

Report on the Activities of the 2011-2012 Senate Council on Research & Scholarships

Co-Chairs: Debra Murie and Robert Cook

SCORS Purview: The purview of the Research and Scholarship Council is all policy matters concerning research and scholarship conducted at the University of Florida. The Council's functions are:

- (a) to recommend appropriate policies and priorities to support the quality, stature, and relevance of the University's research initiatives;
- (b) to make recommendations concerning existing interdisciplinary research directions and review the quality of affiliated institutes and centers and their leadership; and to recommend actions necessary to enhance the research functions of the University;
- (c) to recommend new or expanded research initiatives based on the expertise of the Faculty and the conclusions reached on the basis of its analysis; and to review, on the behalf of the Faculty Senate, administrative proposals for initiation or elimination of research initiatives;
- (d) to make recommendations on policies concerning the distribution of indirect costs from research grants;
- (e) to recommend on policy matters concerning graduate students and research personnel; and
- (f) to recommend on policy and programs that enhance the research experience of undergraduates.

(1) Contributing Committees (voting members)

- Graduate Council (Joint Committee)
- Research Policy Committee (Joint Committee)

(2) Related Committees (nonvoting members)

- Institutional Animal Care and Use (Presidential Committee)
- Institutional Biosafety (Presidential Committee)
- Institutional Review Boards (Presidential Committee)

Responsibilities of the SCORS: This council's area encompasses University policies and procedures relating to research and scholarship, including university-wide research and scholarship initiatives and strategies; research grants and contracts; research infrastructure; and other matters relating to funding or producing scholarship.

Members

Azra Bihorac	Senate Member, Anesthesiology
Robert Cook	Co-Chair, Senate Member, Epidemiology
Henry Frierson	Administrative Liaison, Graduate Programs
David Hahn	Senate Member, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering
Paul Mueller	Senate Member, Geological Sciences
Debra Murie	Co-Chair, Senate Member, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
David Norton	Contributing Committee Chair - Research Policy Committee
Win Phillips	Administrative Liaison, Research
Sandra Russo	Senate Member, International Center
Andrew Tarter	Student Representative
Thomas Walsh	Administrative Liaison, Research

Topics Discussed

- **Online P&T reporting:** Angel Kwolek-Folland, Associate Provost of Academic Affairs, provided an update on the online promotion and tenure process ([Aug 2011](#)). Currently the online P&T documents are uploaded and moved through the process as a pdf instead of the usual hard copy. Future plans include drawing together information that is input into various systems at UF to create the T&P package, as well as other reports as needed. The council remains concerned about faculty having to duplicate effort in entering information into both the new online T&P system as well as existing systems that colleges' already use for reporting (e.g., VIVO). It will be necessary to ensure that duplication is eliminated to increase efficiency and reduce reporting time required by faculty. The council will invite Dr. Kwolek-Folland to provide an update on the online T&P system, results of its implementation in AY 2011-12, and its current state and plans for future development in AY 2012-2013.
- **UF Strategic Plan for IT:** Dr. Fredo Zazueto, Director of Academic Technology, gave a presentation on the IT Strategic Plan ([Aug 2011](#)). Mobile is a high priority for the University. This was an information item only.
- **Training Grants:** Procedures to improve the payment process for students on training grants were discussed ([Aug 2011](#)). A revised process has since been implemented. Tracking of students on training grants (current and post-training grant) is required for renewal of training grants and this process takes significant time and resources by faculty ([Mar 2012](#)). The council discussed the possibility that Dean Frierson's office may be able to help with tracking these students for the purposes of training grant applications and/or renewals. The council will follow up on whether the revised process has resolved the payment issues and whether assistance with tracking students on training grants has been implemented.
- **Enterprise Reporting (ER) Financial System:** Lee Catledge, UF Enterprise Systems, provided an update on the progress in modifications to the ER system that would allow PIs (and others) to more easily obtain up-to-date financial reports on their grants ([Sept 2011](#)). This was followed in [Oct 2011](#) by a presentation by Stephanie Gray, Division of Sponsored Research, on a financial system used by the University of Wisconsin that provides user-friendly access to current grant expenditures and planning capacity. Modifications of the ER system will incorporate some of these features depending on development time ([Apr 2012](#)).
- **Effort Reporting:** Status and progress of the online effort reporting system was updated in AY 2011-12 by Jim Ferrer, Assistant Vice President, Finance and Planning ([Sept 2011](#)). Concerns continue to be voiced that reporting effort based on % FTE causes faculty to under report the amount of time spent teaching, overseeing student research, and supervising graduate students. The council provided feedback on the changes in the online system to Jim Ferrer, including draft policies ([Nov 2011](#)). The council will request an update of the online effort reporting system in Ay 2012-2013.
- **IRB and IACUC:** Michael Mahoney, Assistant Director IRBs, gave a presentation regarding the IRB Board and Mission, review times for protocols, plans for online submissions, and strategies to improve collaboration with PIs, including training ([Oct 2011](#)). Bill Buhi, IACUC Chair, also gave a presentation regarding the IACUC mission ([Oct 2011](#)). Questions were raised about the use of IRB or IACUC protocol end dates as a regulatory tool in the Enterprise Reporting financial system but this issue needs to be addressed by financial management and not by the IRB or IACUC systems.

