Research Council
May 8, 2018
Minutes

Voting members present: Chris Akroyd, Shan de Silva, Colin Johnson, Siva Kolluri, Andriy Morgun, Hong Moulton, Carlos Ochoa, Michelle Odden, Ron Reuter (via phone), Rob Stone
Voting members absent: Gloria Crisp, Loren Davis, Glenn Howe, Katie Linder
Guests present: Susan Emerson, Martin Storksdieck

Discussion of Survey Results

The previous Research Council conducted a survey to understand the needs of the research faculty.
- Dr. Martin Storksdieck, Director, Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning, led the Council through the analysis of survey data.
  - The goal is to prioritize and follow up with the feedback to make the OSU research enterprise vibrant.
- Given that the survey had an 11% response rate for tenure/tenure-track faculty, there is no idea of bias in the data – "take with a ginormous amount of salt".
- The OSU college affiliation table combined CAS (75%) and COF (25%); 'Other' includes the following colleges: Education; 'Health' – Public Health and Human Sciences, Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy.
- Grant proposals submitted ranged from 0-50; median=6 and mean=8.3. Likely completed by those with experience.
- The group discussed survey questions.
  - Q: Considering your grant/contract proposals in the past three years, check the category that best matches the median amount requested (total of direct + indirect costs).
    - Asking about the amount of money is not a good question – don't over-interpret these results.
  - Q: Would you have submitted more grant proposals if there were more resources or administrative support available?
    - Given the sample size, there is a no response; tenure made no difference (they all suffer from the same problems). Storksdieck noted it was surprising that the response was not 100%. Some indicated they would not have submitted more, but they would have submitted better proposals.
  - Q: How important are each of the proposal development activities listed below?
    - Scale – important to not important, basically 1-5; you get the median; didn't provide the mean since it is misleading. Storksdieck suggested looking at the 5's since below 4 is not as important.
  - Q: Providing database of potential collaborators.
    - Respondents felt this question was not important since they have their own networks.
  - Q: How important are each of the proposal submission activities listed below?
    - People would really like to have help with this.
  - Q: How important are each of the post-award activities listed below?
    - Responses were all 5's; respondents really want all of this, and they want it to work.
  - Q: How important are each of the post-award tracking activities listed below?
    - Responses were all 4's.
  - Q: Would you have submitted more grant proposals if there were more resources or administrative support available?
    - The College of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences appeared to be strong with No responses at N=11 and 61%.
- Results indicate that respondents want support with budget and distribution, and post-award administration. The whole survey is not representative at a response rate of 11% (89% have not responded). Due to recent improvements, faculty may be happy with what they have and don't know how bad it could be.
- There were some components that Storksdieck would have made closed ended (i.e., rank); overall questions are fine, in the sense of what does this mean. The problem is how to increase the response rate. If done again, it could be done more selectively (i.e., work through the deans).
- Kolluri felt that doing an immediate survey may not be helpful. Unless a specific pulse on a topic is desired, it may not be worthwhile.
- Ochoa felt some questions are pertinent to college level, while others are pertain to the unit level.

- Storksdieck thought that, to increase the response rate, it's necessary to work thru the deans and/or research office; need to promise something to entice a response. Obtaining a valid response would take a major effort and a lot of time.
- Ochoa noted that Cayuse issues have been addressed, but not necessarily fixed.
- Kolluri questioned, if there are repeated collaborators external to OSU and all of the titles, names, etc., must be entered each time – why can't the system store data. One indicated that there is a laborious way to store information in the system.
- One agreed with survey fatigue comments; are there other data points to triangulate? Suggested collecting thoughts from faculty. Rich Holdren and Roy Haggerty had listening sessions – were comments recorded? Ask Lean team (?) for results that could bolster the survey results.
- Emerson stated that Simonich and Pat Hawk are visiting colleges and gathering information. She felt that the budget issue has improved, but likely post-award issues will not be addressed.
- Kolluri indicated that changes to grants must be communicated well in advance of the grant end date.
- Ochoa questioned what to do with the information collected.
- Storksdieck will share the distribution information. A potential risk associated with sharing information is that individuals may not take into account the low response rate – non-representative survey.
  - The Research Council will review the additional materials from Storksdieck before it is distributed more broadly.
- Kolluri asked where the recommendations should go. Should recommendations related to equipment be specific? There should be an attempt to collaborate with the Provost's Office.
- Ochoa questioned the effectiveness of dollars related to return. Kolluri indicated that it cannot be converted to pure numbers. He was told by the Research Office that, due to small numbers, it's too complicated to determine; unable to compile data due to low staffing. How effective have grants been for recipients? Akroyd suggested contacting recipients, indicate that the Research Council is conducting an audit to get information. When reaching out to recipients, Ochoa suggested asking them if the equipment can be attributed to additional grants, and what role did it play in assisting the recipients?

Summary and Feedback of Scored RERF Applications
    Provide summary of scored RERF applications for the past two weeks.
- Do not share distributed RERF information. Each proposal has been scored by a minimum of eight Council members – average, not median.
- Unclear whether the Research Office will fully fund recommended amounts.
- A proposer was asked whether a strong proposal could receive funding from alternate source; this is being determined. If it can be sourced from other than RERF, then other proposals could be funded.
- Emerson stated that Simonich wants a recommendation for one particular proposal.
- De Silva commented that he would have liked to have seen standard deviation related to divisions between groups.
- If the Research Office doesn't follow the recommendations of the Research Council, will they inform the Council why they didn't follow the recommendations? Kolluri indicated that the Research Office can be asked to inform the Council.
- Ochoa recalled, at the beginning of the year, there was some consensus for the Council to have a more proactive role. Should ensure that the Research Office follows their guidelines and hold them accountable if the guidelines change.

Potential Revisions to the Research Equipment Reserve Fund (RERF)
- Current Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria is online at: https://research.oregonstate.edu/incentive-programs/research-equipment-reserve-fund
- Discuss potential revisions to incorporate into the next year's RERF applications and provide recommendations to the Research Office.
- What should change?
  - Does the Research Council want to change their role from advisory to an executive authority role, i.e., ensure that recommendations will be followed? This would be a Standing Rules change approved by the Faculty Senate.
  - If there is a 10-15% deviation on the part of the Research Office, it's acceptable; however, if the deviation is dramatic, there should be rationale from the Research Office.
  - Advocated to not change the number of proposals allotted to a college.
  - Role should be to fund multi-college proposals – revise instructions that proposals shall be multi-college.

- A longer RERF selection meeting when everyone is present, i.e., a Saturday AM meeting? This may have resulted in more consistent scoring.
- The Research Office ex-officio should not be present.

Topics of Focus for Academic Year 2018-2019
- Have the Research Office Ex-officio, or other relevant administrators, attend every Council meeting for better communication of issues needing counsel from the Research Council. Keep the Research Council in the loop prior to making major decisions.
- Emerson struggles to find reviewers for other highly competitive awards – is this something in which the Research Council would be willing to participate?

Minutes prepared by Vickie Nunnemaker, Faculty Senate staff