

Present: Jack Fletcher, George Zouridakis, Richard Bond, Alan Burns, Stuart Dryer, Allan Jacobson, Randy Lee, Stuart Long, Jay Neal, Clayton Neighbors, Ezemenari Obasi, Christie Peters, Gregg Roman, Maria Bondesson, Patrick Bordnick, Rathindra Bose, Cris Milligan, Beverly Rymer, Brooke Gowl, Ben Mull, Ashley Merwin, Rozlyn Reep

Absent: Alessandro Carrera, Wynne Chin, Gregory Marinic, Robert Palmer, Steven Pei, Pradeep Sharma, Gangbing Song, Luis Torres, Michael Zvolensky, Mary Ann Ottinger, Mark Clarke, Maria Solino

Welcome by the Chair: Chair Dr. Fletcher welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order.

Approval of September Minutes: Dr. Fletcher asked members to review the minutes from the September meeting then asked for a motion to approve. Dr. Roman made the motion, and Dr. Zouridakis seconded. The minutes were approved.

Status Report by VP/VC Dr. Bose:

- Funding Updates:
 - A handout was distributed for 2014 extramural funding. The data is listed on the handout for UH and comparable institutions for the funding trend over the last 3 years.
 - Some universities went down by 12%, one by 27%, etc. UH went up 28%.
 - Not all of the data is available yet from other universities, but once the information is available, he'll compare UH to those institutions. Virginia Commonwealth University is the only one that went up 39%, which may be due to a large center grant, etc.
 - UH is doing well and he would like to see this trend continue to increase.
- Recent Recognition:
 - As a Point of Pride, the University of Houston is one of the finalists to receive an Innovation and Economic Prosperity (IEP) Award. This is a competition that is run by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU). There will be 4 awards: one overall category and 3 specific awards.
 - The University of Houston is one of 8 finalists, which include Georgia Institute of Technology, North Carolina State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, University of Illinois, University of Massachusetts-Boston, and Virginia Tech.
 - When APLU spoke with us about these awards they asked if President Khator would be at the awards breakfast, where the winners will be announced on November 4th in Orlando.
- A-133 Audit by State Auditors:
 - Beverly Rymer's group in OCG has been working with state auditors during its recent audit. There were 4 auditors in DOR offices for 2 weeks, and they were provided with thousands of pages of data. The auditors have not completed the audit yet, but Dr. Bose had an exit interview with them and he was pleased with their comments. They were not able to find anything of concern at that point in the audit. The auditors requested additional information which was sent to them, and DOR should receive the official report in the next few weeks.

- There was a separate internal audit, which went through about 30 departments and found 40 violations. These violations have been reported to the Board of Regents. If anyone would like to see this information, Dr. Bose would be happy to share. Most of the violations came from academic departments. Accordingly, Dr. Bose would like to have a conversation with everyone for assistance with these findings.
- Dr. Fletcher asked for an idea of what some of the general issues were. Dr. Bose stated that it included things such as cost transfer, and opening/closing of accounts. Dr. Fletcher stated that it would be helpful if this list was shared with the RSC committee; Dr. Bose is happy to do so.
- MREB Building:
 - For those who attended the recent groundbreaking ceremony for the Multidisciplinary Research and Engineering Building (MREB), there were a lot of guests. The 3 donors who will have floors named after them in the building attended, along with 2 alumni.
- Health and Biomedical 2 Building (HBSB2):
 - The HBSB2 building is in the planning stage. The plan would be to co-locate some of the faculty who are animal users, are working with the College of Pharmacy, are from the Biology Department, and others, so that we can have a large number of faculty who can collaborate and use core facilities.
 - We'll finish 2 floors and see if we can finish 3 floors so we can move in more faculty who are animal users. This would free up space in the SERC building.
 - Also, with the MREB building, the old TLC2 area will vacate some space they have and move to MREB. The TLC2 space will go back.
 - By building the MREB and HBSB2 buildings, NSM will get additional space, along with the 4th floor of the HBSB1 building. The idea is to address lab space that NSM needs. We have previously dealt with spacing issues for Optometry, Psychology, CACDS, and Engineering. Hopefully these new buildings will help address spacing issues for NSM.
- IDC Distribution for FY2015:
 - IDC PowerPoint slides were displayed to show FY2015 IDC distribution data.
 - This year there was \$19,196,174 total IDC recovered in FY2014.
 - The IDC distribution has been determined already and will be going out next week.
 - Historically, you would take \$1,238,909 out for infrastructure overhead first, then DOR would take 28%, followed by taking out the bad debt and some core facility funding. The rest went back to the colleges and departments. So there is no exact formula because the numbers are variable.
 - When Dr. Bose first arrived to UH, Dr. Long had a challenging problem when he was VPR because he was hit with the issue of bad debt. 46.35% went back to the colleges/departments in 2010. When Dr. Bose arrived in 2011, he looked at this carefully, made some adjustments, and tried to return at least 52% and maintain that level.
 - This year completes the bad debt issue, but the policy is to set aside 3.5% of IDC for dealing with future issues of bad debt. 55.5% of the total IDC going back to the college/department, for a total of \$19,196,174 total IDC for 2015.
 - If they're able to control the bad debt, Dr. Bose will return that money to the colleges/departments; however, he would like to see 3-4 years of no bad debt first.

