**UNL Research Council**

**October 5, 2012**

**MINUTES**

***Present:*** Professors Awada, Azzam, Bloom, Burnett, Enders, Ferguson, Ford, Ladunga, Sarroub, Shipley, and VCR Paul

***Absent:*** Professors Albrecht and Gonzalez-Allende

***Guests:*** Professors David Hansen (Psychology) and John Anderson (Economics)

***Approval of Minutes September 7, 2012 Meeting:*** Motion made to accept the minutes as distributed. Motion seconded and approved.

Bloom welcomed members, guests and VC Paul to the meeting. Professors Hansen and Anderson are attending the meeting today to present information on the Social Science Initiative.

***Social Science Initiative:*** Hansen distributed information on the Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Initiative (SBSRI). In June, VC Paul appointed a task force of leaders assisted by Deb Hamernik and Noah Clayton. They are developing an interdisciplinary initiative that will be communicated to faculty. He reviewed recent activities, and their future plans. The initial charge for the group was to enhance research excellence in the social sciences and increase funding. A mission statement was drafted. A faculty forum was held in June with 40+ faculty in attendance where they discussed issues and the charge for the initiative. Potential themes and strengths were discussed. The task force also met with dozens of social science chairs and directors on campus and talked about some of the same issues that came up during the forum. They discussed specific faculty that they would like to see have a major role in the initiative. A faculty survey is currently underway with Mindy Anderson-Knott leading the effort. They have identified 24 themes. One thing they are very interested in is a network analysis of the themes. As an example, it would show faculty in relation to these themes and then the data they’ve generated would be analyzed.

They are organizing a workshop to be held at the fall Research Fair to discuss the infrastructure and support needs. They would like to learn from other Big 10 institutions and have invited speakers from those institutions to talk about what they’ve learned. Dr. Rowell Huesmann (University of Michigan), Kurt Johnson (Penn State University), and Kevin Leicht (University of Iowa) will be speaking. They will talk about how their programs work at their institutions. There will be a panel discussion at noon and breakout sessions in the afternoon. The task force has received tremendous support from the Office of Research. They would also like the support of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs so they will be talking to Dr. Weissinger. They hope to move forward based on the themes they have identified.

Anderson noted that pursuing a Research Data Center (RDC) would give UNL researchers access to restricted federal data and would provide the opportunity for funded projects that would help pay the costs. Three UNL faculty members recently attended a meeting of all the RDC directors and learned more about how these centers operate. Paul added that the task force has done an excellent job and this initiative will have an impact on society.

Bloom asked if there is anything the Research Council can do to communicate this information to faculty. Hansen asked that we encourage faculty to respond to the survey, and to support the event at the Research Fair. If anyone has ideas or questions, please call or email Hansen, Anderson or any of the task force members. Bloom thanked Hansen and Anderson for sharing the information with the Council.

***Further Discussion on Proposal Reviews:*** Bloom said the deadline for applications is October 12th. He reviewed the number of applications received as of today. Our next meeting is November 30at 10:00 a.m. where each subcommittee will make their recommendations for funding and decisions will be voted on. It was suggested that the two Faculty Seed Grant subcommittee chairs meet prior to the November 30 meeting to discuss their funding recommendations.

***Review of the Research Council Bylaws:*** Copies of an email received from the Chancellor’s office regarding review of the bylaws was distributed for review. Discussion held on the statement “The Council may recommend to the Chancellor and the Board of Regents summer research appointments for faculty members”. Sarroub asked if advocating for faculty salaries is something we should pursue in the future. Paul suggested we ask for clarification on this statement from Bill Nunez in the Chancellor’s office. Peg will follow-up with Nunez.

***Nebraska Lecture Series:*** Bloom reminded Council members to be sure and attend the next lecture, scheduled for Nov. 1at 3:30 in the city campus union. Steve Baenziger will be the lecturer. Bloom will moderate the discussion.

***Comments VC Paul:***  Paul reminded everyone that the internal competition requesting proposals for the Arts & Humanities Research Enhancement Program are due November 12. He also indicated he has begun tweeting and found it a good means of communicating externally.

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