

Research Council

Annual Report 2013-2014

Membership

Ricardo Letelier, Co-chair '13	Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences
Hillary Egna, Co-chair '14	Aquaculture Collaborative Research Support Program
Ping Hsieh '13	Business
Laurel Kristick '13	OSU Libraries
Taifo Mahmud (v. Leid) '13	Pharmacy
Mahfuz Sarker '13	Veterinary Medicine
Viktor Bovbjerg '14	Biological & Population Health Sciences
Andrew Klein '14	Nuclear Engineering & Radiation Health Physics
Mei-Ching Lien '14	Psychology
Darlene Russ-Eft '14	Education
Kreg Lindberg '15	OSU Cascades
Gary Merrill '15	Biochemistry & Biophysics
John Simonsen '15	Wood Sciences & Engineering
Vacant	
Vacant	
Ex-Officio: Research Office (Rick Spinrad or Rich Holdren)	
<i>Executive Committee Liaison – Bob Mason</i>	
<i>Liaison to Research Office – Debbie Delmore</i>	

The Research Council is a standing committee of the OSU Faculty Senate. One of its main functions during this academic year remained the evaluation of proposals submitted by the OSU faculty to the Research Equipment Reserve Fund (RERF) and General Research Fund (GRF). In addition, the Research Council provided recommendations on pre-proposals and letters of intent for limited submission funding opportunities. Finally, the Research Council was tasked with reviewing and making recommendations to the vice President for Research on proposals for Centers, and Institutes.

In addition to these mandates, the Research Council plays an active role in identifying and communicating to the University's administration concerns from the academic community regarding the state of the university's research infrastructure and administrative support. This past academic year we provided input to the vice-President for research regarding guiding principles for research infrastructure recapitalization. Also, we invited various chairs and administrators from compliance committees to give a brief presentation and discuss the mandates, procedures and challenges they face. The objective of this effort is to educate the RC members regarding the mandate and functioning of research related compliance committees on campus and to provide the chairs and the VP for research with feedback regarding the contribution of these committees to the university's research endeavor.

A summary of the activities of the Research Council for academic year 2012-13 is given below:

Proposal Review

This past academic year, the Research Council evaluated XX General Research Fund

(GRF) and YY Research Equipment Reserved Fund (RERF) proposals. The GRF program was evaluated in two panels (November 2012 and March 2013). RERF proposals were also reviewed in two panels (January 2013 and April 2013). In addition, the Research Council evaluated proposals for the creation of research centers, both lead by College of Agricultural Sciences PIs, one for the development of a Center for Applied Economics and Policy and the other for the creation of a Center of Small Farms and Community Food Systems. In addition, members of the Research Council provided feedback in the selection of several NSF limited proposal submission opportunities, including the NSF Scalable Nanomanufacturing (SNM), NSF Sustainable Energy Pathways (SEP) and NSF Material Research Science & Engineering Center (MRSEC) programs.

During the year we considered and addressed several issues related our mission and working procedures.

- 1) In order to ensure that the Research Council will meet regularly every month during the academic year, we decided to create a vice-chair position to prepare and lead the meetings when the chair is unavailable. Hillary Egna was elected to this position for the 2012-2013 academic year. We agreed that the vice-chair position should be filled by a member in its second year of committee service since this new position may help achieve a smooth transition from year to year if the Faculty Senate elects the vice-chair as committee chair the following year.
- 2) We evaluated the extent to which this council should be involved in the creation of college-based centers and suggested that we should review proposals for centers and institutes that request OSU Administrative financial support, unless requested by the colleges.
- 3) Following feedback from the Faculty Senate President, the research council worked on revisions to proposed modifications to the council Standing Rules. These modifications were aimed updating the Standing Rules to describe the present tasks and responsibilities of the Research Council. It also expands the membership to include representatives of OSU research facilities not located in Benton County, such as the Hatfield Marine Science Center and the Cascade Campus. Following these modifications, the new standing rules were submitted to the Faculty Senate. Although one of the senate's feedback recommendations was to reduce the number of council members due to the difficulty in filling vacancies, we decided to maintain the proposed number (15) to ensure the availability of members to cover the evaluation of GRF and RERF proposals.
- 4) As in previous years, we discussed extensively the efficiency in our GRF and RERF review and funding selection process. We recognize that the review process requires a significant time commitment from each one of the committee members and suggested that members rotating out the previous year should be included as potential reviewers.
- 5) We provided the Research Office with suggestions regarding guidelines to prioritize research infrastructure recapitalization (see attached text).
- 6) We met with chairs and administrators of University Compliance Committees to

discuss their distinct missions, procedures and challenges. The Compliance Committees covered this year included:

- Institutional Biosafety
- Chemical Safety
- Radiation Safety
- Diving Safety
- Institutional Animal Care and Use
- Institutional Review Board
- Conflict of Interest

Meeting summaries and Research Council recommendations are being prepared to share with the chairs of the respective committees, the Research Office and the Faculty Senate.

