During the 2012-2013 academic year, the Committee on Research (COR) met five times.

The Committee reviewed and readopted the prior year’s Conflict of Interest Statement.

COR’s primary activity was to administer intramural grant competitions. COR worked to clarify the wording of the Call for the intramural research grant programs it manages and to make the on-line application process clearer and less onerous. COR considered two issues related to faculty eligibility for funding. First, the committee decided that the use of Senate grant funds would not be allowable during an unpaid leave. Second, COR expressed serious concerns that some faculty were losing their Senate rights and program eligibility in their terminal year due to a reassignment by Academic Personnel to a research title code. COR transmitted their concerns to the Executive Council.

COR usually pre-reviews Pac Rim grants submitted by UCR faculty; however, this year only seven applications were submitted, and since Pac Rim allows a maximum of eight, all seven applications were submitted for systemwide review.

The committee discussed APM 430 pertaining to Visiting Scholars. There was strong committee support for having such a title. The committee's only major concern was that its use should not be restricted by a narrow interpretation of a scholar’s need to be "affiliated" with an outside institution or agency. The committee suggested to the Executive Council that this problem would be resolved by explicitly broadening the definition to include scholarly funding.

COR reviewed and discussed the proposed Open Access policy. There was strong support for open access; however, serious concerns were expressed that the proposed policy could inhibit faculty research and impose undue additional burdens on faculty. The Open Access policy was subsequently revised in ways that addressed many of COR’s concerns.

COR reviewed and discussed the Rebenching Report. The committee did not have any comments and was generally in favor of this report.

COR discussed the request by the Senate Chair to evaluate the issue of faculty fellowships in order to help formulate a future campus fellowships policy. The committee was deeply concerned that current campus policy (which is somewhat ad hoc but typically involves using sabbatical leave) makes it difficult for Humanities faculty to accept the Research Fellowships that are so critical for them to be productive and widely recognized. Bearing in mind that there is no overhead paid on fellowships and that faculty do not accumulate sabbatical credits while on fellowship leave, the committee felt that fellowships should be considered independent of sabbaticals, and that fellowship leave should not be limited to one year.
COR expressed concern over the lack of financial support for faculty to cover basic office essentials. There is no current campus policy defining minimum faculty support, and there is considerable variation among departments. It is clear that Federal guidelines (OMB Circular A-21) on direct vs. indirect (F&A) costs generally prohibits the use of Federal funds for office equipment and supplies. The committee noted an old (now discontinued) policy which allocated funds to faculty for the purchase of a new computer every 3 years. The committee felt that generating a document of basic needs of faculty members would be very beneficial and would provide a guideline for department Chairs when requesting funds from their Dean. The committee considered basic needs to include such items as a computer/laptop with videoconferencing capability, a printer, paper, printer cartridges, basic software – (e.g. Adobe, Microsoft Office, as well as software that is discipline specific – citation software for the Humanities and a statistics package for the Sciences). Concern was also expressed about the elimination of support for communication devices by some departments and the inability to replace old broken furniture.

Research grant applications received for 2013-2014 funding included: 358 Omnibus (205 Travel Only and 153 Research and Travel), 57 COR, and 27 Regents.

Of the 205 Omnibus Travel Only applications, there were 14 applicants who received Regents or COR Fellowship funds over $5,000, which disqualified them from also receiving an Omnibus award. The committee awarded 191 Omnibus Travel Only awards at the level requested up to a maximum of $1,125, resulting in a total of $202,231.

Of the 153 Omnibus Research and Travel applications, there were 9 applicants who received Regents or COR Fellowship funds over $5,000, which disqualified them from also receiving an Omnibus award. The committee awarded 144 Omnibus Research and Travel awards at varying levels from $1,125 to $1,650 based on two reviewer scores the proposal received, resulting in a grand total of $217,350.

Omnibus awards were made to 338 faculty (191 Travel Only and 144 Research and Travel Awards). The total allocation was $419,581 ($202,231 Travel Only and $217,350 Research and Travel Awards).

Committee on Research (COR) Fellowships were awarded to 30 faculty. There were seven $9,000 awards; twelve $7,500 awards; four $4,500 awards; and seven $2,250 awards for a total allocation of $186,750. 18 of the 30 awards funded (or 62%) were awarded to Associate Professors. COR Fellowships are intended to assist faculty to develop new research projects that could be funded extramurally. All tenured members of the Academic Senate are eligible to apply.

Regents Faculty Fellowships and Faculty Development Awards were funded to 19 faculty. There were four $9,000 awards; ten $4,400 awards; and five $3,400 awards for a total allocation of $97,000. All Assistant Professors are eligible for this award. The Vice Chancellor for Research graciously supplemented the Academic Senate Regents Fellowship budget of $67,015 by adding an additional $30,000 of funding from his own budget so that COR was able to fund seven more Regents Fellowships.
Total Research funds awarded for 2013-14 was $703,331. Following several years of declining funding COR was allocated an increase of 20% of available funds as compared to last year. The committee thanks Senate Chair Wudka for making the increase to research funds a priority in his overall Senate budget.

The committee discussed creating forms or templates for faculty to complete in place of the written final report for COR and Regents Fellowships. The template would contain only the specific information the committee needs – if external funding was received due to receiving these seed funds, what the funds were used for, etc. COR considers the maintenance of accurate records related to the external funding facilitated by these awards will be valuable when requesting future increases in funding.

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