

## COMMISSION ON RESEARCH

October 14, 2009

325 Burruss Hall

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** J. Ball, L. Coble, D. Cook, J. de la Garza, R. Hall, T. Herdman, W. Huckle, T. Inzana, R. Jensen, D. Jones, J. Jones, B. Laing, S. Martin, K. Miller, T. Schroeder (for D. Dean), S. Samavedi, R. Siegle, R. Veilleux, P. Young,

**Members Absent:** R. Benson, S. K. De Datta, T. Fox

**Others:** S. Muse, C. Montgomery

- 1. Approval of Agenda:** A motion to approve the agenda was offered by D. Cook and seconded by J. de la Garza and carried.
- 2. Approval of the minutes for CoR meetings September 30, 2009:** P. Young stated that a correction was needed in section 6 to reflect that there was an increase in the library budgets. J. de la Garza noted a small grammatical error in section 7. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was offered by R. Jensen and seconded by B. Laing and carried.
- 3. Quarterly Research Expenditures Report:** R. Hall reported on the most recent report of research expenditures by the National Science Foundation. NSF is charged with annually collecting data on all university research, regardless of its source. The most recent reporting period was July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008 and Virginia Tech reported \$373 million in expenditures. This ranked the university 46th, down four places from the prior year. R. Hall noted that there was only \$50 million difference between the universities ranked between 41st and 50th. Tech's growth between 2007 and 2008 was small, mainly because of the reduction of \$12 million in state-funded research expenditures between the two years.  
  
R. Hall announced that our goal as part of our strategic plan is to reach \$540 million by 2012 using the NSF algorithm.
- 4. Status of Defining Centers & Institutes:** R. Hall reported that this agenda item was deferred at the last Academic Council meeting due to the discussions on the budget and the ASO Plans. The President made an announcement at the end of the meeting that there would be some direction coming regarding the new policies.
- 5. Effort Certification Policy Revision- Policy 3105:** K. Miller reported on the proposed revisions of the Effort Certification Policy 3105. He explained that this is in conjunction with the revision of Policy 6200 which was discussed at our last meeting. K. Miller stated that the changes made in Policy 3105 mirror the revisions in Policy 6200. These policies were revised in a response to the Yale-Duke settlements and an effort to be more compliant.

K. Miller explained that the first change made was to reflect the responsibility of signing an effort report. The second change made was regarding the language detailing the certification of employees total work efforts. It is stated that if anyone other than a PI is going to sign off on an effort report, there has to be an after the fact written documentation from the PI or some one who has direct knowledge about the project certifying their efforts. There is a presumption that a business manager or administrative person would never have that knowledge on their own. L. Coble noted that a possible instance for this would be in the case where an individual has left the university and obtaining that additional documentation would be difficult. K. Miller stated that in such cases a department head could certify only if evidence is available such as notes from the PI during their work on the project or a statement from the Co-PI. Otherwise those funds must be moved off the project and charged to overhead or departmental funds.

The third change in the policy defines what 'effort' is. K. Miller explained that it is what ever time you are working for the university. The denominator of the effort percentage must always be total university effort, irrespective of the total number of hours worked during the effort reporting period. K. Miller provided the example if a faculty member works an average of 50 hours per week during an effort reporting period and works an average of 10 hours per week on a particular sponsored project, the correct effort percentage for that project would be 20%.

Lastly, a change was made in section 4.3 which relates back to those changes made in Policy 6200. If a faculty member is charging 100% of their time to a grant or contract, they can not work on other things such as advising students, attending committee meetings, etc. If so, they should have other sources of funding. The recommended solution was to charge their time on the project through-out the year- as they are working on it- build up salary savings, and carry over those salary savings to the summer. K. Miller stated that faculty should not charge more time to the grant than what is actually spent. J. de la Garza asked if a conversion of a faculty member to a CY appointment would be a solution. K. Miller explained that some CY faculty still end up charging 100% of their time to a grant or contract of the summer months, which is unacceptable. In order to move from AY to CY a PI would need a consistent source of funding and not all are eligible to convert. We need to get our effort in sync with the funding. L. Coble and J. de la Garza felt that the faculty should be trained and informed thoroughly on the implementation of these changes.

K. Miller requested feedback and suggestions on clarity of language for the revisions on this policy be emailed to him.

- 6. VTTI Director Review:** R. Hall reported to the Commission that a new piece has been added to the Institute/Centers reviews. The VP for Research would like to decouple the reviews of the Institute/Centers effectiveness and the Director's effectiveness. A complete analysis would be performed with assistance from University Organizational & Professional Development and includes not only the stakeholders committee, but employees and various constituencies. The review process will be similar to other administrator reviews such as Deans and Department Heads.

R. Hall reported that the first review to be completed is for the Director for VTTI, Tom Dingus. A personnel-type committee will be formed to conduct this review. B. Huckle asked for volunteers to participate on the committee. J. de la Garza and R. Jensen both volunteered to be on the committee.

**7. Macromolecules & Interface Institute Review:** S. Muse reported that the Macromolecules & Interface Institute was notified last year that they would be under review this year. They have been preparing their paperwork and Dr. Inzana should be convening a committee soon which would consist of one or more participants from the Commission as well as other individuals whom have expertise in the area of the review. We anticipate that a committee will be convened and this will be presented to the Commission this academic year. S. Muse clarified that this review would be for the Institute, rather than the Director, Richard Turner.

S. Muse explained that once a committee is convened, the Institute/Center under review would submit information such as their charter, financial reports, their current annual report, and info on scholarly work and grad students. A survey instrument tool has been developed to collect feedback on interaction with the center. It is important that the center has been successful in meeting their mission statement as outlined in the charter and that they are accomplishing what is expected in their research area in addition to their outreach and instructional activity. R. Hall added that essentially the committee's charge is to recommend or not recommend that the center be continued as a university center.

B. Huckle asked for volunteers to participate in the MII review. T. Herdman stated that he would speak with S. Muse about his volunteering for this committee.

**8. Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.