

**Present:** Jack Fletcher, George Zouridakis, Richard Bond, Alan Burns, Alessandro Carrera, Wynne Chin, Randy Lee, Stuart Long, Jay Neal, Ezemenari Obasi, Robert Palmer, Shin-Shem Steven Pei, Christie Peters, Gregg Roman, Gangbing Song, Michael Zvolensky, Maria Bondesson, Rathindra Bose, Mary Ann Ottinger, Mark Clarke, Cris Milligan, Brooke Gowl, Ashley Merwin, Rozlyn Reep

**Absent:** Stuart Dryer, Allan Jacobson, Pradeep Sharma, Maria Solino, Gregory Marinic, Clayton Neighbors, Luis Torres

**Welcome by the Chair:** Chair Dr. Fletcher welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

**Approval of October Minutes:** Dr. Fletcher asked members if they had any edits for the October meeting minutes then asked for a motion to approve. Dr. Roman made the motion and Dr. Lee seconded. The minutes were approved.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

**New Faculty/Small Grants:** Dr. Obasi told the committee that today was the deadline for New Faculty & Small Grant submissions. His subcommittee will begin reviewing the submissions early next week.

**Excellence:** Dr. Fletcher reported that Dr. Neighbors volunteered to Chair the Excellence subcommittee. A draft of the guidelines was provided for review. Dr. Fletcher said the date would need to be changed to reflect the current year and mentioned changes throughout the document:

- A sentence was added to the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph: “At the time of nomination, individuals must have at least two (2) years’ service at the University of Houston.”
- A sentence was added to the 6<sup>th</sup> paragraph: “Current members of the Research and Scholarship Committee are not eligible to be nominated. Members of the review subcommittee may not review or vote on nominees from their own department and shall excuse themselves from any meeting when such nominees are discussed.
- The following paragraphs were added in order to clarify the guidelines and to be inclusive for colleges/disciplines:
  - Evaluations will be based on persuasiveness of arguments for merit and evidence of the nominee’s accomplishments as described in 1) the letter of nomination; 2) relative comparisons with others in the field, as well as significance and scope of contribution(s) as described in letters from outside the University and in the nominee’s field; and 3) assessment of accomplishments from CV.
  - Each candidate will be rated on criteria relevant to their discipline. Examples (not exhaustive): 1) STEM disciplines: may include publications, grants, national awards, patents, invited presentations at major national meetings and at other universities, and other research funds from donations, contracts, or agencies with more limited competition or peer reviews. 2) Social sciences: may include articles, monographs, grants, key role in significant projects, fellowships, citations, invited lectures and keynote speeches. 3) Humanities: may include monographs, articles, translations and/or critical editions, fellowships, critics’ reviews, invited lectures and keynote speeches. 4) Creative disciplines (e.g., music, dance, art, architecture, and creative writing): may include concerts, recordings, exhibitions, commissioned works,

residencies, fellowships, critics' reviews, prizes, books, collections, presence in important anthologies, translations of their work, national and/or international recognition. Nomination letters should attend to these guidelines and explain how the nominee's accomplishments match the standards of excellence for awards in any of these areas.

Dr. Randy Lee stated that "arms-length" criteria, which was included in last year's guidelines, were not in the document. Dr. Fletcher agreed that "arms-length" should remain in the document and that it would be added.

It was suggested that on the nomination form, "no later than 5:00 pm CT" be added to the due date for nominations.

The RSC recommended that nominations of existing RSC members be permitted, but not those members serving on the Excellence Awards subcommittee.

There was a discussion about professors receiving multiple awards. The committee voted 15 for and 2 against, for being eligible once as a Full Professor.

Dr. Fletcher told the committee he will circulate the guidelines (with track marks) to the subcommittee and to the previous chair, Dr. Lee, and for members to feel free to edit.

Status Report by VC/VP Bose: Dr. Bose addressed the following items:

