**UNL Research Council**

**November 30, 2012**

**MINUTES**

***Present:*** Professors Albrecht, Awada, Azzam, Bloom, Burnett, Enders, Ferguson, Ford, Gonzalez-Allende, Ladunga, Sarroub, and Shipley

***Call to Orde*r:** Bloom called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed members and thanked them for their hard work reviewing proposals.

***Approval of Minutes October 5, 2012 Meeting:***  Motion made to accept the minutes as distributed. Motion seconded and approved.

***Recommendations for Funding:*** Bloom noted that a few Council members have applied for funds in the current calls. We will ask them to excuse themselves when discussion is held on the categories they’ve applied to.

Visiting Scholar/Symposia/Distinguished Lecturer: Ladunga said funding levels were reduced on all Symposia and Distinguished Lecturer proposals. Burnett indicated that when the speaker is well-known, faculty are able to go to other departments and seek funding so reducing the budgets should be fine. Ladunga asked for input from the Council on one applicant who was funded in the previous round of funding. Albrecht said not funding a proposal because they were funded in the last round should not be the reason given to the faculty member for not funding the proposal. Feedback on the evaluation forms should be consistent.

Discussion held on when the evaluation forms need to be returned to Bloom and Hamernik for review. Will feedback be provided for just proposals not funded or for all proposals. Bloom suggested that all applicants get feedback on their proposals. For proposals that received partial funding, an explanation can be provided in the comments. Everyone should send their completed evaluation forms to Bloom and Hamernik by December 7th.

Motion made to accept the subcommittee’s recommendation for funding. Motion seconded and approved.

The following topics need to be addressed at a future meeting:

* Can applicants be funded in two consecutive years.
* Applicants applying to several categories – do we specify that they can only submit one proposal for a Grant-In-Aid, Seed Grant or Interdisciplinary grant, or state they can submit one proposal per category.
* Criteria needs to be followed for the information in the current call. We should not deny someone funding because they were funded last year unless the call specifically states that.
* Add language to the call that states priority will be given to non-tenured, junior faculty and those that have not received funding during the previous year, or previous two years.

Grant-In-Aid: Ford indicated they received 17 proposals and they recommend fully funding 12, and partially funding 2. Discussion held on whether or not the applicants that had their budgets reduced will be able to complete their projects. Ford asked that the topic of “serial applicants” be added as a discussion item at a future meeting.

Motion made to accept the subcommittee’s recommendation for funding. Motion seconded and approved.

Faculty Seed Grants – Subcommittee 1: Ferguson said each subcommittee reviewed 14 proposals. The subcommittee chairs met and discussed the recommendations from each subcommittee and are at consensus. No budgets were changed. The budget requests were well justified. Subcommittee 1 recommends funding 4 proposals and seeks input from the Council on a 5th proposal. The 5th proposal does not fit the Seed Grant category. After discussion, motion made to fund 5 proposals from Subcommittee 1. Motion seconded and approved.

Discussion item for a future meeting: it needs to be made clear that perhaps as a first reading, if the proposal does not have an explicit plan, it should not even be reviewed. We are trying to encourage new researchers and their plan has to be clear. Also reiterate that priority will be given to those that are new investigators/new faculty.

Faculty Seed Grants – Subcommittee 2: Shipley said their subcommittee recommends funding 5 proposals, and possibly a 6th. Discussion held on the 6th proposal. Peg will check and see if proposal #26 was funded last year, and if the research is different. Motion made to fund 5 proposals from subcommittee 2. Motion seconded and approved. Next year Peg will provide each subcommittee with a list of funded proposals from the previous year.

Albrecht suggested that the Council consider sponsoring a seminar or talk on how to write a good proposal for the programs offered by the Council. This will be added as a discussion item at a future meeting.

Azzam asked if a successful proposal could be posted on our website. It was decided this is considered proprietary information so we will not be able to do this.

Interdisciplinary Grants: Albrecht said they recommend funding 6 proposals and will have $1,116 in funding left. Discussion held on whether the teams that applied were interdisciplinary; some of them were not. When the proposals were not interdisciplinary, they were penalized. Some were strictly teaching, no research and no plan to obtain future funding. People are not following the directions in the call. Proposal #13 was not reviewed and was moved to another ORED competition as per Peg’s direction. The proposals recommended for funding had clear outcomes and plans for obtaining external funding.

Discussion on what will be done with the remaining funds. It was decided the funds will be carried over for the spring competition. Motion made to accept the subcommittee’s recommendation for funding. Motion seconded and approved. Peg will send Council members a complete list of all projects funded from decisions made today.

***Report to the Faculty Senate:*** Bloom said the Council reports to the Faculty Senate annually, and he is scheduled to present December 11th. A draft of the report he plans to present was circulated earlier for comments. He indicated he captured the regular Research Council business and other topics that came up during the year. Please let him know if you have comments. Sarroub said one question that might come up is the humanities area and why they haven’t been funded. Discussion held on whether or not we want to include information on the decisions made today. The report is for last year so todays’ decisions do not need to be included.

***Nebraska Lecture Series***: Steve Baenziger’s lecture was held November 1st and it was an extremely poor turnout from the Council and UNL as a whole. We attempt to make it sound like it is one of the highest honors we can bestow on a faculty member, yet attendance is poor. We will need to discuss releasing a call for new nominations for the lecture series at the January meeting.

***Potential topics for future meetings***: Bloom mentioned the following items as possible topics for discussion at future meetings.

1. Usefulness of the new evaluation forms, were they helpful, were they not. Albrecht said they were a great benefit to their subcommittee. Bloom asked each subcommittee to review their evaluation forms and make comments. It was suggested that the Visiting Scholar/Symposia/Distinguished Lecturer evaluation forms be different from the Grant-In-Aid, Seed Grants and Interdisciplinary Grants. We need to tweak the language regarding what the expectations are.
2. Mentoring junior faculty. Can we find out what is currently being done in other departments.
3. The move to the Big 10 and what it will do for research on campus.
4. UARC – discuss the new arrangement we have with Stratcom that provides us a more direct channel of funding for defense related research.
5. Discuss the increasing micromanagement by the Office of Sponsored Programs of faculty grants. OSP has concerns that are beyond what the funding agency requires. Much of it stems from auditor requests. Sarroub said this may be a faculty senate issue. We do not currently have a strong faculty lobbying group. What steps are necessary to bring an issue before the Senate.

Bloom asked if any of these topics were of interest to the group. Sarroub asked if we should consider adding a category of funding for the Research Council that would come from the DOD, or could we have a new RFP that relates to DOD funding. Everyone agreed on 3) the move the Big 10, and 5) the Sponsored Programs micromanagement issue, as future topics.

***Adjournment***: There being no future business, the meeting adjourned at noon.