- Since Beverly has taken over OCG, they have collected over \$1M in bad debt from 2010-2012.
- Manufacturing Institute:
 - Dr. Bose wanted to share an update on an investment. If everyone recalls last spring, Dr. Selvamanickam came to a RSC meeting to give a presentation on a Manufacturing Institute. They've been building the manufacturing capacity, and working aggressively to get a 100+M center grant at UH.
 - They have made significant progress. They submitted a proposal for a planning grant to the Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce invited them to submit a full proposal for a planning grant.
 - They also sent a white paper to President Obama's office, the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), which they are reviewing.
 - Dr. Selvamanickam also made this same presentation at the Associate Deans for Research Meeting and the President's Cabinet meeting.
 - Dr. Bose is very supportive of this initiative and is going to give this manufacturing institute a special recognition for 3 years and hopefully the RSC can create a matrix and evaluate their progress based on reports.
- Questions:
 - IDC:
 - Dr. Long stated that during his first month as VPR he found out about the bad debt issue and had to take 3.5% from the colleges to address the problem. At that time he would have liked to give it back to the colleges/departments when the bad debt was over, and thanked Dr. Bose for doing so. Dr. Bose also expressed his appreciation to Dr. Long for his efforts. The PowerPoint will be posted on the website.
 - Internal Awards Program:
 - Dr. Roman asked about the memo that was sent out for FY2015 internal awards program. He is chair of the GEAR subcommittee and noticed that there was a reduction in funding for this year and wondered why. Dr. Fletcher stated that it was not a reduction, but rather \$10K was added in the previous year.
 - Contracts:
 - Contracts:
 - Dr. Fletcher brought up a concern by faculty about the new requirement for signatures on contracts. The confusion was whether this was a new DOR policy and some faculty were offended by the language in contracts of "read and understood".
 - Dr. Bose stated that he is aware of one case involving this requirement and that DOR has not created a new policy. Grants and contracts fall under several categories:
 - The NIH, DOE, and some other agencies have standard clause language.
 - Cooperation agreements –federal regulations state that institutions should have internal controls. These agreements are variable and not the same. DOR have been sending these to PIs and asking them to please acknowledge the milestones. There are also times when the milestones are tied to the payment.

- Umbrella agreements – this allows DOR to expedite the contract and the PI only sees the part of the contract that applies to them and not the umbrella agreement. DOR is asking the PI to please review and acknowledge the deliverables that they are responsible for completing.
- The final answer is that DOR has not changed the policy
- Dr. Lee stated that the issue appears to be the language on the current forms and he asked if the RSC would consider going over the language.
- Dr. Bose stated that legal counsel review would be needed for any changes.
- Beverly stated that the language in the contracts is “read and understood” only. If there are milestones inserted, the PI is asked to sign “read and understood”.
- Dr. Lee stated that the wording is unacceptable to some faculty.
- Several RSC members expressed their appreciation for DOR’s support, as well as surprise about any complaint. They felt that PI review and acknowledgement of the deliverables in a contract is critical.
- Dr. Fletcher would like to recommend a couple of RSC members meet with Beverly, Ben, and legal counsel on this issue.
- Dr. Bose stated that is okay as long as they protect the university.
- Dr. Fletcher proposed that Beverly also talk with a small group of faculty to diffuse these concerns.
- Dr. Bose asked for Beverly to work with Dona and others.
- Dr. Fletcher asked for volunteers and will also ask Dr. Harold to join. Dr. Lee and Dr. Bond also volunteered to meet with Beverly and the others to discuss and report to the RSC at the next meeting.
- Dr. Bose distributed the center recommendations from the RSC back to the DOR Centers and Institutes.