- Recent Achievements and Recognitions:
  - Two UH faculty members were recently elected as a Fellow of the AAAS, Dr. Dan Graur from Biology and Dr. Mary Ann Ottinger. Dr. Bose congratulated Dr. Ottinger on her election as Fellow.
  - Dr. Bose congratulated Dr. Clarke for his work with the University's nomination for the APLU IEP award. At the last RSC meeting, Dr. Bose mentioned that UH was a finalist for the IEP Award. Since then, UH has won the overall award. Georgia Tech, Purdue, and University of Massachusetts were other institutions that had received other sectional awards. This award is a special point of pride for UH.
  - Dr. Bose also congratulated TcSUH, as they received the IEEE Milestone this week. IEEE came here and put in a milestone plaque based on the superconductivity discovery.
  - Dr. Bose is proud of all of these accomplishments.
- Per Diem Costs:
  - Last time there was a discussion on decreasing the per diem cost for animal care. Dr. Bose met with all of the deans, and the proposal is to reduce the per diem cost by 25% to be competitive with TMC. All of the deans agreed to help DOR in reducing the cost. The verbal agreement was that DOR will provide 50% of the deficit, and the colleges will come up with the other 50%.
  - Dr. Bose has asked Dr. Brammer to provide him with the accounting from last year, based on department by department and college by college. He will then send this information to the colleges.

- Grant Management:
  - The Associate and Assistant VPs and the Executive Director will meet with the department chairs to understand the nature of the issues in grant management. The team will visit the departments and receive information on existing issues. They will then create a list of these issues and try to solve as many as they can.
- HBSB 2:
  - The HBSB 2 Building is still in the planning process. DOR is planning to fund 3 of the floors, one at a time. The faculty that will be moving in the building will not be college specific, but will be those with animal research.
  - There will also be a drug development center placed there by the deans.
- Survey:
  - There will be a survey sent out by the RSC to look at DOR functions and everyone's satisfaction. Dr. Bose needs a group of individuals to work on this survey and asked Dr. Fletcher to help formulate a group. Dr. Bose will develop a chart of his responsibilities and provide it to the group.
  - Dr. Fletcher stated that Ben and Beverly are doing a great job visiting departments, and they have been very responsive.
  - Dr. Bose stated that when DOR is meeting with departments, Cris should also join for the discussions on start-up costs. He recently sent out an email to new faculty to request a list of any issues. One of the issues that came up was about their start date not beginning in the summer like other institutions. Another issue that was raised was the pay period starting after classes have started. DOR has no control of these issues.
  - Dr. Lee stated that the only issue with NSM faculty was a lab renovation for one of the faculty members, and none of the other faculty had any issues. Dr. Bose agreed that the faculty member in question was struggling, but that he had agreed to increase DOR's contribution to \$150,000 to address the problem.
- Questions?
  - Dr. Obasi asked about the recent bonuses approved for staff making under \$50,000. Many of these staff are funded on research grants. Is this additional cost expected to come out of these grants?
  - Dr. Bose stated that they always encourage faculty to build a 3% increase into the budget each year. Since there wasn't an increase last year, there should be enough to cover the increase this year.
  - Dr. Obasi stated that the NIH doesn't allow investigator's to build in a salary increase anymore, so this is an issue.
  - Dr. Bose will look into this and how much money it would be university wide.

#### Subcommittee Reports Cont'd:

**GEAR:** Dr. Roman stated that the guidelines have been updated. The only change was to the Pre-proposal Narrative under the Internal and External Funding narrative. It hampered those who had reports from past projects, so the subcommittee gave the Internal and External Funding its own section.

The updates were approved unanimously.

**Centers & Institutes:** Dr. Zouridakis reported that they need to redefine cluster definitions. The subcommittee will review clusters and make recommendations to the committee. He asked for a list of centers that will need to be reviewed by the subcommittee. Dr. Ottinger mentioned that there was a full review of all University Wide DOR Centers last year, and we will now initiate the review cycle as directed by our policy.

**Resources & Core Facilities:** Dr. Burns informed the committee that the guidelines were slightly revised. He met with Dr. Ottinger, and they suggest the following:

- January 15 – Submissions are due
- January 20 – Committee meets briefly for charge and distribution of proposals
- February 15 – Initial screen by committee; select peer reviewers
  - Peer reviewers return reviews by April 1
- April 10 – Committee meets to review April 10
- RSC report at April meeting with a vote for the proposal(s) to be supported
- Immediately notify the PIs submitting the core proposals.

Dr. Fletcher stated that Dr. Bose would like to have the subcommittee consider the role of Core Facilities and draft a policy statement that describes expectations of a Core Facility – mainly university-wide Core Facilities. There are currently no expectations for Core Facilities and sustainability. Dr. Bose told the committee that DOR has a finite budget, and would like to know what kind of support is expected of DOR and what support colleges can provide.

Dr. Burns said that he has an article that was a nationwide survey of Core Facilities and how they're sustained, and that the subcommittee may find this information useful. Dr. Lee mentioned that he would like for Dr. Burns to share the article with the committee. Dr. Burns said that he would send the article to Rozlyn for distribution.

