University Research Council  
January 15, 2013  
Meeting Summary

• Mark Redfern discussed adding research updates from Council members to monthly URC meetings:
  ➢ Each month one council member will present research update for their School/Department. Dr. Kathleen Blee gave the first research update at this meeting.
  ➢ The goal is to open up questions and share new innovative ideas to the council members for discussion.

• Mark Redfern announced Pitt’s Department of German’s Guide to Graduate Funding Opportunities, Scholarships and Fellowships. This is a good fellowship resource for graduate students:  
  http://www.german.pitt.edu/documents/German_Graduate_Fellowship_Guide.pdf

• Mark Redfern asked for the Council’s help with reviews for the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship reviews. We need to determine the top three applicants (from 20 student applications) to be nominated from Pitt. Nomination deadline is January 25th.

• Internship Report Update: Draft of Internship Report will be sent to the Council by the end of January to review for the final Recommendation Report to be submitted to Provost Beeson. The purpose of this report will help determine the direction the Provost’s office will take regarding future internship programs.

Other Announcements

Small Grant Program (CDRF)

• The Small Grants Program review process timeline was announced. Mark Redfern will select the Program review committees at the February URC Meeting. Grant proposal submissions are due March 15, 2013. We hope to have the final selections completed by mid-May.

• Dr. Nancy Baker brought up the question as to whether the proposals should be also available to non-tenured faculty? Future discussions will continue on this topic.

2013 Agency Bus Trip

• The Annual Agency Bus Trip is being scheduled for late March or early April 2013. This year’s trip is focused on Humanities/Social Sciences areas. More details regarding the trip will be discussed at February’s URC Meeting.

Monthly URC Member Research Update:  
Dr. Kathleen Blee, The Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences

Highlights from Dr. Blee’s Research Update:
• The Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences is an extremely diverse school.
• Much of the research in the natural sciences in Arts & Sciences is funded by grants and contracts.
• However, much of the research and scholarly activity within the School in the non-sciences is not externally funded.
• A large majority of the graduate students within the Humanities are supported by fellowships or teaching assistantships/teaching fellowships.

Challenges:
• Working with extreme diverse cultures and styles of research, scholarship, and creative activity across the School.
• Many graduate students aren’t attached to laboratories, but develop independent research and scholarly projects.
• Most faculty in the Humanities work independently, not in team research.
• Within the Humanities/Social Sciences, some faculty mostly publish books rather than journal articles.

Issues:
• More demand for undergraduate research internships (working in laboratories and elsewhere).
• Humanities/Social Sciences undergraduate students need to acquire non-laboratory research and scholarly experience.
• Need to keep research and teaching laboratories state of the art – the new Physics renovated laboratories are a good example. Costs are very high.
• Increase in costs of faculty startup packages, especially in the natural sciences – this continues to be a significant drain on budgets especially.
• Humanities/Social Sciences issues:

  **Humanities:**
  - Academic job market is shrinking in Humanities and, to a lesser degree, also in Social Sciences.
  - We need to move students through the programs more quickly.
  - Students need to show up in the job market with publishing experience.
  - We are shifting some TA/TF lines to Fellowships to reduce time to degree and compete for the very best graduate student applicants.

  **Creative/Performing Arts:**
  - Scholarly needs are very different than other departments.
  - Need a variety of arts studios.
  - Need practice rooms and stages.

---

*The next URC Meeting is scheduled for February 11th at 12:00 noon (University Club).*