Minutes of the Academic Senate Research Committee
25 January 2011

Present: Cinabro, Avrutsky, Biswas, Gretebeck, Kreipke, MacArthur, Stemmler, Wang, Wurm

Absent with Notice: Benkert, Mordukhovich, Thomas, Whittum-Hudson, Shamoun

Guests: Dan Lodes, Marlene Erno, Jim Barbret, David Thompson

Meeting time is Tuesday 10:30 and for the rest of the semester the meeting dates are 15 Feb, 22 March, 19 April. 26 April is the study day and we decided not to move the 19 April meeting to that day. Do not forget to mark your calendars.

Note that remote participation worked OK, but the meeting chair did not pay much attention to what was going on remotely as he was busy running the meeting and taking notes for minutes.

We began with the topic of restricted research. We note that there is broad agreement to allow restricted research, and no objection to the proposed change in the statute. The policy implementation of the new statute as suggested by the VP for Research (VPR) is for PI's to request a wavier to the VPR in a document that explains why it is in the interest of the PI and the University to conduct this research. The VPR then must quickly respond to the request. Also all "workers" on the research have to be informed that they are working on "restricted" research and even sign a consent form. The Policy Committee accepted the proposed policy implementation with the suggestion that rather than the VPR alone be responsible for allowing the restricted research that a 2N, 1/2 faculty and 1/2 administration, committee be responsible. The committee thought that the better course would be to leave the VPR responsible for the initial decision, but allow PI's to appeal to a 2N committee. The reasoning behind this is that the VPR can respond faster than any committee and that in this case a 2N committee is not necessary as there is alignment between the PI and VPR who both want to have the University awarded external research grants. In contrast 2N committees usually decide matters where the interest of the faculty and the administration are not aligned. The committee chair will draft a letter to the policy committee and cc it to the Provost and VPR.

 We talked briefly about publication of student theses. The Policy Committee took this matter up again yesterday motivated by unhappiness in the Faculty Affairs committee at the way things were handled in the Nutrition and Food Sciences case from last year. The Graduate School is still working on a policy, but Dean Wardell indicated that they were drafting guidelines that would flow to individual departments for customization given that practices vary from discipline to discipline. Suggestions for students and faculty to sign some sort of ethical standards statement were not strongly supported due to the impractically of keeping track and difficulty in agreeing on or applying sanctions for violation. We hope to see the Graduate School guidelines within the next month or two.

Research incentives are being worked on in the colleges. There is a Med School committee, no evidence of effort in CLAS, Engineering has new leadership and plans to take this up soon, and work going on in the Business School. All should check with their Deans to see where things are going.

We had a presentation by Dan Lodes and Marlene Erno of the new research effort reporting system that will be rolled out in the coming months. This is needed for compliance with external grant auditing which minimally must ensure that external grant money spent on salaries is

actually going to effort on the supporting grant. This has been done with the paper salary certification forms that have to be periodically filled out. The new system is completely electronic and will be accessed via Pipeline. A pre-review is done by a local grants manager, the department business manager in Physics for example, which will then generate an email to the grant PI's. If all is well the PI simply certifies by pushing a button, and if something is inaccurate the PI requests a change and has to work it out with the local grant manager. The default effort follows the salary. All faculty have pointed out that effort does not necessarily equal salary, typically more effort goes into external research than is paid by external grants, and this represents some sort of cost sharing by the University which, in general, is a good thing. One of the goals of this system is to capture the level of cost sharing up to the level of effort committed on the award. PI's will certify for graduate students, but post-docs and technicians will certify for themselves with the PI being able to do it for them if they cannot for whatever reason. This will be done per year for 12 month faculty and in Fall, Winter, and Summer for 9 month. Note is made of the special case that summer represents with most getting two months of pay from external grants for the three summer months thus there is no problem if some time in the summer is devoted to teaching and service tasks. In general the effort level should be accurate to 5% even though the system gives numbers down to the 0.01% to avoid rounding errors.

The time line is that grant administrators will be trained on the system in February, there will be PADs seminar in early March for faculty in the Med School and Main Campus, and emails to start using the new system should go out in early March, with the due date for certification being early April. There is a draft of a guidelines document that explains what is going on with effort reporting and give practical advice on how to report effort.

This was well received. Rodger pointed out that an incentive, even a small token, to use the new system would be welcome. This would be better than focusing on sanctions for not completing the effort report on time. Jim and Don thought this a good idea and they will come up with something. Rodger will bring this up at the Policy Committee. We thought a presentation at the next Full Senate meeting on 2 March would be the next good step to inform faculty of the new system. Also comments and suggestions to the draft guidelines would be very welcome. The latest draft is attached.