

Present: Michael Harold, Maria Solino, Stuart Long, Abdelhak Bensaoula, Gregg Roman, Allan Jacobson, Randy Lee, Alan Burns, Robert Palmer, George Zouridakis, Pradeep Sharma, Ezemenari Obasi, Alessandro Carrera, Pam Muscarello, Gangbing Song, Haluk Ogmen, Mary Ann Ottinger, Rathindra Bose, Cris Milligan, Beverly Rymer, Ashley Merwin, Rozlyn Reep

Absent: Jack Fletcher, Gregory Marinic, Wynne Chin, Karl Titz, Michael Zvolensky, Stuart Dryer, Richard Bond, Luis Torres, Jacqueline Hawkins, Mark Clarke, Patrick Bordnick

Chair Dr. Harold called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

Welcome by the Chair: Dr. Harold thanked everyone for coming to the meeting at a later time. He informed the committee that it is the last official meeting of the year and the Retreat will be May 8th from 9:00 – 12:00 pm at the Hilton. He invited everyone to attend a lecture by Prof. Gila Stein on flexible solar cells in the Houston Science Center after the meeting.

Approval of March Minutes: Dr. Harold asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Lee made the motion and Dr. Roman seconded. The minutes were approved.

Status Report by VC/VP Dr. Bose: Dr. Bose told the committee he was delighted to see everyone, despite heavy end of semester demands and that he wanted to touch on several issues:

- National Updates:
 - Beverly sent an email about the NIH policy change on proposal submissions. You are now allowed to resubmit your proposal under the “new” category if you fail to receive funding after your first amendment, i.e., “two-strikes and you are out” is no longer valid.
 - Congress is working on the FIRST act to put restrictions on NSF’s ability to fund some humanities and social science projects. In fact, the Science Committee chair, Honorable Congressman Smith from Texas is leading the charge. The National Science Board committee has publicly opposed the move. Dr. Bose will keep everyone updated.
- Update on Issues:
 - Personnel change: Assistant VP Jennifer Duncan has left the university. Dr. Bose felt that she was not the best fit for UH and provided an explanation of his priorities:
 - DOR operates a shadow system, RAMP and RD2K, which do not communicate with PeopleSoft, which is UH’s official business

operation tool. He is sure that everyone has their own shadow system and spends enormous time trying to reconcile their grants accounting. Ever since he arrived at UH, he has wanted to avoid that shadow system. So his priority was to quickly install the PeopleSoft grant module which UH has already paid for and implement InfoEd to interface with PeopleSoft so they can minimize reconciling efforts and concentrate on services that faculty need from DOR.

- Second, they have a responsibility to send invoices to sponsors but have a limited ability to track.
- Third, his budget is operated through DOR's own shadow system which creates enormous issues with Finance and Administration since they do not know his exact financial situation. It is important that Finance and Administration have up-to-date information on his commitments so he can secure additional assistance on a variety of projects faculty need, from laboratory renovation to matching funds, start-up costs, etc.
- Fourth, DOR has to make changes in its business operations to comply with A-81 by December 26, 2014. This A-81 implementation also provides DOR with an opportunity to get rid of some red tape such as tracking effort reporting through Maximus or paper formats, base salary, extra pay, procurement, and other items.
- Dr. Bose decentralized pre-award activities so that colleges can submit proposals in a timely manner (with appropriate oversight from DOR). He also provided resources to a couple of colleges for hiring trained personnel to help faculty, and does not want to go back to the "cradle to grave" model abruptly.
- Several members previously expressed concern about a lack of feedback from the colleges about DOR's reorganization. He said they may recall during the last meeting that he had indicated that he is willing to send DOR staff to visit with colleges to get a list of their issues. Dr. Fletcher followed up and invited three DOR staff who had a good conversation with Psychology faculty. They brought back a list of concerns to Dr. Bose. Solutions for most of the concerns, if not all, are linked to working with other divisions. The key point is that he is working with other departments on those issues and solutions are slowly coming together.
- He plans to compile the issues provided from faculty to DOR and will send those issues to faculty for review. Based on that feedback, a plan will be developed to respond to each of those issues in a priority manner.
- Dr. Bose also had a very productive meeting with the Faculty Senate President and President Elect, along with the RSC chair and vice chair on the "Research and Scholarship Excellence

Awards.” He believes that all aspects of scholarship should be recognized and that we have many outstanding scholars at UH, many outside of the areas that we often recognize. He closed with a quote from Galileo, “Measure what is measurable, and make measurable what is not so.”

Subcommittee Reports

New Faculty/Small Grants: Recommendations for next year’s program was tabled for the Retreat.

Excellence in Research & Scholarship: Policy changes will be discussed at the Retreat such as:

- Give scholarship awards that recognize the arts, and
- Invite members outside the committee to review nominations.

