

University Research Council
Approved Minutes
October 1, 2007

Present: Vimal Chaitanya, Kip Coggins, Shaun Cooper, Alexander “Sam” Fernald, Linda Lacey, Meghan Starbuck, William Stein, Steve Thomas, April Ulery, David Voelz, Michael Young

Absent: Prentice Baptiste, Brenda Benefit, David Boje, Everett Egginton, Abbas Ghassemi, Nirmala Khandan, Michele Nishiguchi, Azadeh Osanloo, Elizabeth Titus, Patricia Wojahn, Karl Wood

1. Minutes for August 31, 2007 were approved after review.
2. Draft URC Charter

Chair Sam Fernald told members that the revised draft charter he provided for their information/discussion was an important step in the evolution of the URC. Dr. Fernald used the URC description from the NMSU policy manual as a base to build upon. Discussion on some of the items including terminology commenced. Some issues mentioned in the “Duties and Responsibilities” were:

- Lack of mechanisms for faculty to benefit financially from technology transfer and commercial application of research results for public benefit
- Training for research faculty on research grant management and indirect cost mechanisms
- Streamlining the procedures for submission and review of research proposals

Other issues in the “Structure and Membership” were:

- Consideration to drop or request replacement for members who aren’t attending council meetings
- URC membership that would include research cluster leaders/chairs to help nurture the clusters

This topic lead to discussion on current membership and whether the current set-up was the most beneficial for the council since this has not been studied since its inception. In its early years, the council apparently was needed to assist the colleges with different issues due to decentralization. Now that NMSU is centralized, the ex-officio and position appointments along with the number of representatives from the colleges will be reviewed by the Executive Committee before the next URC meeting and their suggestions will be discussed at the next URC general meeting. Dr. Fernald asked members to write to him in the near future for possible inclusion/correction to the draft document.

3. Research Presentation

Vice President Vimal Chaitanya gave a brief presentation that was given to the Board of Regents on September 7, 2007. He introduced Sudha Murthy from the Office of Strategic Initiatives, also

mentioned in the presentation, so she could list some of the support this office provides which included:

- Targeted distribution of funding opportunities
- Identification and pursuit of strategic initiatives (identifying partners)
- Proposal management activities (gathering information about competition, supporting development of proposal strategies, themes, and plans)
- Technical editing
- Database of faculty capacities and interests
- Coordination of limited submission opportunities

Ms. Murthy may be reached at 575-646-9279 or at osi@research.nmsu.edu.

Dr. Chaitanya resumed with the presentation speaking about research expenditures. From 1997 onwards, research expenditures have been growing except for 2004 during which time a continuing resolution in congress caused the drop. With less funding from the federal government, Dr. Chaitanya sees this as a need for the VPR office to support faculty in preparing and submission of proposals. He mentioned that if the proposal submission rate goes down that the awards will drop the following year with expenditures dropping the year after.

Overall NMSU submitted in 2007, \$315M worth of proposals and in total awards we received \$144M compared to \$150M in 2006. This is about 4% less in awards compared to last year. This is nothing to be extremely concerned about, yet it is something that we don't want to see become a trend. We need to look at what we can do to keep from dropping. The expenditure numbers are reported by SPA, submissions and awards numbers by OGC. The various college research centers have their own submissions and awards which normally don't match OGC's. The reason behind this is the definition of when the award is made. This year we are trying to define how we are going to say the award is in and it will be uniform across campus. This way the research centers and OGC will be able to match numbers. He would also like to track the number of publications, and national and international recognition. Some colleges at NMSU don't have the numbers on research publications that their faculty members have. Dr. Chaitanya feels that success and productivity should be measured in recognition as well as awards.

NSF ranked NMSU at 32nd in the nation for universities without medical schools in 2005. They ranked Engineering at 22nd in the national for 2005. Dr. Chaitanya gave future research goals as:

- Incentives for interdisciplinary efforts
- Rewards for research productivity
- Activate clusters
- Improve visibility of research in the overall mission of the university

Due to lack of time, the remainder of Dr. Chaitanya's presentation will be given at a later meeting.

4. Research Clusters – Brainstorming on Their Development

Due to lack of time, this topic will be addressed at a later meeting.