University Research Council

Minutes of November 12, 2019 Meeting

Members Present: *Michael Holland, Vice Chancellor for Science Policy and Research Strategy; Mark Anderson, Department of English; Karen Arndt, Department of Biological Sciences; Debbie Brake, School of Law; Brian Galla, School of Education; Stephen Hirtle, School of Computing and Information; Holger Hoock, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, School of Arts and Sciences; Sean Kelly, School of Education; William Layton, Department of Mathematics; Frits Pil, Katz Graduate School of Business; Jeremy Somers, Office of Research, Health Sciences; Steven Stern, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Jennifer Woodward, Vice Chancellor for Research Operations*

Members Absent: *Rob Rutenbar, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research; N. John Cooper, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research; Velpandi Ayyavoo, Graduate School of Public Health; Yvette Conley, School of Nursing; Marek Druzdzel, 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; Robert B. Gibbs, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Kent Harries, School of Engineering; Alexandria Harris, Graduate and Professional Student Government Board; Neil Hukriede, Department of Developmental Biology; Matthew Kropf, University of Pittsburgh Bradford; Kacey Marra, School of Medicine; Elizabeth Monasterios, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures; Anne Robertson, School of Engineering; Margaret Rosenzweig, School of Nursing; Susan Sereika, Department of Health and Community Systems; Alexandre Vieira, School of Dental Medicine; Stephen Weber, Department of Chemistry*

1. **Welcome and Announcements**

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

2. **October 14, 2019 URC Meeting Minutes**

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

3. **Discussion of Review Criteria, Processes, and Rubrics for Funds Allocated through the Momentum Funds Program, including CRDF funds**

   Michael Holland gave a presentation regarding the submission and review process for the Momentum Funds program. He reminded the group that the idea is to make the process easier for the reviewers and ensure that it leads to recommendations that are unambiguous.

   There was a concern noted that Seed Grants are meant to be just that, but that those who already have startup funding could be favored, since those seeking can use startup to enable them to better meet the grading criteria.

There was a follow up comment that previous funding should be irrelevant in this process/decision. It was noted that we should be looking at the proposed budget – what will the money be able to do? Is the budget appropriate and sufficient to cover what is being proposed?

It was noted that reviewers do not automatically know what other sources of funding could cover expenditure items.

There was discussion regarding review of the proposal vs. review of the investigator. Many members of the committee agreed that the reviewers would not be able to make a call on how actually "impressive" the investigator is. The suggestion was made to change wording to "qualifications", rather than "competency".

The suggestion was made to take some weight out of *Investigator* and add some to *Feasibility*.

For Teaming grants, it was noted that the language on review criteria is a bit ambiguous regarding who is on the team. It was noted that there is some confusion in the wording regarding "putting together a team" – a comment was made that the team should do some actual work, not just gather together.

Dr. Holland asked the committee members to please provide feedback and edits/suggestions.

Regarding the Review Timeline, it was noted that the 2-week period to complete reviews is very tight, given that it overlaps with finals week.

4. **Establishment of Momentum Fund Review Committees (MH)**

This topic was not discussed, and will brought back to the next meeting.

5. **Setting up the Next Proposal Bootcamp (MH)**

This topic was not discussed, and will brought back to the next meeting.

6. **Any other business**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:04pm.