University Research Council
Approved Minutes
August 26, 2014

Present: Jeffrey Arterburn, Susan Beck, Jamie Bronstein, Vimal Chaitanya, Joanne Esparza, Cathy Ortega-Klett (for Sam Fernald), Maria Gurrola, Kathryn Hanley, Stephen Hanson, Clint Loest, Hongmei Luo, Jill McDonald, Mihai Niculescu, Mary O'Connell, Hari Sankaran, Steve Stochaj, Mingjun Wei

Absent: Matthias Burkardt, Cathy Kinzer

1. Welcome

   Introductions were made for returning and new members.

2. Approval of Minutes

   April 11, 2014 and May 9, 2014 minutes were approved with corrections.

3. URC Role on Campus and NMSU Policy

   A handout was provided to the council from the NMSU policy manual, 5.94.30, sec B that shows the definition, vision, mission, goals, duties and responsibilities, structure and membership of the council. Chair Steve Stochaj told members that the University Research Council (URC) acts as the cheerleaders for research and advisor to the Vice President for Research. Last year under Past Chair Steve Hanson's leadership, the URC was asked to have a member on the NMSU Budget Committee which was a crucial step in having a research voice on a very important committee where funding decisions are made. Chair Stochaj informed members that it is their task as council members to be the voice of research at their colleges and to not only take information there, but to bring back any topics of interest or concerns that URC can assist in either finding solutions or being an instrument in getting notice taken on areas that need change. He also mentioned that Jeff Arterburn and Mary O'Connell are working with ICT to build better tools for grant management.

4. Future Topics

   Chair Stochaj asked the council to suggest topics or areas they would like to see addressed during this next academic year. Some suggestions included:

   - Request an outcomes report from Provost for Research Processes Task Force (a report was expected by end of July) which has resulted in shared service centers being created;
   - How will the presence of the new College of Osteopathy impact research on campus;
   - Incentives for research (to include teaching release, graduate assistantships, F&A held by the researcher, among others);

- Graduate student recruitment/retention system broken (to include knowing TA allocation for departments so they don't have to hold off on recruitment which causes loss of top tier students);
- New ways to find collaborative connections across campus via informal interactions to share ideas;
- When serving on review panels, bring evaluation rubrics back to VPR for future use;
- Red team reviews for smaller proposals instead of only large scale as is current practice (with idea that smaller proposals need the foundation that will lead to larger proposals);
- Self reporting when serving on review panels for funding agencies;
- Two meetings with Provost - one to show the engagement and energy of faculty, and the other to ask the harder questions with an overview of his and President's trends for supporting research during their first year;
- Bridge Funding. Formalizing short-term gap funding support for researchers whose grant has come to a close, but are anticipating another award (especially to keep the research active during gap)

5. URC Fair

    The URC Fair will take place on Friday, October 3rd in the Las Cruces Convention Center. Chair Stochaj said that poster judges will be needed again this year and for members to consider volunteering. This will be requested at the next URC meeting being held on September 16th.

6. Other

    Jill McDonald provided an invitation to URC to attend the Southwest Institute for Health Disparities Research (SWIHDR) mini-conference. The purpose of the conference is to initiate, inspire and increase participation in interdisciplinary research across NMSU colleges to improve health outcomes in our region. The conference will take place on September 5th from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. in the CHSS auditorium. RSVP by August 29th at lilo@nmsu.edu .

Minutes by Frances Schumacher