**ACO User Advisory Committee:** Dr. Bond reported that issues such as communication and user-friendly forms are being addressed. The group will not meet again until next year.

Dr. Bose stated that after the last meeting, he met with Dr. Brammer, who is truly excited to work with the Advisory Committee. There were a couple of issues he wanted to bring up:

1. The password for access to the website should be removed. If free access is given, anyone could visit the website. That could be an issue.
2. Listing all of the employees and telephone numbers. There have been issues in the past with faculty being followed by members of certain organizations. It can be difficult to recruit some faculty if the information is available; as such, Dr. Bose does not want individual contact information listed.

Dr. Bond agreed and stated that they are sensitive to the first issue. He will discuss the second issue about publishing phone numbers with the ACO User Advisory Group.

**Conflict of Interest:** Dr. Burns stated it was “business as usual”.

### New Business:

**Data Management:** Dr. Ottinger reported that she is working with Mary Dickerson as well as Kirstin Rochford and will have a draft for the committee's review in the new year.

**Functions of ORD:** Dr. Ottinger provided initial information on the functions of the Office of Research Development that she directs. She has a new member joining her team, Dr. Courtney Donica, starting on December 1<sup>st</sup> as a Research Liaison. Dr. Ottinger's office will be working closely with Dr. Ben Mull in Pre-Award in a "hand-off" manor. She views her office as "Pre Pre-Award", to help formulate large multidisciplinary teams; she in cooperation with other units will be developing some policies for timing of submission to allow PI's more time to fully develop their proposals. Her office will be relying heavily on colleges, Associate Deans and their Research Administrators

**Language for Non-federal Grants.** Drs. Lee, Harold, and Bond are working on it.

### Old Business:

**Travel:** Dr. Fletcher took travel questions that were raised at the last RSC meeting to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. He went through each question and answer which was included on the meeting agenda handout:

1. **Q:** Why does the Provost have to approve travel, especially if it was signed off on by the department and dean? Their approval should be sufficient. **A:** The Provost only approves international travel per BOR requirements, and this approval will be expedited with the new travel system.
2. **Q:** If travel is being covered by a different agency, why obtain letters, especially if the trip is being paid for by an external source? Why should additional letters be required when faculty sign COI documents and report outside income annually? **A:** Non-university travel does not have to be approved beyond department/college.
  - o Clarification: External source – it's not paid for by a grant.
3. **Q:** Why are travelers 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. **A:** Dr. Carlucci will provide guidance on this issue.

As a follow up to point #3, Dr. Fletcher told the committee he will distribute an email from Mike Glisson explaining UH travel policy in regards to state and local funds. He would like for the committee to help formulate a response to Mr. Glisson's email. It was then mentioned that Mr. Glisson oversees a college/department meeting every month, and that someone could attend the meeting and discuss the travel issue.

### New Business Item:

Dr. Lee brought up an item for new business: the NSF-MRI. He said there will be three NSF-MRI proposals due in January and would like to propose that a small group of RSC members meet with Dr. Bose to come up with a plan on how to accomplish the required 30% budget match. He said the deans may not always be willing to commit funds when they had to raise money.

Dr. Bose stated that this has been discussed multiple times at previous RSC meetings. DOR will work with the deans and department chairs to find the 30% required match for each of the selected proposals. There is no need for additional meetings on this item.

Dr. Fletcher said that if IDC is being returned to college, they should use some of those funds for the match.

Dr. Lee said that in the past, DOR has always provided 100% of the cash match for MRI proposals. Dr. Bose said that was incorrect, and he could provide information from years past.

Dr. Roman said that he has been through an MRI proposal and has talked with the program office. One critical feature they look at is institutional support, particularly in the form of real dollars. Dr. Ottinger said that memos sent in support of the MRI proposals last year showed full commitment by the institution for the 30% cost share and did not itemize the sources of the cost share. For the current cycle, her office is already working with PIs selected to submit the three MRI proposals.

Old Business Cont'd:

**Indirect Cost Policy:** The final meeting of the IDC committee will be later that day.

**Date of December 19 Meeting:** Although the RSC meeting will take place on the same day as commencement, only one member reported unavailability. There will be no change to the RSC meeting scheduled on December 19 at 1:30 PM.

Dr. Fletcher asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Roman made the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 3:02 PM.

**The next RSC meeting will be Friday, December 19 at 1:30 PM in the Faculty Senate Conference Room (MD Anderson Library).**