

## **University Research Council**

**February 18, 2020**

**417 Beacon Heights**

**4:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Approved**

**Present:** Maryam Ahmed, Rebecca Battista, Erin Bouldin, Sara Evans, Beth Fiske, Karen Fletcher, Marie Hoepfl, Charna Howson, Ece Karatan, Pam Mitchem, Andrew Monroe, Julia Pedigo, Abhi Ramalingam, Twila Wingrove

**Excused:** Tracy Goodson-Espy, Alecia Jackson, Robin Tyndall, Rebecca Witter

**Absent:** Elaine Berry, Andrew Caldwell, Gary McCullough

**Staff:** Kate Hoffman

- Call to order – Ece Karatan 4:03 pm
- Approval of the January 21, 2020 minutes as amended (Pedigo, Bouldin ). VOTE: 13 – Approved, 0 - Opposed, 1 – Abstained. Motion passes.

### **Announcements**

Seats still available for the February 28, 2020 Walker College of Business Research Day with the National Science Foundation (NSF), featuring Alan Tomkins, Deputy Division Director of Social and Economic Sciences (SBE/SES). The event will introduce faculty to the NSF and the opportunities therein (specifically SBE, but other areas will be discussed as well), detail the NSF review process, and give tips on NSF grantsmanship. A luncheon panel of Appalachian business faculty will also be featured, to share lessons from their funded research experiences.

### **New Business**

Information on the upcoming Spring 2020 URC award competition -Karen Fletcher

March 3, 2020 at noon is the deadline for submissions. Reviews occur late March and early April. Voting is at the April URC meeting. Panels remain the same as the fall. Deadline is at noon across the board for internal grants for consistency.

Recruitment and support of graduate students by Marie Hoepfl (Associate Dean of the School of

Graduate Studies)

The Graduate School recruits for main campus and online programs. For online programs we meet with University Communications as well as APP Online. Online recruitment has stepped up recently to meet the enrollment target of 100 additional students. There are slightly more main campus than online graduate students currently. The total number is down from 10 years ago. Ninety percent are North Carolina residents.

Dontrell Parson, the director of admission and recruiting, attends graduate fairs off campus that include the UNC System and HBCUs. Also, advertisements, such as signage are placed in elevators. Direct email is also used. There are some radio ads. The College of Business does radio advertisements. The Graduate School's budget for recruiting is small. Dontrell geographically targets through social media. Some faculty do their own recruiting.

The recent App State Graduate School Fair did not have as much traffic despite the strong effort to market it. Beth Fiske was there as an exhibitor. The fair was 3 hours long and there was no cost for campus departments to be an exhibitor. Other schools attending must pay to exhibit. Per Beth Fiske, the people that did come were genuinely interested.

Support of existing graduate students consists of 265 assistantship positions at 20 hours per week funding for main campus. Assistantships funded by colleges and departments are at 750. There is a \$2.4 million allocation of lapse salary funding provided to the Graduate School. This funding amount has not changed in a long time; even as tuition has increased. Offering higher salaries generates fewer positions. There is no formal policy regarding dividing the funding. GRAM is one type of assistantship offered. It is a competitive award to faculty members. About ten to twelve new GRAM assistantships are awarded each year at a rate of \$13.34 to \$15 per hour. This does not include grant students or teaching assistants. The department decides the type of assistantship (GA, TA, or RA).

A twenty hour per week assistantship just about covers the amount of in-state tuition. Tuition waivers are not allowed in North Carolina. Assistantships are not currently competitive. Students at Western North Carolina receive \$12,000. The Graduate School cannot be competitive. There is a proposal to Interim Provost Norris to increase assistantship values to \$10,000.

Scholarships to departments consist of fifty-five each at \$13,500 in academic year only. Summer funding is from Summer Sessions at 66 each (\$100,000 total funding) for a five-week work commitment. Ten each diversity assistantships are set aside per year at \$2,000. There are seven chancellor and eight provost fellowships awarded directly that are very competitive. The chancellor fellowship auto renews as long as a specified GPA is held. The Hirschvogel

Foundation provides three fellowships per year at \$2,000.

It would be nice to see more research assistantships used in meaningful ways to promote team research. It is unlikely that this could be mandated. Assistantship allocations have become entrenched. There would be push back.

Charna Howson relays that a conversation about writing tuition into grants happens during the budget development process with the PI and Sponsored Programs staff. The RUI program looks at the student allocations. Frequently graduate students are included. The program may cap available funds. It is highly competitive to build a graduate student budget at \$15,000. The advantage of RUI supplemental funding for existing NSF awards needs to be pursued. It usually funds an additional one to two students. Talented students find multiple scholarships to fund their graduate school experience.

Adjournment at 5:05 pm