

## University Research Council

### Minutes of February 11, 2020 Meeting

**Members Present:** *N. John Cooper, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research; Mark Lynn Anderson, Department of English; Karen Arndt, Department of Biological Sciences; Velpandi Ayyavoo, Graduate School of Public Health; Debbie Brake, School of Law; Ryan Champagne, Grants Development Coordinator, Office of Sponsored Programs; Yvette Conley, School of Nursing; Julie Fiez, Department of Psychology; Brian Galla, School of Education; Robert B. Gibbs, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Kent Harries, School of Engineering; Stephen Hirtle, School of Computing and Information; Michael Holland, Vice Chancellor for Science Policy and Research Strategy; William Layton, Department of Mathematics; Elizabeth Monasterios, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures; Frits Pil, Katz Graduate School of Business; Anne Robertson, School of Engineering; Jeremy Somers, Office of Research, Health Sciences; Steven Stern, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Stephen Weber, Department of Chemistry; Jennifer Woodward, Vice Chancellor for Research Operations*

**Members Absent:** *Rob Rutenbar, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research; 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; Shelome Gooden, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research in the Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Related Fields; Alexandria Harris, Graduate and Professional Student Government Board; Holger Hooek, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, School of Arts and Sciences; Neil Hukriede, Department of Developmental Biology; Sean Kelly, School of Education; Matthew Kropf, University of Pittsburgh Bradford; Kacey Marra, School of Medicine; Margaret Rosenzweig, School of Nursing; Susan Sereika, Department of Health and Community Systems; Alexandre Vieira, School of Dental Medicine*

**Guest Attendees:** *Allen DiPalma, Director of Office of Trade Compliance*

#### **1. Welcome and Announcements**

Dr. John Cooper welcomed the Council members and called the meeting to order at 12:10pm.

#### **2. January 13, 2020 URC Meeting Minutes**

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

#### **3. Funding Showcase**

Dr. Mike Holland shared the agenda/timeline for the Pitt Funding Showcase on February 24 at Alumni Hall. Three categories of funding awards would be announced at the event: Seeding Grants to provide up to \$16,000 for early stages of new projects; Teaming Grants of up to \$60,000 to help multidisciplinary team build capacity to pursue external grants; and Scaling Grants of up to \$400,000 to help teams pursue large scale external funding. Winners of Seed and Teaming Grants had already been notified, and the Scaling winners would be announced at the event.

#### **4. Export Controls Update and Discussion**

Allen DiPalma, Director of the Office of Trade Compliance, gave a presentation on Export Controls and their impact on research activities. He indicated that this is a moving target, and explained that the Office is looking at the types of emerging technologies our people are working on and how that might map on to new export control guidelines on emerging technologies expected out later this year. He noted that several of the new rules in the pipeline are focused on issues of national security, while also noting the Pitt risk profile in the area of export controls is relatively low because we do only fundamental research at the moment (no classified research). He also noted that it is unclear what our legal responsibility is in matters of foreign nationals here on restricted visas taking courses in restricted fields (i.e. Iranian taking classes in Nuclear Engineering).

#### **5. Indirect Cost Waiver Electronic Process**

Dr. Jennifer Woodward, Director of the Office of Sponsored programs, discussed the incoming electronic process for Indirect Cost Waivers. These are sought if a sponsor is not willing to pay Pitt's F&A rate. This happens routinely, but the waiver request process is not centralized and is not electronic, so it is inefficient. Dr. Rutenbar has been working with the deans to centralize this process and make it more consistent, and a new electronic process will be rolling out soon. Dr. Woodward noted that for amounts of \$50k or less, you would need your dean's approval for the waiver; for amounts more than \$50k, you would need approval from your dean and from Dr. Rutenbar. She also noted that this needs to be done at time the proposal is submitted, and not left until an award has been made.

#### **6. Update on MyDisclosures**

Dr. Cooper gave an update on MyDisclosures, noting that the vast majority of schools have opted to participate in piloting the new system this year, and that a broad, university-wide announcement about the system will be going out soon. The Conflict of Interest Committee is currently working on populating email lists of people required to disclose, starting with a sort by job type or classification as identified by Human

Resources. Those lists are being reviewed by the schools and departments. Faculty and staff required to disclose as determined by schools and departments will get a message around March 2 with instructions to disclose electronically in *MyDisclosures*. There will be a deadline for disclosure of April 15. CSSD will be providing its help desk with a supporting script, and there will be extensive FAQs to facilitate the process. He finished by noting that more help with messaging may be needed as the process rolls out.

**7. Any other business**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.