Subcommittee Reports

New Faculty/Small Grants: Dr. Obasi told the committee some modifications were made to the New Faculty/SGP guidelines and the opportunities were announced. After the announcement, one modification was made.

Excellence: Dr. Fletcher informed the committee that Dr. Chin will not be able to serve as Chair of the Excellence subcommittee and may not be able to serve the RSC. Since then, it has been determined that Dr. Chin will continue to serve on the RSC, but won’t chair the committee.

Dr. Fletcher would like to appoint a replacement for the Chair position and told Dr. Zouridakis to convene a meeting and have the subcommittee elect a new chair. They can proceed with review of the guidelines.

GEAR: Dr. Roman reported that his subcommittee will be reviewing the guidelines.

Centers & Institutes: Dr. Zouridakis informed the committee that Dr. Bose distributed annual review memos to the centers, and that the UH Coastal Center is no longer a university center.

Core Facilities: Dr. Burns reported minor changes made to the Core Facilities guidelines. A sentence was added under “eligibility” and the deadline date (April 1) was deleted. Dr. Zouridakis suggested adding “participate” to the sentence added under eligibility.

The committee agreed to the changes. Dr. Burns will work with Dr. Ottinger on a timeline for Core Facilities.

Animal Users: Dr. Bond reported that the subcommittee has met twice and the issues boil down to communication. He gave an update on the concerns brought up in the Animal Users committee. One issue was cage washing, which IACUC is looking into. Another item brought up was bringing a BSL2 facility here. Dr. Bose stated that the cost estimate would be around \$800,000-\$1.2M. He can ask Dr. Brammer to give an update. Another item was in regard to making forms more user friendly version. Dr. Bose stated that his office will look into the issues regarding the forms and Maribel can look at the forms to see what can be done in the interim.

Dr. Bond ended his report by saying the subcommittee will meet on the first Friday of every month. Dr. Fletcher thanked Dr. Bond and told him everything sounds efficient and well organized.

Conflict of Interest: Dr. Burns said the committee met via email over the summer to clarify some language in 2015 documents on the website. They are now posted and the committee meets once a month.

New Business

Travel: Ms. Cris Milligan distributed copies of the current Travel Request Form Checklist. She told the committee that there’s now a clear set of guidelines and that things have gone smoother since implementation. Now travel requests are moving to Concur, a system being piloted by several centers. Faculty can assign delegates to handle travel on their behalf and T-card receipts will be in the system.

Dr. Long asked why the Provost has to approve their travel, especially if it was signed off on by the department and dean. He feels their approval should be sufficient. Dr. Fletcher stated that it’s to ensure faculty are not missing classes, and if travelling internationally, that you have a plan to cover your classes.

Dr. Long also raised the following question: If travel is being covered by a different agency, why obtain letters? Especially if the trip is being paid for by an external source? Other members asked why additional letters were required when faculty sign COI documents and report outside income annually.

Members also asked why they were restricted to state per diem rates as opposed to Federal standards which vary with the site. Several members complained of significant out of pocket expenses traveling to places like Washington DC.

Dr. Fletcher said he’ll bring the issues to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

Date of December 17: Dr. Fletcher informed the committee that there was a scheduling conflict (Graduation) with the December 17th meeting. He asked members to check their schedules to see if they have a conflict. If so, the meeting will need to be rescheduled.

Old Business

Dr. Fletcher told the committee he will have a report on IP at the next meeting.

Correction

Before the RSC meeting was adjourned, Dr. Bose stated he had a correction: The total research expenditures discussed and shown earlier on the IDC chart are sponsored research expenditures.

Dr. Bond made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

The next meeting will be held Friday, November 21st at 1:30 PM at the same location (Faculty Senate Conference).