

University Research Council
Approved Minutes
December 14, 2012

Present: Salim Bawazir, Susan Beck, Vimal Chaitanya, Rebecca Creamer, Stephen Hanson, Cathy Kinzer, Collin Payne, Steve Stochaj, Laura Thompson

Absent: Rani Alexander, Jeffrey Arterburn, Muhammad Dawood, Joanne Esparza, Sam Fernald, Richard Fortin, O.D. Hadfield, Kathleen Huttlinger, Shanna Ivey, James Robinson, Robert Smits

Guests: Gin Morgan, Eshan Dahal, and Nishath Ranasinghe

1. URC Fair Poster Competition Winners Presenting

The following poster presentations were made to the council by the URC Fair's poster competition winners.

Mother-Infant Interactional Patterns Predict Infant Learning – Gin Morgan
Laura Thompson

How do the Physicochemical Properties of Nanoparticles Influence their Biological Behavior? – Eshan Dahal

Geometric Spreading – Nishath Ranasinghe

Examination of Race Structure for Verticillium Dahliae Isolates Affecting Chile Pepper Production – Steve Hanson

2. Approval of Minutes for November 9, 2012

Minutes were approved as presented.

3. Annual Research Presentation to the NMSU Board of Regents – The State of Research Enterprise

VPR Chaitanya gave the presentation to URC (attached for record) and also told them that comment was made at the Regents meeting stating revenues at NMSU were reduced by \$17M in grants and research, that expenses in the VPR office/budget should be reviewed carefully to see where costs can be cut. Dr. Chaitanya said he would rather URC review the VPR budget to see exactly where funding is spent and then make recommendations of where funds can be cut and/or determine what services would be of less value to faculty researchers. He said he is happy to work with the whole URC or they may select representatives to look at this depending on the URC Chair and Past Chair's suggestion.

Dr. Chaitanya told URC about the different awards or contracts that NMSU was awarded this year. He mentioned that many of the competitive funding opportunities require cost-share in which he waives the overhead. This is one of the types of functions that affect the VPR budget. He also brought up that most universities are funded around 60 to 65% federally while NMSU is funded around 87% which is too high. He said NMSU needs to have more diversification to keep the federal economic environment from having such an effect on research dollars. He suggested looking into industry and foundation for expansion.

One question asked was, were any other departments mentioned at the Regents meeting as needing to cut their budget. Dr. Chaitanya said no. It was suggested that the researchers need to better communicate in an attempt to explain that researchers need the funding and the support, and perhaps speak with examples and data of why some top researchers have left NMSU. Another point made was if NMSU has no research, then there will be no graduate students whose presence here directly impacts the university. Economic multipliers as related to research at NMSU might assist with this awakening. It was suggested that it is time for URC to take the lead role in educating NMSU's senior management and decision makers.

A report called "Diamond in the Rough" was created some years ago by a faculty member who interviewed faculty who had left NMSU and many of the reasons seemed to revolve around lack of recognition, lack of monetary reward, feelings of no value and other low morale type topics. Also mentioned was the company that performed the evaluation of the graduate school released their study recently and the lack of the investment for research infrastructure was highly recognized. It was suggested again that the need to assist with education of the Regents who are perhaps more of a business background by faculty researchers is very important especially during this current drop in funding.

Dr. Chaitanya went on to point out that the University of New Mexico had a drop in awards, Montana State University had a drop in awards and so did UNM. Colorado State University increased slightly. The difference is NMSU's proposal submission has dropped significantly and the other universities have not. He finished with the five grand challenges with the importance of a collective, coordinated effort with various university entities including University Advancement, Finance and Administration, Graduate School, International and Border Programs, Student Success, University Communications, Arrowhead Center, Government Relations to name some.

Minutes by Frances Schumacher