

University Research Council

Minutes of February 19, 2019 meeting

Members Present: Rob Rutenbar, SVCR and Chair, N. John Cooper, Deputy VC-Research; Michael Holland, Vice Chancellor for Science Policy and Research Strategy; Jennifer Woodward, VC-Research Operations; Mark Anderson, Associate Prof-School of Arts and Sciences; Karen Arndt, Prof-School of Arts and Sciences; Velpandi Ayyavoo, Prof and Associate Dean-Graduate School of Public Health; Yvette Conley, Prof and Vice Chair-Research-School of Nursing; Debbie Brake, Associate Dean-School of Law; Marek Druzdzal, Prof-School of Computing and Information; Shaun Eack, School of Social Work; Julie Fiez, Prof & Chair of Psychology-School of Arts and Sciences; Brian Galla, Assistant Prof-School of Education; Kent Harries, Prof-School of Engineering; Alexandria Harris, Graduate and Professional Student Government Board/URC Graduate Student Representative; Holger Hoock, Amundson Prof and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research-School of Arts and Sciences; Neil Hukriede, Associate Prof and Vice Chair-School of Medicine; William Layton, Prof-School of Arts and Science; Kacey Marra- Prof-School of Medicine; Elizabeth Monasterios, Prof-School of Arts and Sciences; Jeremy Somers, Scientific Director-OORHS; Steven Stern, Prof and Chair-University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown; Alexandre Vieira, Prof-School of Dental Medicine.

Members Absent: William Dunn, Prof-Graduate School of Public and International Affairs; Raymond Engel, Associate Prof-School of Social Work; Robert Gibbs, Prof-School of Pharmacy; Stephen Hirtle, School of Computing and Information; Sean Kelly, Prof-School of Education; Matthew Kropf, Assistant Prof-University of Pittsburgh at Bradford; Frits Pil, Prof-Katz Graduate School of Business; Anne Robertson, Prof-Department of Mechanical Engineering; Susan Sereika, Prof-School of Nursing; Stephen Weber, Prof-School of Arts and Sciences; Peijun Zhang, School of Medicine.

1. Welcome and Announcements

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

2. January 17, 2019 URC Meeting Minutes

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

3. Foreign Influence Update

- Dr. Rutenbar emphasized that federal concerns about foreign influences on US research and US researchers continues to be intense but ill defined. He hopes for more clarity about what foreign engagements raise federal concerns and what do not. AAU and APLU are working to develop language/guidelines on this topic, as is COGR.
- The important question for Pitt's faculty is what exactly should be disclosed on COI forms, biosketches, and other documents.
- Dr. Mike Holland explained that the changes with regard to China, in particular, do not involve new legal changes, but a change in how compliance with the existing rules is monitored and enforced. This creates situations in which agencies are more likely to identify. Faculty need to read the rules and understand what is required.

- Dr. Jennifer Woodward added that the federal government wants to know about research relationships outside of the United States, regardless of whether they relate to funded research or not. Any appointments with foreign institutions should be disclosed on biosketches and other support forms. NIH has enquired about relationships of which it found evidence on the web.
- Dr. Rutenbar pointed out that Pitt is in the same situation as other universities, and Chancellors are talking with each other on this issue.

4. Update on CRDF Applications and Review Process

Dr. John Cooper reported on the CRDF applications and upcoming reviews. He asked for volunteers from the Council for Co-Chairs of the review committees for the three CRDF categories (Humanities & Social Sciences, Health Sciences, and Science & Engineering). The 2019 CRDF Co-Chairs who were nominated, approved, and agreed to serve are as follows:

Humanities/Social Sciences: Mark Anderson and Frits Pil

Health Sciences: Yvette Conley and Kacey Marra

Science & Engineering: Kent Harries and William Layton

5. Next Steps in Strategic Research Computing

Dr. Rutenbar reminded Council that CSSD had recently produced a strategic plan, available on the CSSD web site, that was developed through the agency of consultants from Deloitte & Touche. The firm carried out extensive stakeholder interviews across the campus that included senior leadership, faculty, researchers, and Human Resources. The report offers high level suggestions for the future.

One element of the report was an emphasis on the need at Pitt for a complementary strategic plan for research computing. Dr. Rutenbar indicated his acceptance of the value of a strategic plan for research computing, and his plans to bring Deloitte & Touche back to hold more interviews with faculty, students, and researchers. CMU is interested in being involved, and there may be significant synergies to be found in joint projects in the two institutions. The consultants will engage with CMU as well as Pitt leadership. At Pitt, Dr. Rutenbar will get suggestions from Deans about interviewees and will also engage the regional campuses. Dr. Rutenbar invited members of Council to send him suggestions and comments.

Dr. Rutenbar also reminded Council that the Pittsburgh Computer Center (PSC) is currently searching for a new Director, and Dr. Rutenbar is collaborating with the Dean of the Mellon College of Science at CMU, Dr. Rebecca Doerge, on the search.

6. Moving Forward with On Line COI Reporting

Dr. Rutenbar reminded the Council that we are in the COI reporting season. Fully online COI reporting is urgently needed to simplify the process, improve compliance, and integrate COI reporting with proposal submission. A contract has now been signed with an external company with extensive experience working with Pitt to create a fully online COI reporting system.

7. Any Other Business

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm