

## Research Council

### 2019-2020 Annual Report

Report to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
By Siva Kolluri, 2019-2020 Chair

The Research Council has been very active in promoting and strengthening research enterprise on the OSU campus.

#### Summary of efforts during AY 2019-2020

1. The Research Council wrote a letter to the OSU Board of Trustees, met them in person, and strongly advocated for inclusion of search committee members with a research focus. This led to the addition of two research focused faculty to the OSU president search committee.
2. The Research Council brought together OSU senior leadership, including the vice president for research, provost and president, to bring the following issues to their attention:
  - High OPE rates and its implication on research at OSU: OSU's fringe rate (OPE) is one of the highest in the country. OSU's OPE rates range from 45% to 85% depending on the salary range. In comparison, OPE rates at Stanford are in the range of 30%-42%. Because of this, the number of FTEs on OSU grants is 30-40% lower for the same direct costs compared to other institutions.
  - Strategic investment plans in research enterprise to enable effective future Facilities and Administrative (F&A) rate (also known as indirect costs) negotiations in about three years.
  - Facilities and Administrative Costs
    - OSU F&A recovery rate is in the bottom 15% in the country. Strategic investments in research will be needed for the next renegotiation in recovering costs associated with supporting research and maintaining cutting-edge research infrastructure.
    - OSU-wide bridge funding strategy to enable research faculty to remain productive.
    - The competition for extramural funding is extremely high. For example, the funding rates for certain Department of Defense (DOD) grants is in the range of 2%-4% and National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Cancer Institute (NCI) funding rates are around 7%. If research faculty fall out of a funding cycle, it will be even more challenging to compete for grants. We need to have an effective support system at the Research Office/University level in order for the faculty who are in-between funding cycles to remain competitive.
    - Possibly allocate a portion of future tuition dollars to the Research Office to further strengthen undergraduate student research.
    - A follow-up meeting with the senior leadership couldn't be held due to the current COVID-19 emergency.
3. In collaboration with the Research Office leadership, the Research Council established [new criteria](#) to request and review new equipment proposals.
4. The Research Council met seven times between March and June 2020 to carefully review and recommend new equipment proposals to strengthen research infrastructure at OSU. Thanks to the Research Office's leadership, they honored the commitment to fund most of the recommended proposals. The available funding to strengthen research infrastructure at OSU has gone down significantly over the years and is significantly smaller than what is required. This will undoubtedly impact the long-term competitiveness of OSU for state and federal grants.
5. There are several requests for grant proposals (both federal and private) that limit the number of applications to one or two per institution. The Research Council has been very

actively participating in the review of several limited submission proposals to help create recommendations for which proposals should go forward from the institution.

6. The chair proposed an online procurement system a few years ago (now called Benny Buy at OSU), successfully worked with OSU senior leadership to gain their support and helped with successful implementation at OSU. Similarly, the Research Council has proposed an online laboratory notebook for the entire institution. This provides an efficient means of keeping track of research data and has implications for inventions made at OSU and meeting federal guidelines in maintaining research data. At the moment, every lab has its own method of managing data and lab notebooks. There is an interest from the Research Office in exploring this option and finding necessary support. This is an opportunity that should be pursued.
7. The Research Council wanted to engage leadership both at the Graduate School and Research Office as a majority of research at OSU is conducted by graduate students. As such, it is important to have an institution-wide strategy to recruit and retain highly motivated and qualified graduate students. Joint meetings with leadership of the research office and graduate school were planned but couldn't be held.
8. There is a real disconnect between increased research activity at OSU and the flat budget to the Research Office. The Office of Budget & Resource Planning has been engaged on this issue.
9. Research Council members served on search committees, actively participated and/or provided feedback in recruiting research leadership positions on campus. Some of these included searches for the Director of the Linus Pauling Institute, Dean of College of Pharmacy, Dean of Graduate School, Vice President for Research and tenure track faculty positions in College of Science.
10. The Research Council requested and received updates from Brian Wall, Associate Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact. The Council commends the Innovation and Entrepreneurship program at OSU and its alignment with Strategic Plan 4.0.
11. The Research Council helped Research Office staff members to identify COVID-19-related research activity at OSU that resulted in creation of a [web page](#).
12. Research Council members served on the Research Office COVID-19 planning and research resumption committees.

### **Recommendations for AY 2020-2021**

1. The Research Council shall meet with OSU senior leadership (i.e., including the vice president for research, provost and president) to continue discussions related to : high OPE rates, future F&A rates, bridge funding, improve extramural grant funding rates and discuss allocation of a portion of future tuition dollars to the Research Office to further strengthen undergraduate student research.
2. The Research Council should collaborate with the Research Office to continue to pursue an institution-wide online laboratory notebook.
3. The Research Council, in conjunction with leadership at the Graduate School and Research Office, shall pursue development of an institution-wide strategy to recruit and retain highly motivated and qualified graduate students.
4. Advocate creation of a database for easily identifying the research expertise of OSU faculty and available research core facilities at OSU.

5. Strategize to have functional research core facilities on campus.
6. Organize presentations from PIs who were funded by the Research Equipment Reserve Funds (RERF) in the last three years