**UNL Research Council**

**January 15, 2013**

**MINUTES**

***Present:*** Professors Albrecht, Azzam, Bloom, Burnett, Ferguson, Ford, Gonzalez-Allende, Ladunga, Sarroub, Shipley, AVCR Hamernik, AVCR Werum and Greer

***Call to Orde*r:** Bloom called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. He welcomed members and new Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Regina Werum. Bloom also thanked Hamernik for her service to the Council as she transitions to her position as Associate Dean at IANR. We will also be saying farewell to Peg Filliez. She has accepted a new position in the Vice Chancellor’s office. Mari Greer will be the new support person for the Council effective today. The Council thanked Peg for her many years of service.

***Approval of Minutes November 30, 2012:***  Motion made to accept the minutes as distributed. Motion seconded and approved.

***Report to Faculty Senate:*** Bloom noted that he presented the annual Research Council report to the Senate and it was fairly routine. They inquired if the Council was spending enough time on the Council mission.

***Discussion of Changes to RFP’s and Review Procedures for Internal Funding Opportunities:*** Bloom said we typically do a post mortem on the grant review process from the November proposal review. The last meeting was an extremely long meeting, but a productive one with suggestions on how we might do things differently. Items for discussion:

1. Could we have a uniform file naming convention for those that want to download applications. Hamernik noted that the ORED I.T. group is working on a change to NUgrant to put all the files into one PDF vs. opening each file. This will save reviewers time.
2. Have a mass download of all applications assigned to a reviewer. Hamernik said that is not possible at this time in NUgrant, but combining all files into one PDF, will eliminate some of the problem.
3. Is full-time faculty status a requirement to receive an award. If a faculty member owns a business, is this a conflict of interest. This question could be added to the application. Full-time status would show their commitment to UNL. Bloom said we could require a conflict of interest form be on file in NUgrant for all applicants. Discussion followed. Motion made to add wording to the RFP that applicants have to be full-time faculty. Motion seconded. Discussion on adding “1.0 FTE” before “full-time” to the wording. Motion amended and approved.
4. Serial applicants and serial successful applicants in the Visiting Scholar category. There are applicants who apply repeatedly year after year. We need to be sure their application is really better than the others. Albrecht noted that this is also true in some of the other grant categories. Some faculty live off of the Council funding and fail to move toward national funding. We need to make sure we are getting the word out to departments on the maximum number of applications they can receive in one funding cycle. Visiting Scholar grants are very helpful to departments. Motion made that we only accept one Visiting Scholar application per person per year for full-time faculty.

Sarroub said we should encourage faculty to apply for these funds. Azzam suggested we consider a second level of review and let the departments decide which applications go forward to the Council. After discussion, the motion was only a suggestion. Second motion made to limit applications to one application per Visiting Scholar, Symposia and Distinguished Lecturer per applicant. If the applicant applies to the wrong category, their application will not be considered. Motion seconded. Voting: one yeah, eight nay, and one abstention. Motion failed.

Motion made that applicants can only apply once per year to the Visiting Scholar, Symposia, and Distinguished Lecturer categories. Motion seconded. Discussion followed. Voting: nine yeah, one nay. Motion approved.

1. Can an applicant apply for one grant in each category (Grant-In-Aid, Faculty Seed Grant and Interdisciplinary Grant), or are they limited to applying for one across all three categories. The current wording on the website indicates they can apply for one in each category. However, the discussion at a previous meeting was they can only apply to one across all three categories. Hamernik indicated applicants will only get one award per person, even if they apply to the Research Council and the Layman competition. This should be clearly stated on our website.

Sarroub noted that one of her applications was in collaboration with a UNMC colleague, and the second application was working on a completely different project. Saying applicants can only submit one application is very limiting. If the project and the research are different, you should be able to submit to more than one category. She also noted one of her UNMC collaborators was in NUgrant, but was not able to be added to her application because he’s at UNMC, and this showed up as a flaw in her application. Bloom said given the fact that they are only going to receive one award, do they really want to put the effort into preparing two applications. The key is each application has to be distinct.

Ford said once all submissions are made it should be confirmed prior to subcommittee review that there are not two applications submitted from one applicant across all three categories. This wording should be added to the RFP. We should add the Layman language to all the Research Council calls as well.

1. New evaluation forms. Did the forms conform to what we have in the call. Were there problems with the forms. Burnett said they were very effective and made the subcommittee work easier. If the project does not fit the category they’ve applied to, there is no need to review the application. Ferguson also said the forms were very useful.

Sarroub said should we be wedded to funding assistant professors first? Some of the applications are poorly written and we should be doing whatever we can to support assistant professors and find other ways to fund good projects from more established professors.

On the Interdisciplinary Grant form, item #4 is appropriate for the social sciences, but not for the humanities.

Azzam asked if we could add formatting requirements to make the applications consistent. The diversity of the fields we cover would make it difficult to fit into one particular template. We could recommend a font size and specific margins.

Hamernik said she will work with Werum on updating the RFP and the website.

***Nebraska Lecturer Nominations:*** Bloom said he talked with Tim Gay recently and he is in discussions with Mike Zeleny on the date and topic for the lecture. Zeleny is suggesting it be held on the weekend of the spring game and the topic be a combination of football and Physics.

The Council is the pipeline for future speakers and we need to consider making new recommendations to VC Paul for the selection of the next lecturers. Hamernik said Paul suggested following a different model to elevate the lecture to a higher level by having a separate committee make the final selection. The committee would have more buy-in for the selection, and would be responsible for advertising, promoting, and all details involved with the lecture. The committee would likely consist of Research Council members and other university experts. Bloom said for now we will go ahead and release a call for nominations as we have in the past. A draft call was distributed for review. The call will go to deans and directors, chairs and heads, and other various lists. It should be noted we are looking for stature, and nationally and internationally known speakers. The deadline will be March 1st with the goal that we would review and select speakers at the March meeting.

The word “celebrate” should be changed to “feature” in paragraph one, the fifth sentence.

Further discussion on the new model VC Paul is interested in.

Discussion held on whether or not we will accept any additional materials beyond the CV and the letter of nomination. Ford noted that a couple of years ago, in addition to the CV and letter of nomination, a portfolio of work was submitted for consideration but was not accepted for review. Bloom said he hopes that the information needed for the nomination can be captured in the nomination letter and CV to keep the files to a reasonable size.

***Remaining Meetings for Spring Semester 2013:*** There will be a February and March meeting. Topics of discussion will be items of interest raised earlier: the move to the Big 10, and mentoring junior faculty.

Burnett said he would be interested to know what nationally recognized awards the Sr. Vice Chancellor and the Chancellor are interested in, and whether they would want our input.

***Adjournment:*** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.