Finally, I would like to express our gratitude to Rich Holdren and Debbie Delmore for their invaluable intellectual and logistic support to the Research Council activities.

Report submitted by: Ricardo M Letelier & Hillary Egna

Research Council proposed update on standing rules

Updated Standing Rules submitted to the Faculty Senate

The Research Council establishes policies for matters pertaining to sponsored research activities. It recommends priorities for distribution of various internal funding programs and for external solicitations that require limited submissions from the institution. The Research Council also reviews proposals for Centers and Institutes (CI), and is advisory to the Vice President for Research on matters related to Institutional Research. The Council consists of fifteen Faculty members, preferably at least one from each academic college and at least two members representing OSU research units and facilities located outside Benton County, such as Hatfield Marine Science Center, OSU-Cascades, and Agricultural Experiment Stations. The Administrator of the Research Office, or designee, shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Council. The Chair shall be a Faculty member with immediate prior experience on the Council, appointed annually by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The membership of the Research Council will adhere to the comprehensive conflict of interest policy of the Research Council.

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EARTH, OCEAN & ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

MEMORANDUM

To: Rick Spinrad, Vice President for Research
Cc: Rich Holdren, Associate Vice President for Research
From: Ricardo Letelier, Faculty Senate Research Council Chair
Date: 17 January 2013
Re: Recapitalization of OSU's Research Infrastructure

Dear Dr. Spinrad,

The research mission of Oregon State University (OSU) as well as its capability to attract and retain outstanding investigators and to provide high quality educational experience requires the availability of a safe and reliable environment in which research activities can be conducted. In this context, the Faculty Senate Research Council is concerned that a large number of deferred maintenance issues regarding OSU's infrastructure may compromise the quality of the research it supports and create the potential for hazardous working conditions. Acknowledging that limited resources are available to address this problem, a mechanism to identify priorities for the recapitalization of research infrastructure must be established. For this reason, we propose the following three main guidelines to prioritize research infrastructure recapitalization:

A- PRESENT RESEARCH OBLIGATIONS AND LONGTERM RESEARCH VISION

- 1) **Ensuring the infrastructure needs that are required to fulfill the University's contractual obligations with the state and funding agencies:** Ongoing activities supported through research grants and contracts require the availability of a safe and reliable infrastructure. The aging of many of our buildings, as well as the expansion of research facilities in them puts at risk the safety and reliability of the spaces in which research activities are carried. For this reason, the maintenance and upgrading of the basic research infrastructure must remain a priority. Some of these basic needs include:
 - Campus wide stable and high quality electricity, including electrical backup facilities for critical instrumentation and sample preservation.
 - Stable and high quality heating and cooling systems where needed.
 - Safety and accessibility of research spaces.

- Integrity of research spaces (e.g. roof and window leaks).
- Adequate lighting and hoods.

In addition, our basic infrastructure should be adequate to support the required research facilities upgrades as well as the installation of new equipment in existing laboratories.

2) Addressing needs that enhance the efficiency of the research enterprise, such as:

- Increase the availability of adequate research space. Many research units on campus find themselves limited by the availability of adequate laboratory space.
- Improving our IT infrastructure as needed to facilitate the sharing of data and documents while ensuring security and privacy.
- Enhancing communication capabilities with colleagues around the world.

3) Identifying future needs:

- Investment in infrastructure recapitalization should prioritize support in the three signature areas of distinctions identified in our University's Strategic Plan.
- Long lasting solutions should be used when possible.
- Effects on faculty recruitment and retention should be considered.

B- BREADTH OF IMPACT ON THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Decisions regarding priorities in infrastructure recapitalization should weight which projects will have the broadest positive effect on the research community. Some examples include:

- Recapitalization projects that address vital infrastructure, such as the availability campus wide of a stable power source. These projects should receive high priority.
- Infrastructure supporting research facilities that serve broad campus needs (e.g. analytical facilities)
- Infrastructure providing unique and breakthrough capabilities.

C- COST ANALYSIS:

This analysis should consider the initial funding investment as well as the long term financial benefits and commitments required for the maintenance and upgrades. Criteria used to address cost analysis should include:

- The possibility of alternative funding sources: projects that cannot be funded through alternative mechanisms should have priority.
- The social and educational impact, as well as the lead to potential funding sources, of the research supported by the Infrastructure.
- Project costs and leverage.
- Recurrent costs following initial investment such as long term operating and maintenance costs, including regular upgrade programs.
- The allocation of responsibility between the PI(s), the unit(s), and the university regarding cost maintenance.

Finally, although we recognize that emergencies requiring immediate action in order to maintain the integrity of our research enterprise will occur, we propose that a campus wide advisory body, such as the Associate Deans for Research Advisory Council, should meet regularly to review and advise the Research Office on research infrastructure recapitalization priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Letelier". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Ricardo M Letelier
OSU Faculty Senate Research Council Chair

DRAFT