University Research Council Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2009

I. Call to order

Dr. Jeff Brown called the meeting to order of the University Research Council at 9:35 on October 9, 2009 in KL 330.

Roll call

The following persons were present:
Jeff Brown, Tom Vaughan Rohitha Goonatilake, John Maxstadt, Louise Autio, Ken Tobin, David Beck, Trace Pirtle, Jerry Thompson, Juan Hinojosa, Tagi Sagafi-nejad, Christopher Ferguson

In *absentia* was: Nereu Kock

II. Review University Funding Applications - *Distribute handouts*

a. University Research Development Award Application
b. University Travel Grant – Application
c. University Research Grant – Application
d. University Creative Project Grant - Application

III. Modify Applications – ALL

1. Addition to all the applications in details about submitting final reports:
   "if applicant does not submit final report to Office of Graduate Studies & Research, they will not be eligible to apply for ANY university funding for the following two years"
   For the travel grant, this addition will be effective for this year's applications 2009-2010 (this year's money), all other applications this addition would be for next year's money.

MOTION: Request made for a reminder to be sent to submit the final report by October 1st of the following academic year.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to put the year on the application, example "university travel grant 2009-2010". The motion was passed unanimously.

MOTION: Add "subject to availability of funds" to all applications when detailing the award amounts.

MOTION: Change on all applications "must be submitted by electronic copy to celeste.kidd@tamiu.edu or grants@tamiu.edu" to "must be submitted by electronic copy to grants@tamiu.edu", so there is only one place to send everything.

MOTION: Vote on clause the Provost added (after applications had been printed and distributed to URC) "that applicants can not receive both summer salary and school of business grant, must be one or the other". The motion was passed unanimously. Add to all applications except travel.

MOTION: Vote on clause the Provost added (after applications had been printed and distributed to URC) "that faculty can not request both summer salary and release time, must be one or the other". The motion was passed unanimously. Add to all applications except travel.

IV. Modify Application - Travel Grant

MOTION: Add name of conference (if travel for attending a conference) and a one paragraph description (abstract) of the purpose of the travel. Add lines to the form or make a box for enclosing space, to restrict abstract to one paragraph only. The motion was passed unanimously.

V. Research Grant (URG)

1. Discussion regarding external collaborators – Problem Dr. Brown sees with many reviews from submitted grants is the reviewers state the applicant has a lack of experience, few/little publications in that area and they have questions about whether they are capable of doing the work. Adding an external consultant/collaborator would be a way to address this issue. It is optional, a way to try and enhance research opportunities

Issues raised:

Page 5, item 8: faculty clause subject to interpretation, there are non-academics who are at the top of their fields that are not faculty

Should preference be given to proposals with external collaborators. If all else equal between proposals, fund the one with an external collaborator that will be more likely to receive external funding. However, having an external collaborator would not be a deciding factor on who gets funded UNLESS proposals are evaluated as relatively equal using the other review criteria.

Discussion on ordering computers with university funding, must do during normal refresh period. Notifications for grant awards occurs in the spring, so there is sufficient time to submit in the September refresh cycle.

MOTION: Change external collaborator to "scholar/researcher" to enable non-academics to be used as consultants.

MOTION: Page 8, add to end of 1st paragraph – "Preference given to individuals collecting data for external funding opportunities."

MOTION: Add details under Review Criteria section about external collaborator. Motion passed unanimously. Add on pg 8, item f – this suggested text:

"An external collaborator strengthens proposals by contributing their expertise by reviewing & commenting on the proposal and further collaborations enhance the chances of external funding. This is an advantage to university and the URG applicant, and if faced with a choice between two equivalent URG applications, preference will be given to applications that involve an external collaborator. This does NOT mean that a lower quality proposal will be funded over a better quality proposal on the basis of whether or not an external collaborator is involved."

MOTION: Page 9, item 2 - Add "URG recipient must be a PI on an external grant, NOT a co-PI. If co-PI, must be lead PI, so grant is to further YOUR research. Contact Dr. Brown to discuss the matter if you are a co-PI on a grant, but not lead co-PI, if you feel your contribution is sufficient to satisfy the grant application requirement of the URG. He will decide this on a case-by-case basis.

MOTION: Page 9, item 2 - Change "must include funding for future Graduate Assistant(s)" to "are strongly encouraged to include funding for future students". Problem is that not every major on campus has a graduate degree.

MOTION: Pg 5, item 8 - It was moved and seconded to change the external collaborator incentive from "with the expectation that a minimum of $1500 will go to the outside collaborator" to "with the expectation that up to $3000 will go to the collaborator for his assistance." The motion was passed unanimously.

VI. Creative projects grant:

MOTION: Pg 2, item 8 - It was moved and seconded to going to seminars/conferences etc. should be a significant part of the review process, as it is a means of determining effort in trying to find funding opportunities. The motion was passed unanimously. Add this sentence to item 8:

"Attendance at these kinds of workshops is evidence of your efforts to secure external funding and will be used in the review process when making the decision of which applicants will receive funding."

URDA:

> Discussion: No restriction on the number of awards. Once the working budget is determined, URC needs to decide on the number of URG, URDA, UCPG and Travel grants that will be awarded prior to beginning the review process.
>
> Regarding the amount of the URG and URDA grants, why would any faculty want to apply for URDA with 15,000 amount, when 2 URGs would be 20,000 for less work. Raising the amount of the URDA award seems necessary.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to raise award amount to $25,000, subject to availability of funding. The motion was passed unanimously.

ERROR: Pg 7 – says "Maximum of 4 course releases", page 10 item 13, says "unlimited course releases". Change page 10, item 13 to read "maximum of 4 course releases".

MOTION: Pg 2 – Make very clear that the "URDA applicant would get a RA that would be paid by either the LBV or funds directed by Dr. Brown, not paid out of the URDA award. It is still the responsibility of the awardee to find a suitable RA candidate."

Discussion: Pg 6 – 1st bullet point – need to raise the travel award from $2000 to $4000, since it is a 2 year award? Leave as written, if applicant needs additional travel funds, as long as they provide sufficient justification in their proposal, that can be modified as needed.

MOTION: Pg 8 – Regarding the interview part of the application. "Rank will be determined based on other review criteria and only the top proposal applicants will be interviewed before determining who will be awarded the URDA(s)."

VII. Other Business

For next URC meeting – Dr. Brown distributed a hand out on export control changes. Copy sent to Dr. Kock.

Discussion of review criteria for applications

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Minutes submitted by: Dr. Jeff Brown & Celeste Kidd

Minutes are pending approval by University Research Council