

COR minutes 11/10/15

Announcements

October 27 were approved as written

Shared Research Facilities and Equipment

Last year's COR worked jointly with the VCR to collect data from divisional deans about research facilities with the intention of creating an inventory that would make transparent the existence and availability of shared resources visible to campus researchers and potential faculty hires, postdocs and graduate students. The committee reviewed the dean's responses which varied in their level of detail. The committee noted with regret that VCR Brandt could not attend COR due to illness because they hoped to work collaboratively on developing the inventory. The project will need his support, since COR anticipated that the inventory would be hosted on the VCR website.

The committee quickly understood that shared facilities raises the adjacent issues of space and costs associated with technical support. Space is held divisionally, so shared equipment must take up the space allocation of a single division. Further the technical support required make equipment available is paid divisionally, paid out of a single PI grant, or depends on the generosity of faculty or graduate student time.

Use of some facilities are on a recharge basis, so they are in a sense, shared. Other models for sharing are less formal. PBSci's response makes a distinction between facilities that have just a scheduling system and those with a recharge system. There are less formal arrangements that gain access by just contacting the faculty PI. But this informal sharing occurs between faculty who know each other. There is a sense that if the existence of equipment and facilities were more widely known, faculty would be more likely to design research around its use. COR is concerned that some facilities/equipment are underutilized. There would be higher utilization of existing equipment if it was maintained, had technical or other assistance to make it accessible. As follow up, COR will ask for more information from the divisions; Social Sciences (a unified response across the division, Arts and Engineering), sending out the PBSci response as a model. The goal was also to ask Deans for one or two candidate resources that might benefit from some funding, e.g from the VCRs office. We can discuss this with VCR Brandt.

Library Funding Proposal 2015-15

At its last meeting, COR questioned why changing the methodology from a one-time allocation associated with specific faculty to a system of a line item in the budget, seemingly for less total dollars was good for the library. CPB's letter clarified this point.

If the funds are now to go directly to the library with no obligation for faculty input, COR would prefer to see the proposal include an outreach plan. Outreach to faculty, absent the previous model of subject area librarians, could include going to department meetings, or other faculty events to raise awareness of how to work with the library on faculty needs. COR sees the library as becoming increasing disassociated from faculty, which is a danger for the library. It is already conceivable to do research without a conventional library in an increasing number of disciplines. Without deep connections to faculty, the library only weakens its ability for further funding, especially for collections.

With the implementation of this proposal, faculty control over collections has been further reduced, and the library's relation to faculty decreases. If this proposal is implemented COR recommends that the new method of allocation should be reviewed after three years.

FRG/SRG Criteria

COR finalized the criteria for the two award programs, specifically clarifying language in the allowable/unallowable expenses sections. There was an extensive discussion about how to implement the matching fund program for Special Research Grants. Since the program is new, and COR doesn't know what the faculty response will be, they will retain some flexibility in how to allocate the matching funds. COR agreed on the following program. There would be one or two matching grants per theme. Faculty would be asked to write one budget for the SRG \$8,000 award. If they were proposing to get a match, faculty will indicate this on the application and provide a 200 word explanation of how the project matches the theme. All SRG proposals would be adjudicated together. If a theme-related proposal is awarded and COR will allocate matching funds, COR will request a revised budget for the project stating what additional research will be conducted, and how the additional money will be spent. COR agreed to use the CPB description of the themes.