

Research Council Minutes
May 1, 2007

The Research Council met on Tuesday, May 1, 2007 at 2:00 pm in the University Center Catamount Room.

Members present: C. Cooper, M. Hargis, S. Higgins, M. Karvonen, W. Kwochka, M. Holliday, K. Schmidt, P. Jacques, S. Acheson, G. Knotts, S. O'Connell

Members absent: P. Bates, M. Kartlet, J. Eastman, D. McGinty, G. Moller, K. Cooper-Duffy, M. Karlet, R. Lirely, P. Sanger, S. Henson

Others present: None

Announcements

S. Higgins wanted this meeting to provide closure on start up fund issue and conduct and research initiatives, there may be a grant writing workshop in fall by Dr Lomax. Possibly he will address ethics in research at that time.

M. Hargis reported that the animal research committee needs to be reactivated and the local vet was asked to participate. Also Bio safety committee also being reestablished and both committees will need to be reintroduced to the university community through education.

Old Business

1. Meeting Agenda
Send Scott agenda items prior to scheduled meeting. Only two items to be discussed due to anticipated minimum participation at semester end.
2. Research Integrity
M. Hargis reported that Legal is working to develop clear definition of research and research ethics, reporting misconduct, and university responsibility once misconduct is reported. This will go on line once finalized.
S. Higgins wants to provide training about ethics and distributed some on line resources and will send out more as it come available. No timeline on policy availability, probably by fall. Once Reggie Rogers has transitioned into coordinator role at Research Administration and he will help provide research and training in this and other areas.
3. Start-Up Packages
There was a good deal of discussion of this issue. Here are the highlights of remarks.
S. Higgins observed that in the past, \$15k to 25k was typically awarded to new faculty. The provost policy now requires the dean of the college to contribute 50% of start up money, but the source of these funds unknown. The council is still working on collecting data about start up funds in other organizations and our own. Soft sciences (psychology) are not getting start up funds as a rule when compared to hard science requests. One positive note is that revised workload templates will be coming out soon which will measure research time as well as classroom time. This might help tie quality research into startups and will provide recognition for research workload as well as teaching workload and provide incentives for research commitment.
Some council members have noticed that information is slow coming from within, so education about where we are in the process of securing startups needs to take place. There is also some evidence that younger faculty members are more likely to leave WCU to pursue research opportunities.
Candidates who will be expecting startup funds are often not interviewed by psychology. Psychology hires mid to late career people because they have their research behind them and they are looking for a place to retire.
C. Cooper observed that even a small startup indicates that WCU values research and will promote WCU desired image in this area. He suggested that WCU should support basic (pure) research as well as applied research.
M. Hargis that WCU has improved from past standing of dead last to next to last in indirects in the UNC system? As more federal funding is received, more indirects will be available which will encourage more faculty members to seek funding that include indirects. The balance between research and scholarly activity needs to be addressed so that faculty can find time to do research. Release time funds were returned to UNC because deans would not release faculty to do research. Many on council did not hear about availability of these funds. Deans are not seeing big picture of advantage of encouraging research. WCU cannot retain best and brightest without allowing faculty to do research. Do most faculty members feel that research is important? Younger faculty members want to do research (and might leave to do it) and older faculty members are happy not accepting the additional workload of research. M. Hargis observed that there should be no differentiation between

basic and applied research because there would be not be applied research with basic research first. WCU does not have research attitude at this time because workload does not currently measure research. New template will address this. New faculty should not be loaded down with service (committee membership) and they should focus on developing research agenda. It was suggested that Deans need to protect new faculty from committee overload for first three years.

C. Cooper noted that political science uses creative budgeting to define funds and what they are used for to create incentives for new faculty (such as course release). Cooper says he received a Xeroxed copy of opportunities/incentives available to WCU faculty (research funds, etc.) It is not clear who has the funds and what can they be used for.

S. Higgins suggested a two prong approach. 1) Seek additional resources and 2) compile and advertise existing resources. The Council should start compiling list for provost review. It is also important to continue to gather data from comparable institutions to give weight to data. The Council and faculty needs to know what goes back to the deans so that they are accountable for saying where money went when they say NO to start ups. Since provost says dean must provide 50% of start up, is provost willing to cover whatever a dean negotiates with new faculty? Deans may not have a clear picture of what money is available, how it can be spent, and what source of money is. The expectation on campus to support new faculty needs to be reinforced. There are little to no expectations at WCU for startups among "old" deans. What funds are available needs to be widely known so that department heads and faculty can keep deans "honest" and give them leverage to challenge provost to support new faculty start ups. This money is needed to attract and retain quality faculty. Obviously, all colleges will not have same requirement.

Summary: It is not clear that anyone on WCU knows the rules of the game about these funds and how they should be used.

Approval of the Minutes The minutes are available for review on the Research website.

New Business None

- Action**
1. Continue to gather data regarding start up funds at comparable institutions (by department).
 2. Compile a list of existing resources at WCU to share with new faculty/candidates.
 3. Conduct survey of faculty to clarify existing attitude towards research (how likely a member is to leave WCU to do it), startups, and impression of how WCU administration views research.
 4. Continue to address startups and indirects with the provost and encourage a clarification of WCU policy and procedures.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.

Submitted by – John Hawes