THE PROVOST’S CHARGE

On November 14, 2013, in the Provost’s absence, Mark Redfern delivered this year’s URC Council Charge. She asked Council members to:

- Continue to sponsor the Multidisciplinary Small Grant Program
- Members of the Council will evaluate applications to the Central Research Development Fund. The Council should work with the Office of Research to refine the electronic submission and evaluation process.
- The council should work with faculty members to determine what kinds of training programs could benefit the University community.
- The council should continue to sponsor the annual spring Federal Agencies trip.
- Future research agendas and research-promotion strategies:
  - Diversify the University’s research portfolio in a way that develops new research models and identifies future, cutting-edge research questions. The Council should invite speakers from industry to determine if industry’s research and development strategies can be applied at the University
  - Speakers from research-related administrative units should continue to address the Council

FACULTY ASSISTANCE

Central Research Development Fund

Sixty-five 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 7th, 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 three faculty members from Duquesne University, as well as three grant administration staff, attended. Representatives of NSF directorates and divisions, the Department of Energy, Association of American Universities, Office of Naval Research, NIH, and other federal organizations spoke. The speakers provided information on discipline-specific research programs, agency contacts, and proposal review criteria.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Mark Redfern: Presentation given to November 2013 Faculty Assembly

Highlights of the presentation:
Strategic Initiatives:
- Innovation Institute
- Sustainability
- Support Energy Research
- Corporate Relations

New Initiatives:
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Big Data
- Computation: Where do we want to be in five years?
- Shale Gas/Water

Julie Myers-Irvin, PhD: Benefits of having Central Research Developments Office

Dr. Julie Myers-Irvin from the Swanson School of Engineering (SSOE) gave a presentation on the benefits of having a Central Research Development Office. Some highlights from her presentation were:

- Pitt’s Current Grant Developer Offices
- Benefits of a central office
- Grant writing resources
- Faculty training resources
- Metrics for success
MISCELLANEOUS

Council members discussed several other issues. They included:

Undergraduate Research Internship Program

The Council continued discussions on Pitt’s Undergraduate Research Internship programs. Donald Taylor gave several presentations regarding Pitt’s current undergraduate programs and initiated surveys with faculty and students. Discussions ensued on how information can better be circulated to students on the various programs available. One discussion was developing a centralized system?

The Undergraduate Research Internship report is still in the works for submitting recommendations to the Provost in the future. 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:

- Establishment of a Grants Development Office: Central Office style?
- Research funding for senior faculty
- Graduate and undergraduate student resources
- Challenges hosting international scholars

COUNCIL 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 Louise Comfort

Graduate School of Public Health Stephen Wisniewski

Katz Graduate School of Business Frits Pil
School of Dental Medicine  Alexandre Vieira
School of Engineering  Kent Harries
SHRS  Nancy Baker
School of Information Sciences  Marek Druzdzel
School of Law  Haider Ala Hamoudi
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  Donald Taylor
Swanson School of Engineering
(Department of Bioengineering)