Research Committee Meeting

Minutes

January 27, 2012  10:00-11:00 AM
Science Complex, Room 200

Members present: Mary Dzindolet, Dennis Frisby, Mohammad Tabatabai, Anton Wohlers, and P.K. Das

Members not attending: Ali Soylu (Dr. Ali provided favorable recommendation of Stegmaier proposal by e-mail.)

1. The Meeting was started on time at 10:05 a.m.

2. Approval of last meeting’s minutes
   The minutes of the January 20, 2012 meeting were distributed and read. The minutes were approved unanimously, after correction of a typo.

3. Follow-up deliberation/recommendation on Stegmaier proposal
   The committee members discussed the responses provided by Dr. Stegmaier to address the questions/concern raised by the Committee at the last meeting. Everybody made favorable comments about the proposed scholarly work and remarked that Dr. Stegmaier’s responses were sufficiently satisfactory. Dr. Frisby made a motion recommending that the project be funded and Dr. Nalley seconded it. The motion was unanimously accepted.

   Dr. Nalley stated the need for a university policy regarding involving students in faculty-performed research. Dr. Dzindolet stated the need for a university policy on royalties or other incomes that may accrue from publication of scholarly works (e.g., a book) by the faculty.

4. Continued Discussion on Strategies to encourage external grant writing
   On this topic, a prolonged discussion in which all of the members actively participated was held. Here are the main points:

   Dr. Frisby: Identify and list the disciplines and departments most likely to submit potentially successful grant proposals. Challenge these departments for grant applications.

   Dr. Nalley: Mentioned that she had a list of barriers (“non-incentives”) that discourage writing grant applications. She will share this list with the committee.

   Drs. Frisby/Wohlers:
   Science (biology in particular) and education departments are among the most appropriate or qualified for submission grant proposal.

   Dr. Wohlers: Annual reports of CU provide the list of recent successful grants from external agencies.

   Dr. Frisby/Nalley/Tabatabai/Das
   In the light of full teaching loads, primary programmatic focus on teaching (by the administration), additional ever-increasing non-teaching responsibilities (e.g., PQIR), increasing office hours, enrolling and advising students, lab hours that extend beyond the allocated times, etc., lack of uninterrupted time is the main barrier against grant writing.

   Dr. Dzindolet: Some faculty may not be interested in research.

   Dr. Das: Can we benefit from the experience/information on research vs. teaching from another similar university?

   Dr. Frisby: At the University of Central Oklahoma, the faculty have 12-hr teaching loads (like ours), but are relieved of nonteaching duties, e.g., physical enrollment and advising.

   Dr. Frisby: 4-day week schedules affect the lab activity, including lab preps, adversely and result in additional time constraints.
Dr. Das: Is Weaveonline helping to reduce the time spent on PQIR and program assessment activities?

Dr. Frisby: Preparing and retrieving data for Weaveonline are still very time-consuming.

Dr. Frisby: Allowing uninterrupted time for research as well as research grant writing is extremely important.

In response to Dr. Wohler asking to identify issues specific to various departments:

- Dr. Dzindolet (Psychology) mentioned (a) the frustration and resulting turnover of new faculties who are told about research being an important component of academic activities, but experience the (in practice), (b) lack of time as the main issue, and (c) highly competitive nature of the process for obtaining a grant
- Dr. Frisby (Biology) mentioned (a) lab-based research being highly demanding on time, (b) the need for uninterrupted time and days, and (c) increased load of subsidiary matters.
- Dr. Nalley (Chemistry), supported by Dr. Das, pointed out the lack of sophisticated, state-of-the-art equipment for research in the department
- Dr. Tabatabai (Mathematics) mentioned the severely reduced number of regular faculties in the department and increased dependence of adjunct teachers. As a result, all of the non-teaching duties have fallen on the few regular faculties.

Dr. Frisby/Nalley: Mentioned the offer of Masters degree in Natural Science and use of undergraduate teaching assistants at Northeastern Univ.

Dr. Tabatabai: The administration should seek the opinion of the faculty in grant application matters.

5. **Date for next meeting**
   February 10, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

6. **The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.**