

MINUTES
Committee on Research
September 25, 2012

The Committee on Research (COR) met at 2:00 pm on Tuesday, September 25, 2012 in 307 Kerr Hall.

Present: Scott Oliver (chair), Elisabeth Cameron, Nathaniel Deutsch, David Koo, Sri Kurniawan, Debra Lewis, Deborah Letourneau, Andrew Smith (Graduate Student), Mary-Beth Harhen (Senate Director), Matt Robinson (Committee Analyst)

Absent with Notice: Barbara Rogoff

Chair's Announcements, Member's Items

Chair Oliver welcomed all members back and noted that the committee membership is the same as last year save one member.

The COR minutes of June 5, 2012 and the COR confidentiality statement were approved as written. Based on the benefits of their input during the 2011-12 year, COR extended standing invitations to Senate Director Mary-Beth Harhen and graduate student Andrew Smith to attend COR meetings.

Scholarly Meeting Travel (SMT)

The committee approved four changes to the Scholarly Meeting Travel guidelines:

1. Non-Senate members will no longer be eligible for SMT but the application guidelines will provide a link to the Non-Senate Faculty Professional Development Fund which provides support for travel of non-Senators.
2. Requests for SMT must be made at least fourteen calendar days in advance of travel.
3. Department Chair signatures will no longer be required on the application but Department Chairs will be cc'd on all SMT award notification e-mails.
4. A flat award of \$700 will replace the \$650/\$1,000 award structure.

Effective dates for these changes were not finalized. An electronic submission website is being prepared by the COR analyst. Chair Oliver noted the need to revisit the guidelines for inter-campus travel at a future meeting.

Faculty Research Grant (FRG)/Special Research Grant (SRG) Budget Review

After reviewing the 2012-13 COR budget and the award statistics for 2011-12, the committee agreed to keep the FRG and SRG award amounts at the same levels as last year. SRGs will be for a maximum of \$8,000 and FRGs will be for a maximum of \$1,500 for regular faculty and \$2,000 for junior faculty.

Members noted that no faculty complained about the diminished FRG and SRG award amounts last year (down from \$15,000 and \$2,000/\$2,500, respectively). One member noted that the sharp decrease in applications might represent some faculty deciding that the lower award

amounts were not worth the time needed to apply. Another possibility is the many additional steps added at the new survey monkey website.

The committee also discussed the current state of the COR budget and the potential for COR to garner funds from the pending Rebenching process. One member suggested that COR undertake an analysis of the degree to which annual COR grants serve as seed funding for larger grants that bring money and prestige to campus. Another member noted that research in some divisions—such as Arts—does not bring a lot of money back to campus due to the nature of their discipline. The committee decided that a qualitative, rather than quantitative, analysis ought to be done to express the importance of the COR grants to campus. This qualitative analysis will be discussed at a future meeting.

Approval of FRG/SRG Timeline

The committee reviewed the new timeline for application, adjudication and award that was approved last year. The new timeline moves everything up by a full quarter. The committee approved the following deadlines:

Application Period – December 1 through 5:00 pm January 22

COR Adjudication – February

Award Notification – March 15 - 30

After an update on the attempts to create a new web interface for the FRG and SRG applications, the committee agreed to help with the process by completing mock grant applications to test the parameters of any new system. One member noted that COR needs to get the message out soon that changes are coming to the SRG/FRG process. Because the timelines are new and the grant application and grant guidelines are under review, the committee agreed to discuss a communication plan at the next meeting.

The committee discussed the process for New Faculty Research Grants (NFRGs). It was proposed to just include new faculty into the general FRG and SRG call, given the accelerated application deadline. Members pointed out, though, that this would still delay the grant money for a full year whereas the spirit of the NFRG program is to give research money to new faculty right away. It was decided that NFRGs will be handled the same way they have been done in the past.

FRG/SRG Allowable Expenses and Other Issues

Based on a list of issues that arose during adjudication of FRGs and SRGs last year, the committee discussed the guidelines of both programs.

A major concern was that COR funds should not be used to fund graduate research. Each application must represent faculty-led research, but graduate student support can be justified. Another concern was the hiring of external personnel in place of on-campus personnel. The committee agreed that both grant applications should require applicants to use available on-campus resources before any off-campus resources. Also, a discrepancy was noted between COR grant guidelines regarding per diem when travelling abroad and University guidelines. The committee agreed that COR guidelines should conform to University guidelines.

The new application guidelines will eliminate the long list of non-allowable expenses. Any requested expense must be well and clearly justified in order for COR to grant the funding. Applicants must show in their application that their budget items are essential to the research in question and that those budget items are not readily available through another source.

Regarding the question of whether a faculty can apply for both an SRG and an FRG in the same year, the committee agreed that a faculty may apply for both but only one may be awarded. Lead applicants for SRGs may not receive both that SRG and an FRG, but if a faculty is listed as a collaborator on an SRG that is funded, that faculty may still receive an FRG in the same year.

Moving the application, adjudication and award deadlines forward allows for faculty to better prepare to spend their COR grant money including the upcoming summer. As such, extensions ought not to be needed. The committee agreed that the guidelines should clearly state that no extensions will be granted. In the case of extreme circumstances, COR will count on the faculty to reach out if needed.

COR Bylaw Amendment Proposal

Chair Oliver presented the wording of the proposed change to COR's charge to include graduate student representation. The committee noted that the input received from the graduate student representative last year was valuable and that because graduate students play an integral role in the research enterprise of the campus, they ought to have representation on the committee.

2011-12 Annual Report

The committee approved last year's annual report.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm

So attests,
Scott Oliver, Chair
Committee on Research