

**University Research Council**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**October 11, 2013**

**Present:** Jeffrey Arterburn, Susan Beck, Rebecca Creamer, Muhammad Dawood, Richard Fortin, Stephen Hanson, Cathy Ortega-Klett (for Sam Fernald ), Jill McDonald, James Robinson, Hari Sankaran, Steve Stochaj, Mingjun Wei, Dennis Zaklan (for Joanne Esparza)

**Absent:** Rani Alexander, Matthias Burkardt, Vimal Chaitanya, O.D. Hadfield, Shanna Ivey, Cathy Kinzer, Mary O'Connell, Robert Smits

1. Approval of Minutes for August 23, 2013

Minutes were approved as presented.

2. Recap URC 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Research and Creative Activities Fair

Frances Schumacher provided a brief presentation of the URC fair which included photos of presenters and statistics regarding current and past fairs. Poster award winners were named as follows:

Tied for First Place:

*"Infection Dynamics of Sylvatic Dengue Virus in a Reservoir Host Species"* by K. Hanley, T. Kautz, M. Brown, S. Whitehead, S. Weaver, N. Vasiakis, and P. Marx

And

*"Striving to be Tobacco Free"* by S. Wilson, C. Kratzke, C. Spurny, M. Wilson and C. Luna

Second Place:

*"Minimum Lab PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)"* by K. Doolittle and D. Schoep

Third Place:

*"Beet Armyworm, Spodoptera exigua, and Cotton Bollworm, Helioverpa zea, Development on Glandless Cotton"* by J. Pierce, P. Monk, A. Garnett, O.J. Idowu, R.P. Flynn and C. Vasquez

3. Updates on Provost committees

URC members Jeff Arterburn and Mary O'Connell were invited to participate in the Research Administration Task Force. A task force agenda with a distribution date of October 11, 2013 was provided as a handout (see attached as supporting documentation). President Carruthers addressed the committee and charged Provost Howard to lead this effort; attendees at the second meeting included: Yoli Baca, Neta Fernandez, Norma Grijalva, Peter Martin, Norma Noel, Andrew Pena, D'Anne Stuart, and Angela Throneberry in addition to the two URC members.

Following the first meeting, materials from the Educational Advisory Board were distributed to the committee as background information describing organizational research administration structures in use at other institutions. The second meeting of the committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October introduced the “shared service center model” a plan that would involve sequential formation of four service centers with a one-stop shop with representatives from HR, OGC and SPA. The suggestion was that ACES would be the first test case, however, there remain numerous considerations and details to address. It was noted by URC member Susan Beck that the centers as displayed in the handout, did not include the library. Dr. Arterburn suggested an alternative SSC organization would be to designate agency expertise at the centers instead of what appears to be a geographical placement. The research process issues have not been mentioned during the first two RATF meetings.

Chair Hanson told URC that CADRe met the day before with Provost Howard and they have a list of items and positions that they feel should be funded out of I&G instead of overhead such as the ICT charges and some staff under the VPR and the A&S Research Center. The idea behind this suggestion is SPA is paid from I&G funds so the grant process or support staff at other units should be paid out of I&G as well. Provost suggested that moving staff or items off overhead and placing them on I&G will not work as I&G funds are completely budgeted out. CADRe only had 30 minutes with Provost Howard so the SSC model and CADRe taking up the 54 issues did not get discussed.

Dr. Arterburn said the next meeting of the RATF should provide a chance to discuss potential problems/solutions that might exist with the SSC model. Chair Hanson suggested that URC spend a few minutes to reflect and make suggestions for Dr. Arterburn to present to the task force. One comment included having SPA representation on site would be helpful; however a representative for travel or purchasing, or even the SPA representative, might not be as successful as their procedures are based on NMSU policy. Dr. Arterburn brought up the fact that the hires on research dollars are harder to processes than I&G hires as they tend to break down due to the process. Steve Stochaj made the suggestion for the task force that they need to have a matrix to assess the first launched SSC model, created before it starts, that defines metrics for failure or success. He felt some discussion should have been made as to how the shared service models were set up. He said the sciences part of Arts and Sciences would have probably worked better with Engineering. It was noted that the next task force meeting would have discussion for obstacles, impediments, concerns, limitations and staffing patterns for the centers.

Also suggested was the possibility of having a CADRe member sit on the URC. Chair Hanson said the URC Chair sits on CADRe as does VPR Chaitanya. Having the CADRe member rotate as the colleges do on URC would provide equal representation. Chair Hanson will write to CADRe about this suggestion.

#### 4. Prioritize Groups to Invite to URC Meetings

Human Resources, Arrowhead, Office of Research Development and Grants & Contracts have requested an audience with URC. Chair Hanson asked members what order would be most effective given the new service models that will be implemented. It was agreed upon to invite HR, the interim Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Council Chair to the

November meeting and then request Provost Howard return in December. Arrowhead and the patent process will be scheduled in January. Chair Hanson requested members to send him specific issues/suggestions for HR so that the topics can be provided to them in advance so the meeting is more productive. The same should be done for graduate services specifically tuition waivers as well as centralizing the processes for grad students. Other topics and suggestions included:

- Chair Hanson to chat with Grad Council Chair to see what questions they have for HR
- Let HR know the URC is interested in evolving policies
- Additional flexibility for soft money
- Policies for grad students with re to pay levels, RF mandates, requirements for funding, index numbers to be able to cover the year before you are allowed to hire, 20 hours a week work load

#### 5. Suggestions for Research Incentives

Incentives that can be put forward to the research process committees and also the individual investigator or interdisciplinary research incentives were put up for discussion and suggestions. Chair Hanson told URC that Provost Howard spoke to CADRe about his plan which included formal teaching release. However CADRe said their departments don't have the depth for this. Related to this they asked about salary savings being used but it is traditionally used for faculty startup. NMSU has had above average faculty hiring activity for the past two or three years. The resources for faculty startup are already committed so salary savings would not be an option. The Provost does not appear to have made many suggestions for incentives. His model for reduction of faculty startup was discussed at CADRe and it includes plans for central laboratories as a way to cut costs.

A comment was made that NMSU is in a unique situation as none of the deans have a significant research reputation and even the associate deans for research are not particularly strong with research backgrounds. So NMSU's educational administrators are basically trying to keep the door open so to speak with no basic strategic plan. Provost Howard needs to realize that reinvestment in research is vitally important right now to NMSU.

Minutes by Frances Schumacher