

University Research Council
Approved Minutes
March 9, 2007

Present: Vimal Chaitanya, Janice Black, Wanda Borges, Alexander Fernald, Abbas Ghassemi, Linda Lacey, Michele Nishiguchi, Marc Pruyn, William Stein, Steve Thomas, Allen Torell, David Voelz, Patricia Wojahn, Karl Wood

Absent: David Boje, Prentice Baptiste, James Botsford, Kip Coggins, Shaun Cooper, Everett Egginton, Inigo Garcia-Bryce, Maria Luisa Gonzalez, Nirmala Khandan, Elizabeth Titus

1. Minutes from the meeting held on February 2, 2007 were approved as presented. A question was asked about the council having a quorum for passing motions as the number of members attending meetings seemed to average 50%. Chair Karl Wood said that quorums had not been used in the past.

2. Introduction – Laurie Churchill

a) Funding Opportunities – Laurie Churchill was introduced as the Senior Program Development Specialist for the VPR office. Dr. Churchill will be sending out RFPs/opportunities to faculty and research centers, and she will announce limited submission opportunities and internal competitions associated with those. Dr. Churchill will assist with proposal development and creating a database of faculty research interest. She is the NMSU coordinator of the NM EPSCoR program and is involved with the process of developing the new EPSCoR grant for the next round of funding which will focus on water, climate change and snowmelt. Dr. Churchill welcomed suggestions for the opportunity announcement process and for faculty research interests to her email at ljchurch@nmsu.edu .

Vice President Vimal Chaitanya told URC that he and Dean Garrey Carruthers are on the EPSCoR State Committee board along with VPRs from UNM and NM Tech, Tom Bowles - Science Advisor to the Governor, Los Alamos National Lab (LANL), Sandia National Lab (SNL), and Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) representatives. EPSCoR has always been handled through UNM; however the EPSCoR director position which is currently open has two NMSU candidates applying which, should one be selected, would bring EPSCoR to NMSU for the first time. Dr. Chaitanya asked Dr. Churchill to provide an EPSCoR update at the next URC meeting.

b) Sandia University Research Program (SURP) – Dr. Churchill spoke to members about the SURP program which brings together young faculty and Sandia collaborators. Eight faculty has expressed an interest to date. Sandia staff will be on campus to meeting with interested faculty on March 27, 2007.

3. Recent Reallocation of Faculty Slots/Research Ramifications

David Voelz opened this agenda item expressing concern for research due to recent faculty slots being reduced based on undergraduate student credit hours. In his department, one slot has been reduced which has forced two better researchers to have to cover the classes which in turn means less research. Dr. Voelz suggested that this council would be useful in discussing this issue. Dr. Chaitanya said that he felt research was not considered in this and that he was not made a part of the discussion. Michele Nishiguchi told members that a group she is working with, Advancing Leaders, has a project that is working with this issue and that they will be meeting with all the research deans to address this. Dr. Nishiguchi is hoping to provide a draft report (with permission) on how this affects their colleges at the next URC meeting. Janice Black mentioned concern as to the accuracy of the undergraduate student credit hours report which the reduction was based on. Dr. Chaitanya said that what has been done this year is probably irrevocable but that he would like to see some representation with an overall strategic research picture for the university.

A motion was made and seconded to provide a letter (resolution) to administration requesting the URC Chair and Dr. Chaitanya be added to this committee. Dr. Chaitanya asked that the resolution be positive in nature. He also told URC that there is recognition on the part of President Michael Martin and Senior Vice President Jennifer Taylor that NMSU cannot function as a university simply on the basis of student credit hours. Ms. Taylor is working with the formula so it favors research but within state constraints.

4. Faculty Publication List at Colleges/Institutes

Janice Black provided members with a database (electronic and a paper copy) that she has created that lists publications from faculty for the last 5 years at the College of Business. She suggested that members consider the creation of such so that there is a campus wide list of publications. Marc Pruyn mentioned a program that department heads and faculty can use in yearly evaluations where you enter the publications on line. Dr. Chaitanya told URC that our office has bought software for the College of Engineering that records such; however it is available to all campus.

Dr. Chaitanya updated members on the ARGIS software system that he is hoping to purchase that would go back 3 years on publications and be available to all faculty to use.

5. Subcommittees

- a) Awards – Deadline for submissions is March 9, 2007. The VPR office has received nominations from the College of Education, Arts & Sciences and Engineering to date. Copies of packets will be sent to the subcommittee members next week to which they will select 4 winners who will receive \$2,000 each, at the Fall Convocation. Nirmala Khandan is chairing this subcommittee with David Boje, Kip Coggins, Allen Torell, and Patricia Wojahn volunteering as members.

- b) Mission, Vision and Goals – Abbas Ghassemi will provide an update at the next meeting after working with volunteer members Jan Black, and Sam Fernald.
- c) Nominating – This subcommittee had not formed to this date. Dr. Chaitanya told members that the role of URC is going to become increasingly significant on campus. He wanted members to know that he wants a strong URC and URC Chair for the future so that they may assist the VPR with formulating policy for the university. The URC will also help Dr. Chaitanya via support in taking research issues/agenda to the forefront. He encouraged any member who felt he or she could do this job effectively, to self-nominate. Chair Karl Wood asked Incoming Chair Sam Fernald to chair this subcommittee as no one else volunteered. Any member who chairs this subcommittee may not serve as URC Chair Elect for the coming year.

6. Other Business

Dr. Chaitanya provided members with an update of his recent travel which included a visit to Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL) for an “innovation in academics” workshop. A large portion of the conference dealt with intellectual property (IP) agreements, patent filing and what kinds of support are available at various universities. Dr. Chaitanya would like to hire a consulting person who would be available to faculty to talk about their innovations as he feels NMSU is behind other universities in these terms. He met with the Deputy Director of the Oak Ridge National Lab and provided a presentation. Dr. Chaitanya will be writing to the research deans providing the contact information at Oak Ridge for our faculty who specialize in areas of mutual interests.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:33 p.m.
Minutes by Frances Schumacher