THE PROVOST’S CHARGE

On November 1, Provost Patricia Beeson delivered the Council’s charge. She asked Council members to:

- continue to support individual researchers, particularly through the Central Research Development Fund and the annual Federal Agencies Trip;
- create new ideas to assist young faculty;
- grant writing
- assist the Schools for Humanities and Social Sciences
- undergraduate research;
- collaborations
- determine what is inter- and multi-disciplinary research
- competitive funding environment – we need to look at emerging areas of research – where is research going?

FACULTY ASSISTANCE

Central Research Development Fund

Eighty-one faculty members submitted proposals to the Central Research Development Fund. Applications were evaluated by one of three Council subcommittees, whose members specialize in the health sciences, the sciences and engineering, and the humanities and the social sciences. Eight of 24 proposals from health science disciplines were funded, eight of 28 proposals from engineering and science disciplines were funded, and 10 of 29 proposals from the humanities and social sciences were funded.

Federal Agency Briefing Trip

On Monday, April 8th, the Office of the Provost sponsored a series of briefing sessions during which representatives of federal agencies discussed opportunities for research funding. Twenty members of the University of Pittsburgh’s and two members of Duquesne University’s social sciences and humanities faculty, as well as three grant administration staff, attended. Representatives of NSF directorates and divisions, the National Endowment for the Humanities, NIH, and other federal organizations spoke. The speakers provided information on discipline-specific research programs, agency contacts, and proposal review criteria.
**Multidisciplinary Projects**

The University Research Council postponed funding any multidisciplinary projects for this current year. We will put this on the URC fall agenda to discuss the future funding of these projects.

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH**

[Mark: Chuck had a section in the URC activity report for Office of Research – do you want to add something here? Below is Chuck’s input from last year]

Allen DiPalma, Director of the Office of Research, discussed a number of items that are related to the Office’s operations:

- An Office of Research portal is now located on my.pitt.edu. It provides links to information that researchers and research administrators regularly use.
- The Office continues to solicit evaluations of its operations from research administrators and faculty members.
- The Office is developing a research administration certificate program that will be geared to administrators.
- Many proposals still arrive late so Office of Research Staff do not have time to troubleshoot them.

**INFORMATION SESSIONS**

**Conflict of Interest Presentation**

Dr. Jerry Rosenberg and David Wehrle gave a presentation on the progress of phasing in the new conflict of interest policies. David Wehrle answered questions on the disclosure forms.

**Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI)**

Dr. Karen Schmidt, Research Facilitator, Regulatory Knowledge and Support Core from CTSI gave a presentation updating the CTSI responsible conduct of research (RCR) training. Highlights from the presentation were: CTSI’s training is an interactive format, consisting of case-based discussions. RCR training helps researchers move their research forward. Training is available to all members of the university committee, including graduate students, post docs, and research coordinators

**Grant Writing/Developer Activities in the Swanson School of Engineering (SSOE)**

Dr. Cheryl Bodnar, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering in SSOE (former Grant Developer for SSOE) gave a presentation on her grant developer activities in SSOE. Dr. Bodnar discussed her experiences working with SSOE faculty on grant preparation
and the grant writing process. She also offered various grant writing resources available to faculty and workshops available through NIH and NSF.

URC MEMBER SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT UPDATES GIVEN

Dr. Kathleen Blee  
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research  
The Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Nancy Baker  
Department of Environment and Occupational Health  
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Dr. Matthew Kropf  
Director, Energy Institute  
Bradford Campus

MISCELLANEOUS

Council members discussed several other issues. They included:

Conflict of Interest Policy

The Council had discussions regarding the new conflict of interest policies, especially reviewing the new restrictions on disclosing travel reimbursements outside of the University of Pittsburgh, new thresholds for reporting remuneration, and training requirements.

Research Internship Program

The Council worked on a Research Internship report for submitting to the Provost. This report lists the research internships available to University of Pittsburgh students as well as internships offered at other universities across the United States. We are in the process of finalizing for submission in the future.

Council members also covered:

- The University’s module on research integrity
- Research funding for senior faculty
- Graduate and undergraduate student resources
- Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship reviews
- Grant Writing assistance for faculty
- Challenges hosting international scholars
MEMBERS

Chair  
Mark S. Redfern, Vice Provost for Research

Representing the
School of Arts and Sciences  
Kathleen Blee
Walter Carson
Julie Fiez
Catherine Greeno
William Layton

GSPIA
Graduate School of Public Health  
Louise Comfort
Katz Graduate School of Business  
Stephen Wisniewski
Frits Pil

School of Dental Medicine  
Alexandre Vieira
School of Engineering  
Richard Debski
Kent Harries

SHRS
School of Information Sciences  
Michael Lewis
School of Law  
David Harris
School of Medicine  
Lisa Borghesi
Michelle Broido
David Carroll
Neil Hukriede
Kacey Marra
Jeremy Somers
Peijun Zhang

School of Nursing  
Susan Sereika
Paula Sherwood
School of Pharmacy  
Robert Gibbs
University of Pittsburgh at Bradford  
Matthew Kropf
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown  
Steven Stern
Graduate Student Representative  
Hassan Takabi, School of Information Sciences