Dr. Sharma concurred on adding a level of award for the arts. Dr. Palmer said he would not oppose a change but is not surprised that the majority of awards have gone to hard sciences in the past, especially since the University seems to be going in that direction. Dr. Roman said it would be hard as to where to draw the line with creative endeavors, and that we would need to figure out how to classify “creative”. Dr. Solino said that creative and arts are very different, and that creative endeavor will leave out other colleges.

Further discussion was tabled until the Retreat.

GEAR: Dr. Ogmen reported that his subcommittee had recommendations for awards. He thanked Dr. Bose for supporting this program as well as DOR staff - especially Rozlyn Reep for all of her help.

Dr. Ogmen provided handouts for the meeting that showed a list of proposals that were submitted and selected, as well as a chart showing college quotas. The review process and results will be posted on the DOR website so there is complete transparency. In order to make sure there were no conflicts of interest, adjustments were made to reviewers so each reviewer did not review proposals from their college. Proposals were reviewed independently and given a score 1 through 9. Proposals were ranked by their scores. The budget was \$260,000 and 9 proposals were selected for funding. A college agreed to fund the remaining amount of one of the proposals. The proposals selected were:

- Lars Grabow, College of Engineering
- Carla Sharp, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Richard Simpson, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Ognjen Miljanic, College of Natural Science & Mathematics

- Donna Stokes, College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics
- Robert Talbot, College of Natural Science & Mathematics
- Deborah Otteson, College of Optometry
- Bradley McConnell, College of Pharmacy
- Danielle Parrish, Graduate College of Social Work

Dr. Bose thanked Dr. Ogmen and his subcommittee for all of the work they did for this program and for taking every care to avoid any conflict. Dr. Harold said that on behalf of the committee, they did a great job on a great process. He asked for a motion to approve the GEAR recommendations. Dr. Zouridakis made the motion for approval and the motion was approved.

Centers & Institutes: Dr. Zouridakis reported that his subcommittee will be reviewing annual reports from TIMES, CACDS and TcSUH as well as considering input for proposed NCALM and CRNCS centers. They will have more information by the Retreat. The subcommittee put together a complete protocol and provided handouts for members to review. Additions to the protocol included personnel information, expenses for the next year, etc. The updated protocol will go into effect next year.

Core Facilities: Guidelines were voted on at the last meeting and they are on the website.

Conflict of Interest: Dr. Burns reported that the group continues to meet on a regular basis. Going through forms and documents is a long process, but it's a great group of people and everyone works hard.

Intellectual Property: Dr. Bose told the committee they have a lot of disclosures coming in. The committee now needs to make adjustments and do a pre-screening and vote on which disclosures will go under further review. They have a lot of folks interested in the disclosure business which is wonderful news.

New Business:

OMB Document Presentation: Beverly Rymer gave a presentation on A-81 – Uniform Guidance:

- A-81 OMB circulars replaces existing OMB Circulars used by Institutes of Higher Educations (IHE) and State agencies.
- UH must implement A-81 by December 26, 2014.
- Pre-Award – Risk Evaluation: In addition to the scientific review, the Federal agency must complete a risk evaluation before awarding funds.
- Pre-Award – Review Criteria: Voluntary cost sharing will not be used as a factor in reviewing applications; cost sharing is only required when clearly defined in the funding opportunity notice; only mandatory cost sharing must

be included in the budget; prior approval by the Federal awarding agency is required for unrecovered indirect cost to be included in cost sharing.

- Post-Award – IDC: Federal agencies must accept the federally negotiated rate of IDC; institutions can accept de minimis IDC rate from agencies with no negotiated rate (10%); pass through agency must grant sub recipients IDC that is neither the negotiated rate or the de minimis flat rate 10%; IDC rates can be extended up to four years (one time) with cognizant agency for IDC approval.
- Post Award Compensation – Effort Reporting: Emphasis on internal controls over salaries and wages on grants - charges must reflect actual work performed and records must support it; incorporate effort distribution into official records; flexibility in implementation of effort reporting; certification of reports no longer required; cost sharing related to effort must be documented in records.
- Post Award Compensation – Fringe Benefit: Cost of leave is recognized in the period that the leave is taken and paid for; severance pay not allowed as a direct charge to grant (allowed as indirect).
- Post Award Compensation – Additional Compensation: consistent written policies; requirement for written policy on institutional base salary (IBS); the amount is commensurate with the IBS rate of pay and the amount of additional work performed.
- Post Award – Allowable Cost: Administrative and clerical staff salaries can be directly allocated if they are integral to the project activity; charging computing devices (laptop computers and associated supplies) allowed if they are essential but not solely dedicated to the performance of the project.
- Post Award – Procurement Standard: Five procurement methods required [1.) Procurement by micro purchases – less than 3K; 2.) Procurement by small purchase procedure; 3.) Procurement by sealed bids; 4.) Procurement by competitive proposal; 5.) Procurement by non-competitive prop]; new category of “micro-purchase” which implies that any purchases over \$3,000 would have to be competitive in some way.
- Post Award – Procurement Standard: Prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state or local geographical preference in the evaluation of bids; follow state rules for purchase, but where there is a conflict between state law and the federal guidance, the Federal guidance prevails; avoided the acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items.
- Post Award – Sub-recipient Monitoring: Evaluate each sub-recipient’s risk up front; monitor the activities of the sub-recipient to include: 1.) reviewing financial report; 2.) requiring programmatic reports in agreement; 3.) performing on-site reviews.
- Post Award – Close Out: Residual inventory of unused supplies less than 5K upon completion of the project can be retained and used for other activities or sold; excess cost over funding amount (at the end of an award) cannot be moved to another award.

