

University Research Council Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2009

I. Call to order

Dr. Jeff Brown called the meeting to order at 9:35 on November 20, 2009.

Roll call

The following persons were present:

Jeff Brown, Tom Vaughan, John Maxstadt, Louise Autio, Ken Tobin, David Beck, Trace Pirtle, Juan Hinojosa, Tagi Sagafi-nejad, Christopher Ferguson, Nereu Kock and Jerry Thompson

In *absentia* was: Rohitha Goonatilake

MOTION: Minutes unanimously approved from last URC meeting

II. Review University Funding Applications

MOTION: Last year's form used for reviewing URG unanimously approved for use in this year's review of the URG and URDA applications.

URDA Subcommittee to consist of three members, must have one science and one education faculty member on the committee - Drs. Vaughan, Pirtle and Thompson will be this year's URDA subcommittee

Summer business grant – business faculty can apply for both URG/URDA and the summer business grant but cannot receive both grants, would have to accept one and decline the other

Selecting teams for URG and CP review – will be teams of 2 members per grant, with the URDA subcommittee members being exempt from reviewing additional URG applications

Travel Grant: Funds come out of a different account than the URG/URDA. Those applications will be reviewed by the entire committee. Question raised about whether Co-PI can apply for travel grant if they have a funded URG. Can apply if the travel grant is a different fiscal year than the URG.

Creative Project Grant: treat like a URG application, reviewed by teams of 2 members per grant

Issues with review process:

Should the deans be eliminated from the review process? In previous years sending applications to Colleges for them to rank has not been very helpful, due to slow responses & all they said was “fund them all”. Issue is that the committee doesn't have the same level of expertise in the subject area, so excluding Colleges takes some of the peer review element out of the review process. Several members of the URC are not in favor of eliminating the Colleges from the review process.

Suggestion made for next year's applications, to give Colleges two weeks to rank applications – informing them that they must rank the applications, or URC will. Being sure to let them know that the application process will be much more competitive and a smaller percentage of applications will be funded, so it is to their advantage to rank the applications.

Mechanisms/models for how grant review works at other schools:

A centralized system or the departments/deans have much more control

Other institutions use the funds generated by indirect cost fees by research faculty to subsidize other faculty in the more difficult to fund areas

III. Two issues to continue discussion on after this year's internal grant competition:

1. Export control – need to come up with a TAMIU policy for export control. Dr. Brown gave handout of the TAMU System Policy for members to review
2. Moving application deadline for the FY11-12 TAMIU internal grants.

Difficult when trying to work with collaborators to submit applications in November but not being able to get funds until next September, would like to begin research project sooner

Issue with moving application due date is the course releases. It would be possible to move the deadline for applications to the late spring, if course releases were not a part of the grant process.

Two solutions were proposed:

- a. to move the application due date to January and have an intensive concentrated review process for FY 11-12 applications, but would be difficult to get an expedited response from the colleges.
- b. Other proposed solution would be to make it so that course releases could only be used during the spring semester. Many on the committee do not want to interfere with faculty course releases at all, feeling they are necessary to enable faculty to have sufficient time to conduct the research

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at ~10:30 A.M.

Minutes submitted by: Dr. Jeff Brown & Celeste Kidd

Minutes are pending approval by University Research Council