- **IDC Distribution:** The council discussed the role of the SCoRS in review of IDC distributions across the University of Florida (Dec 2011). This was an information item with further discussion to be scheduled in AY 2012-2013 as needed.
- **Graduate Students:** Issues related to faculty research, graduate student education, and grant support based on future tuition increases was discussed with input from Rick Yost, Professor of Analytical Chemistry and Board of Governors (Dec 2011). Faculty concerns center on graduate students being more expensive to support than post doctorates (Dec 2011, Mar 2012). The council believes that this issue needs to be monitored in the future as tuition continues to rise.
- **Undergraduate Research:** In Jan 2012 the council discussed barriers that limit faculty involvement with undergraduate research with Anne Donnelly (Director of the Center for Undergraduate Research), Ben Dunn (UF/HHMI Science for Life program), Bernard Mair (Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs), and Samesha R. Barns (Interim Associate Director, McNair Scholars Program). Suggestions included having a central information system for undergraduate research programs and for the undergraduates to be able to register for research credits so that faculty would get the appropriate credit for instruction. The council intends to revisit this issue in the future.
- **Research Subject Payment System:** Faculty are concerned about how research subjects are paid in a timely and efficient manner. Laura Ling Donovan (Finance & Accounting Division - Treasury Management) and Cheryl Bell (Finance & Accounting) have proposed changes to improve the process (Jan 2012). The council will request an update on the progress and efficiency of the new system of payment.
- **RCM impact on interdisciplinary research and unsponsored research:** David Norton (VP Research) and Marc Heft (Chair, Budget Council) discussed RCM's impact on interdisciplinary research and unsponsored research (Feb 2012). Faculty continue to express concern over this issue.

Azra Bihorac and Sandra Russo will be co-chairs for AY 2012-2013 (Dr. Bihorac will be the voting Co-Chair).

Tentative Items for Next Year's Agenda

- New: Number of retractions in science. Is this a problem at UF, or, if not, might this give UF an edge in competition for grants?
- Progress in assistance with training grant management and tracking of students
- Effects of RCM on interdisciplinary research and scholarship programs from PIs perspective
- Progress and updates on the Enterprise Reporting system for financial management of faculty research grants
- Update on the online T&P system, results of its implementation in AY 2011-12, and its current state and plans for future development in AY 2012-2013.
- IDC Distribution
- Update on IACUC and IRB protocol end dates relative to grant end dates in the ER financial system
- A central system for information on undergraduate research to facilitate faculty involvement
- Request an update on the progress and efficiency of the new system of payment for research subjects

- Continue to monitor and discuss graduate student tuition increases (e.g., it is critically important to evaluate tuition on the basis of tuition policy, not just rate, because it is the gross tuition cost of a student that determines our competitiveness and adds to our sponsored research costs)
- Role of open access journals in the T&P process (e.g., open access publications being more economical for the library perhaps but are there consequences to the academics)

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Murie and Robert Cook
Co-Chairs, Senate Council on Research and Scholarship (SCORS)
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