the VP Research. The reporting lines, who the Board would advise are not clear. There is also a Board that advises the UCO/Lick Director. It is not clear how these two groups would interact.

Course Time Slots

COR reviewed a new proposal by the VPDUE to change class time slots. COR expressed concern that in the later hours a lot of campus services get reduced including food and

transportation. Security is also an issue and COR considered recommending rolling the free parking back to 5pm so that students and TAs would be less dependent upon shuttle service.

System-wide Review of APM 010, 015, & 016

COR reviewed proposed revisions to the APM 010, 015, & 016 with regards to Academic Freedom, the Faculty Code of Conduct, and the University Policy on Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline. The revisions are intended to address protections around speaking about institutional policy and a clear statement that faculty will comply with university policy. COR concurred with P&T's comment that it seems the current APM 016 (unrevised) policy is sufficient. The purpose of the revisions are not clear. COR will recommend against the proposed changes.

Consultation with VC Research Bruce Margon

Responding to a question about the UC Astronomy Board charge, VC Margon responded that the charge is idealistic. An annual review and evaluation of all the project of UCO Lick is not possible. The primary benefit of the board is advocacy for UCO since there is a concern about helping determine the distribution of funds between Astronomy and other programs funded by UCOP. VC Margon noted that it is relatively easy to identify the amount of money spent on Astronomy; it is one of the few UCOP programs that has its own budgetary line item making it a vulnerable target for cutting. He agreed with the VP Research in his wish to get rid of a lot of what is UCOP's Research Budget since they are just a pass through.

Turning to the budget, VC Margon noted that the campus has come to rely on Indirect Cost returns to cover operating expenses in general, not just funneling it back into the research enterprise. There is more ICR funding the campus than state funds.

For budget cuts in the coming years, VC Margon noted that at a 12% reduction, he will have to cut funds that he uses to directly support research, since there is nothing to cut operationally.

There was a brief discussion of different strategies for returning Overhead funds to faculty. For example, at UCSF, faculty get a direct return of 1% of their overhead back to their departments. VC Margon noted that on our campus the five deans have different policies about redistribution of Overhead funds. There is a kind of economy of scale, that when the overhead money accumulates, it can make a big difference for research. Giving all faculty a very small amount of money will not have a big impact. While individual faculty do not get returns directly, the VCR does put forward large amounts (i.e. matching funds for large proposals) when required to satisfy granting agencies. He also gives smaller amounts to the deans to distribute based on their priorities. All meritorious proposals get matching funds stitched together by the dean, VCR and EVC. There is always an over commitment of matching funds on the part of the university since the acceptance rate is 1 in 10. Some federal granting agencies no longer mandate matching funds since some geographic regions do not have the resources to match with institutional support. But the VCR noted that offering matching funds to a proposal that does not require them strengthens the proposal.

COR inquired about UCOP's proposal to transfer authority to waive Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) to the campuses. VC Margon explained that indirect cost funds are not free money but are intended to cover real costs. The granting agency sends the award and it is up to the institution

what the split between the institution and the faculty will be. Federal granting agencies generally give grants blind to what the split is. However, it is true that without a waiver, some agencies will simply not award grants to faculty. But we have to keep the pressure up to recover money for the actual costs and not grant too many waivers. The waivers requested by corporate sponsors or foundations must be granted very carefully. UCOP has determined that there are too many sponsors asking for waivers simply because they can get them. But most granting agencies (especially corporations) understand that there are real costs to research. He gave the analogy of asking a corporation to sell their product at the cost of materials – they just won't do it.

VC Margon notified COR that there are new federal regulations for NIH grants regarding personal financial conflicts of interest. They will require substantially more personal information about PI finances. He also informed the committee that faculty will soon get an email about signing the patent agreement, not that the campus will be unable to execute certain transactions for faculty if they have not signed. Approximately 60% of the faculty have signed the agreement, which will now be available on UC At Your Service.

Adjunct Professor Series CAPM 512.280-Consultation with APO Analyst Susan Fellows

Analyst Fellows opened by explaining that the proposed changes to the adjunct professor series were motivated by both the Administrative Task Force identification of academic title procedures that could be streamlined and the Senate Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) questioning the value added for Senate review of Adjunct appointments without duties, without salary and with no expectation that they will move through the ranks. The current number of Adjuncts is around 105, about 98 of which are without salary (WOS) appointments. Most will never get a salary, but if some extramural funds are available, or if they teach, they are paid at their adjunct rank. The APM policy for adjuncts sets funding restrictions on this title – no appointment can be state-funded more than 50% of the percentage of their appointments. This has not been the practice on our campus, and these proposed changes conform with the systemwide APM. The expectation is that Adjuncts will get extramural funding for their salaries. She noted the clear distinction of appointments WOS would not go to CAP, but salaried appointments would get Senate review.

COR noted a potential problem with the proposed changes. Adjuncts WOS are appointed at rank, but not given a step. If they apply for grants — which is usually the expectation for this series — without a designated step, it is difficult for OSP to know the base salary to use. COR will provide a written response to APO.