During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Committee on Research (CoR) met on seven occasions.

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

CoR discussed the proposed revisions to APM 330. The committee felt that the expectations were unclear and asked for further interpretation and clarification.

The committee reviewed the college merge proposal and was generally opposed to the idea of merging the colleges.

CoR reviewed and discussed the proposed amendments to Senate bylaw 182 – University Committee on International Education. The committee had no concerns with the amendments.

CoR reviewed the Doctoral Student Support report and was supportive of two of the options pertaining to NRST. However, the committee was concerned with the desire to bring in more Ph.D. students with the current struggle these students have finding jobs after completion of their degree. The intent of the option was not made clear in the report. The committee was in favor of offering multi-year student support and increasing stipends. However, due to the funding differences between graduate programs, found it impossible to generalize support for students. Likewise, the cost of living differences among campuses make it difficult to set stipends at the systemwide level. The committee was in favor of stipends and student support being determined by each campus. The committee agreed that a UC-wide online resource for graduate students to facilitate professional development and employment would be insufficient because of the various jobs and resources being offered in different areas. However, the committee offered the following alternate suggestions in regards to graduate student resources: 1) each local Career Center expands to include graduate students; 2) campuses create more opportunities for students to meet with potential employers (i.e. job fairs, conferences, etc.); 3) allocate sufficient graduate student travel grant funding so that each student is able to attend two conferences while they are working on their Ph.D. Also allow for more flexibility with travel funds so that funds are able to be carried over from year to year; 4) maintaining a database of alumni and their current place of employment may be useful to students who are looking for jobs. The committee admired the discussion of diversity proposals and agreed that reaching out to Cal State Universities is a step in the right direction. While the committee supported the idea, it is unclear how it will be achieved.

CoR discussed the CNAS teaching load policy. The committee felt that the policy formulation process should have included a lot more faculty input right from the start, instead of developing a draft policy statement and then asking for feedback. Thus, the committee suggests that the administration communicate their goals to the various departments in the college, then form an interdepartmental committee to draft a policy that meets those goals while also being as beneficial as possible for the faculty, students, and the college. It does not appear that this proposal was vetted by the college departments or the CNAS Executive Committee. The Committee also noted many concerns, but focused on those that largely affect research productivity and graduate education. Some of those items were: The current balance sheet approach failed to account for sabbatical or other leaves. Furthermore, the Committee noted errors in the data of the proposal. Sabbatical and other medical leaves were not counted
correctly and course buy-outs were being counted negatively. The Committee was extremely concerned by what was being proposed for IR/OR splits and questioned the legality given that OR funds are intended for supporting the experiment station mission rather than the IR mission. The Committee was troubled by the fact that the proposal devalues teaching courses with less than 100 students. Teaching these smaller courses still takes a substantial amount of the instructors' time, and these courses are crucial for the upper divisional mission and the training of graduate students. It is possible and even likely that it takes more faculty time and effort to teach a graduate course because it has to be current, i.e., it has to be extensively updated each time it is taught, and there is usually no TA support. Contrast this with a large and routine lower division course, which most instructors will have taught numerous times before, which usually requires much less updating, and for which there is extensive TA support. The Committee felt that the proposal did not give enough credit to graduate student mentoring or the teaching of 290 courses. Instead, the committee suggested that the number of graduate students each faculty member has should be counted. Mentoring graduate students effectively is often far more time consuming than teaching an undergraduate course, particularly for new graduate students. A good argument can also be made for giving credit for mentoring postdocs. Teaching Assistants are offered for the large undergraduate courses to help lighten the load of the instructor. It is extremely problematic that a faculty member is given more credit for supervising TA's than for training and supervising the people in their own lab. The Committee pointed out the chronic problem that UCR has had with obtaining fewer graduate students than considered optimal by UCOP, measured as a proportion of total students on campus. This proposal actively contradicts that goal of increasing UCR's percentage of graduate students by incentivizing the teaching of large, undergraduate courses, and disincentivizing the teaching of smaller but critical graduate level courses and mentoring of graduate students.

CoR discussed the draft guidelines for a pilot program to accept equity for access to university facilities or services. The committee agreed that the reporting structure was unclear and the chain of authority was not defined in the proposal. The committee was concerned about the liability of the university as it was not stated in the guidelines. Committee members questioned why systemwide guidelines are not being created first as it was agreed that local campus guidelines should be an altered version of approved systemwide guidelines.

CoR discussed APM 210-1-d, Review and Appraisal Committees. The committee agreed that the proposal lacked a clear definition of who is considered to be “diverse”. Specifically, some racial, ethnic, gender, or other groups that might be considered diverse in one department or college may not be considered diverse in another. It was not clear to the committee whether diversity is being incentivized or equalized. The committee did not support the idea of diversity holding as much weight in the evaluation of a candidate's qualifications during academic personnel actions as the typical contributions in teaching and research. The committee felt that having diversity in a research group should not be equally as important as doing the research itself. Recognizing research on diversity should be raised as a separate issue. Diversity research needs to be defined in the proposal. The committee agreed that the issue of research on diversity receiving appropriate credit as valuable and legitimate research could be better handled as a memo to the department and the Committee on Academic Personnel.

The Committee on Research discussed the UC Policy on Copyright and Fair Use and had no concerns.

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.
Research grant applications received for 2015-2016 funding included: 313 Omnibus (198 Travel Only and 115 Research and Travel), 42 CoR, 18 Regents Faculty Development Award, and 21 Regents Faculty Fellowship.

Of the 198 Omnibus Travel Only applications, there were 19 applicants who received Regents or CoR Fellowship funds over $5,000, which disqualified them from also receiving an Omnibus award. The committee awarded 179 Omnibus Travel Only awards at the level requested up to a maximum of $1,300, resulting in a total of $225,161.

Of the 115 Omnibus Research and Travel applications, there were 10 applicants who received Regents or CoR Fellowship funds over $5,000, which disqualified them from also receiving an Omnibus award. The committee awarded 115 Omnibus Research and Travel awards at varying levels from $1,300 to $1,800 based on the score the proposal received, resulting in a total of $174,460.

Omnibus awards were made to 313 faculty (198 Travel Only and 115 Research and Travel Awards). The total allocation was $399,621 ($225,161 Travel Only and $174,460 Research and Travel Awards).

Committee on Research (CoR) Grants were awarded to 24 faculty. There were eight $11,000 awards; eleven $6,500 awards; and five $4,500 awards for a total allocation of $182,000. 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 Development Awards were awarded to 7 faculty. There were two $9,000 awards and five $6,000 awards for a total allocation of $48,000. All Assistant Professors are eligible for this award. Regents Faculty Fellowships were awarded to 8 faculty. There were two $9,000 awards; five $6,000 awards; and one $4,000 award for a total allocation of $52,000. The Vice Chancellor for Research graciously supplemented the Academic Senate Regents Fellowship/Awards budget of $67,015 by adding an additional $21,000 of funding from his own budget so that CoR was able to fund two additional Regents Fellowships and one additional Regents Development Award.

Total Research funds awarded for 2015-16 was $681,621. Following several years of declining funding, three years ago CoR was allocated an increase of 20% of available funds as compared to previous years. The committee thanks Senate Chair Wudka for continuing to make the increase to research funds a priority in his overall Senate budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

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