

COMMISSION ON RESEARCH MINUTES

September 12, 2012
325 Burruss Conference Room
3:30pm – 5:00pm

Members Present: Mike Akers (Chair), William Knocke, Guru Ghosh, Terry Herdman, Tom Inzana, Chris Lawrence, Kevin Davy, Heather Moorefield-Lang, Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, Monica Rich (Recorder)

Absent: Dennis Dean, Lay Nam Chang, Iuliana Lazar, Anita Puckett, Annie Pearce, Chris Zobel, Chema de la Garza, Randy Wynne, Bradley Martens.

Guests: Martin Daniel (for Bob Walters), Ken Miller, Sandra Muse.

I. Approval of the Agenda:

- a. A motion to approve the agenda as presented was offered, seconded and was carried.

II. Announcements:

- a. Commission on Research Charge: M. Akers reintroduced the Commission on Research (COR) charge to the members.
- b. Introductions and Objectives of COR for FY2012-13: Commission members were introduced and M. Akers sited objectives for FY2012-13.
 - i. ICTAS 5-Year Review Report
 - ii. Revision to policy 13025 which focuses on the removal of principal or co-principal investigators on externally sponsored research grants and contracts. The current policy is more focused on issues arising from the sponsor itself, but does not effectively address internal issues that may arise between VT investigators. The Commission on Faculty Affairs will most likely lead on this review, but the COR should also be involved in considerations of policy revision.
- c. Approval and Posting of the Minutes of May 9, 2012* - A motion was made to adopt the May 9, 2012 minutes without modifications and the motion was carried.

III. Unfinished Business:

- a. Election of Vice-Chair for FY2012-13: Chema de la Garza was nominated by Kevin Davy and second by Terry Herdman. Vote was unanimous in support of de la Garza for the Vice-Chair position for FY2012-13.
- b. Report on Ongoing Activities:
 - i. University Library Committee: H. Moorefield-Lang reported the New Port Research commons was opened and is a new research facility on the library side of the Torgersen Bridge. Faculty, students and staff Open Access Subvention fund is to subsidize processing fees, for articles published in scholarly peer reviewed open access journals. This fund is to aid faculty in addressing the cost of page fees associated with publishing their papers in these journals.
 - ii. Centers and Institutes Update: Bill Knocke is working with Ken Smith and the Provost's Office to catalog information on center and University institutes around campus. This work is required as part of the implementation of the updated Policy 13005. Senior management areas are being asked to update information on centers and University Institutes, including providing updated charters. The memo being sent will also ask for the development of five-year programmatic review cycles for all centers and University Institutes plus their directors. The review cycle for certain centers would begin in 2013.
 - iii. Research Faculty Initiatives: Mike Akers Reported that there was a pilot study to allow SRF to be provided additional compensation when they were doing academic instruction in departments (if the effort was above and beyond their normal duties and responsibilities). He also reported that

there was a pilot program underway with 6-7 departments and one research center (CMI) to address the costs for SRF to prepare proposals to external research sponsors since these costs could not be legitimately charged to external sponsors.

iv. Research Administration: No report given.

IV New Business

a. Presentation and acceptance of VTTI 5-Year Review Report: K. Davy presented the findings of the review committee.

i. The Charge: In accordance with Virginia Tech's Policy 13005, VTTI underwent a 5-year review of its operations in Spring Semester 2012. The procedures and guidelines outlined in Section 3.5 of policy 13005 were implemented.

ii. Virginia Tech Review Team: Jesus M. de la Garza, professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, (Chair), G. Don Taylor, Professor & Department Head, Industrial and Systems Engineering, Karen A. Roberto, Professor & Director, Institute for Society, Culture and Environment, Kent Nakamoto, Professor & Department Head, Marketing; Kevin Day, Professor, Human Nutrition, Foods, & Exercise.

External Review Team: Dennis Christiansen, Director, Texas Transportation Institute; Peter F. Sweatman, Director, Univ. of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Support: Sandra K. Muse, Sr. Director, Administrative Services, OVPR.

iii. About VTTI: The University Center for Transportation Research was created in 1988, and later was restructured as VTTI. Today VTTI is one of three Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration Intelligent Transportation Systems Research Centers of Excellence. The National Tire Research Center and the Center for Injury Biomechanics are two of the newest and largest initiatives within VTTI; Per the 2011 Annual Report, VTTI's sponsored-research expenditures have averaged an annual 37.5% growth rate between FY03 and FY11; Per the 2011 Business Plan, VTTI is projecting doubling its expenditures size by the year 2016.

iv. Data Gathering Process: Three briefing meetings with VTTI's director; One-on-one meetings with all member of the VTTI Stakeholders Committee; An online survey distributed to all VTTI faculty, staff, and students; A 1.5-day site visit by an external review team comprised of two national leaders in the field of transportation; A meeting with six faculty members; A meeting with six staff members; A meeting with six students; and a tour of the VTTI facilities.

v. Recommendation: The Virginia Tech Review Team strongly concludes that the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute is fully meeting its mission as a disciplinary university research institute. Therefore, the Virginia Tech Review Team recommends that VTTI be re-authorized and receive university support for the next five-year period, 2012-2017. The Commission voted to accept the review report and to forward it to Dr. Bob Walters for his review and final action as per Policy 13005.

b. Governance Representation for Research Faculty: Extensive discussion took place within the COR regarding the issue of governance representation for VT Research Faculty. The COR reaffirmed its desire to be a place within University governance for issues related to research faculty to be brought and addressed. The discussion strayed at times into issues such as relative benefits for research faculty versus T&R faculty; whether or not VT should consider a different classification for post-docs outside of the research faculty realm; and, confusion over the inclusion of the word "Special" in the title of Research Faculty. Ultimately the COR decided that it would be most appropriate to resolutions for COR review and action towards University governance:

i. A resolution to remove the word "Special" from the title of Special Research Faculty (this resolution would be coordinated with the Commission on Faculty Affairs)

ii. A resolution that University Council take steps to consider how research faculty may be best integrated into the workings of governance at VT.

V Adjournment at 4:58pm.