Input Gathered from Colleges: Dr. Harold reported that he appreciates the input from colleges in regards to research management. He applauded the efforts of Dr. Obasi who solicited feedback from the College of Education Faculty using a customized survey. DOR will continue to work with the RSC to solicit feedback which will involve a survey instrument.

DOR staff recently visited with the Psychology Faculty. They were able to identify 9 key issues. It was a very good meeting and he said it would be helpful if colleges invited DOR to visit so they can hear their issues and work towards solutions.

A consultant from Chicago evaluated UH in the first few months of Dr. Bose's appointment at UH. He provided a list of risks including closing of accounts, which was a very high risk.

Dr. Harold told the committee that the RSC will be working with DOR over the coming weeks and months to construct a survey.

Research Grant Matching Policy: Dr. Harold stated that there was an observation that when faculty write equipment proposals (such as NSF MRI's) that require a university cost share, there needs to be a process in place that simplifies the process of securing the matching funds from the university. Dr. Roman stated that these proposals are a lot of work, so if DOR could provide information on the level of commitment possible, that would be helpful. Dr. Bose stated that depending on the nature of the proposal he would need to work with the deans and colleges up front to discuss the cost share. If negotiation can be done up front with deans and department chairs, the matching funds can be in place for the faculty at the time of proposal submission.

Dr. Lee stated that DOR historically has provided these matching funds and he thinks faculty should be able to expect support from DOR. Dr. Bose stated that he would be pleased to do that and encouraged IDC to be used as well. This is a negotiation that DOR will have with deans and chairs. Cris stated that we were hurt significantly this year because the HEAF funds were expended and we still have to make sure that every obligation DOR makes is covered.

Dr. Bose stated that the issue is if the colleges and departments have a significant amount of unspent IDC funds and DOR matching is requested, it is unlikely to be approved at the university level. Dr. Lee stated that the problem is the IDC funds are not under the control of the dean, so they are not available for the college to use as matching funds. Cris stressed timing and the importance to have a conversation with DOR far in advance.

Any New Business: Dr. Lee asked if an Agenda had been set for the Retreat. Dr. Harold responded by saying several items have been identified. Dr. Lee suggested

having the Chief Energy Officer and Health Officer come to the Retreat and give an update. Dr. Harold agreed and would extend an invitation to both.

Dr. Long stated that the Honors College just received word that Kate Nguyen in Mathematics has just received the Goldwater scholarship. There were 2 other students that were honorable mentions. The Honors College also received an Udall Scholar award, which was the first ever in the history of the university. Dr. Long stated they are proud of their undergraduates.

Dr. Bose brought up an item for consideration at the Retreat. He has been working with the centers and departments to create a manufacturing initiative under President Obama's manufacturing initiative. They have been working with TcSUH on a superconductivity manufacturing center and need to give the RSC a briefing. They have a potential opportunity to enter into a grant. He would like for Dr. Selvamanickam to come to the Retreat to give a presentation. Dr. Jacobson stated that they have been trying to bring the HTS community together and the process began with a workshop that generated a report and recommendations. One recommendation was to form a steering committee to put together a white paper to go to the Advanced Program Manufacturing Office in Washington D.C. There are many steps in this process and they are bringing a consensus together.

Old Business:

Vacation Payout: Dr. Bose stated that he spoke with Dr. Carlucci and asked how this year would be covered and was assured that he would put up the funds to take care of any issues for this year. There will be a pool for next year.

Indirect Cost Policy: An update was tabled for next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:52.

The next meeting will be the RSC Retreat on Thursday, May 8th at 9:00 AM (breakfast buffet at 8:30 AM) in the Flamingo Room at the UH Hilton.