

University Research Council

Minutes of April 16, 2019 Meeting

Members Present: Rob Rutenbar, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research; Mike Holland, Vice Chancellor for Science Policy and Research Strategy; N. John Cooper, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research; Mark Anderson, Department of English; Karen Arndt, Department of Biological Sciences; Velpandi Ayyavoo, Graduate School of Public Health; Debbie Brake, School of Law; Yvette Conley, School of Nursing; Brian Galla, School of Education; Robert B. Gibbs, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Kent Harries, School of Engineering; Alexandria Harris, Graduate and Professional Student Government Board; Stephen Hirtle, School of Computing and Information; Holger Hooch, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, School of Arts and Sciences; Neil Hukriede, Department of Developmental Biology; William Layton, Department of Mathematics; Elizabeth Monasterios, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures; Jeremy Somers, Office of Research, Health Sciences; Steven Stern, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Alexandre Vieira, School of Dental Medicine; Stephen Weber, Department of Chemistry; Jennifer Woodward, Vice Chancellor for Research Operations

Members Absent: Marek Druzdzal, School of Computing and Information; Heidi Ann Scharf Donovan, School of Nursing; William Dunn, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs; Shaun Eack, School of Social Work; Raymond Engel, School of Social Work; Julie Fiez, Department of Psychology; Sean Kelly, School of Education; Matthew Kropf, University of Pittsburgh Bradford; Kacey Marra, School of Medicine; Frits Pil, Katz Graduate School of Business; Anne Robertson, School of Engineering; Margaret Rosenzweig, School of Nursing; Susan Sereika, Department of Health and Community Systems; Peijun Zhang, Department of Structural Biology

1. Welcome and Announcements

Dr. Rob Rutenbar welcomed the Council members and called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.

2. March 18, 2019 URC Meeting Minutes

The March meeting minutes had been circulated to the Council and were approved *nem con*.

3. Foreign Influence Update

Dr. Rutenbar reported that this issue continues to be a topic of discussion between higher education associations and federal agencies. It is anticipated that definitive guidelines on identifying and disclosing foreign influence will soon be released, and that they will reflect the input of the higher education community. The 2019 National Defense Authorization Act has led to creation of committees to address related issues, including advising investigators about potential concerns of the Department of Defense, and protecting emerging technologies that could be subject to export control. More recently, the NIH and NSF are being questioned by congressional committees about their foreign

engagements. Dr. Rutenbar emphasized that new guidelines and standards are evolving as this issue unfolds, and that it is essential for investigators to disclose any possible foreign engagements at all appropriate points.

4. Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC) Proposal Update

Dr. Mike Holland provided a brief update on the three Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs) whose proposals were selected by the SVCR steering committee. These teams are making good progress towards a pre-proposal submission deadline of June 24th. Dr. Holland noted that the research areas of two of these IRGs have been previously noted by the NSF as areas of particular interest, which hopefully will strengthen their candidacy and provide opportunity for mutual benefit.

5. S-10 Instrumentation Program for May 31st Deadline

Dr. John Cooper re-introduced the S-10 Instrumentation Program, a shared instrumentation grant program from NIH intended to enable the purchase of state-of-the-art instruments to support the research of NIH-funded investigators, typically through Service Centers that provide access to any investigator on campus at a uniform cost. Dr. Cooper noted that this program is an incredibly valuable capital funding source for instrumentation and encouraged Pitt investigators to apply, as there is no cap on submissions from one institution. The proposals do require review and letters of support from the SVCR, and there was an internal notification deadline of April 29th, with an NIH submission deadline of May 31st. Council members were invited to view an exemplar S-10 proposal available through the ARTHUR database of The Office of Research Health Sciences. Ryan Champagne in the Office of Research was identified as the point of contact for any questions about applying to this program.

6. May Meeting

Council agreed that a May meeting would not be necessary, and that the next meeting would be held at the beginning of the Fall semester.

7. Any other business

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.