

University Research Council
February 21, 2023
4 - 5:30 p.m.
Meeting Minutes - Approved

Present: Becki Battista, Elaine Berry, Nicholas Cline, Megen Culpepper, Karen Fletcher, Reza Foroughi, Adam Hege, Christine Hendren, Marie Hoepfl, Charna Howson, Alecia Jackson, Ann Kaplan, Ece Karatan, Ellen Lamont, Gary McCullough, Mina Min, Andres Tellez, Jenny Tonsing, Twila Wingrove, John Wiswell, Jason Xiong

Excused: Shanté Mathes, Heather Waldroup

Absent:

Staff: Kate Hoffman

Guest: Gabe Casale

- Ece Karatan, Office of Research, Vice Provost for Research, calls the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.
- Motion 1 (Hoepfl, Wiswell) to approve the minutes from the [January 17, 2023 meeting](#)
VOTE: 16 Approve, 0 Opposed, 3 Abstain. Motion passes.

New Business

Spring 2023 Review of Applications

Karen Fletcher reminds members of their [URC panels](#), [panel instructions](#), and [training video](#) for the 2023 Spring review of awards. If anyone needs to recuse themselves because they are submitting an application, please email shoafkm@appstate.edu by end of day on February 22nd.

Karen advises that applications are due by March 7th. Panels will be notified of the applications for review by the end of the day on March 10th. Initial reviews are due March 24th at noon. Then, the initial individual reviews will be returned to panel chairs by 5 pm. Panels meet for their final funding determinations by April 13th and submit their recommendations to Katie Shoaf.

Funding applications which are considered borderline will be shared prior to the award meeting. Panel chairs will still share the details regarding these borderline applications at

the meeting. See the URC Shared Google Drive to access all of the applications. People who have applied can use InfoReady to review their application after submission. Go to Status, and use the drop down button to select “All”. The application can be copied and pasted into Word from InfoReady.

Brief discussion of URC [liaison communications](#) including receiving feedback from units and [capturing feedback on the form](#)

How is the liaison communications working with the information being provided? Are the department chairs sending them out via email? Some members have relayed that department chairs are not sending it out so members are sending the communications out themselves. Ece has already spoken with the department chairs regarding this process and they will be reminded.. However, this is a new process. Ece urges members to keep reiterating that this is important and the chairs need to be part of the conduit by sending these communications. Other members have received feedback from departments and inquiries regarding URC grant eligibility.

Updates on Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities

Gabe Casale relays that there have been thirteen responses to the survey for feedback on [draft 1](#) to date. The draft does not assign any responsibilities or action items yet. NORDP will be sending two consultants to meet on campus March 30 and 31 for 1-½ days. The consultants will be meeting with the Provost, Deans, Chairs, Center and Institute Directors, and two groups of pre-selected faculty. Candid conversations are needed in these meetings so the Office of Research will not be attending the sessions with these groups. URC members are welcome to attend the meetings as well.

Old Business

Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Discussion Continues

The report out continues from [faculty](#) and [administrative](#) feedback with question three: How would you characterize the grants culture on campus?

Megen Culpepper receives a lot of different responses: golden handcuffs, no support once grant is received, OCSAs are affected, a burden on the department to find replacements for class releases, course buyouts, are we research focused or not, focus on research on your own time and that if you do research you’re a bad teacher. There isn’t a robust culture of research on campus. How can research be more supported across all colleges and departments?

Marie Hoepfl: It's insufficient, inconsistent, it varies across departments, training needed about processes and procedures, some don't want to apply due to lack of admin budget support, only one associate dean from within a college designated to help with research (Health Sciences), research grants need to be recognized, and advocate for getting external funding and expose upon the benefits of receiving external funding.

Comment: Business officers and departmental admins do not always get the training that they need to administer the grant budgets.

Ece replies that there is high turnover in these positions. Sponsored Programs and Special Funds Accounting have conducted a program to train administrative assistants as a cohort in the past. This program has been paused, partly due to COVID and partly due to the units being understaffed. The staffing problem is being addressed and the program is to resume.

The external reviews of all grants management practices questions efficiencies, staffing appropriateness, and the removal of burdens. Post-award administrators in colleges make a world of difference. Health Sciences has one. A growth of this support system is needed. David Jamison and Elaine Berry will attend a monthly open forum for admins to ask questions directly to them. Sharing and peer teaching is needed.

Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Discussion

Continues

Additional questions regarding partnerships and impacts ([faculty](#)) and ([administrative](#))

1. Are there external partners that you would like to engage? How do you engage with external partners?
2. How does App State contribute to state-level needs/problems, economic and workforce development

The membership splits into two breakout rooms (administrative and faculty) until 5:10 pm.

1a. Are there external partners that you would like to engage or would like to engage? Megen Culpepper reports for the faculty group: Public Health (High Country Council of Government, health department), biotech companies (Excela, Pneuma Respiratory, Moltex), Applied Design (LazyBoy may fund an endowed professorship position). Sustainable Technology (construction, departments of energy and transportation), Music (therapy with hospital, Hickory campus, public schools) Health Sciences (Dogwood Health Trust), Appalachian Regional Commission workforce, multidisciplinary collaborations and relationships. Marie Hoepfl says most departments who are successful at getting external funding have existing connections with non-profits and industry.

1b. How do you engage with external partners? Megen reports that the relationships are typically made by the individual (former students, employers of alumni, advisory boards). What are the rules of engagement? Connections form on an organic and personal level. Marie Hoepfl's suggestion is to create liaisons.

Ece states that sometimes faculty partnerships are handed off to the dean. What is Advancement's role? Have Advancement talk to the membership or leave it to the deans? What do we do with these connection contacts to broaden the relationships? Marie Hoepfl states that the development office keeps a tight rein on connections. What is the process? Who works directly with departments to get their individual contact lists of partnerships? Christine Hendren states that there can be a disconnect between Advancement and departments. How can information be shared between the two groups?

2. How does App State contribute to state-level needs/problems, economic and workforce development. Megan reports that App State works with external partners including the Appalachian Regional Commission. Alumni identify developmental needs by identifying potential donors and collaborators. Additionally the University works with federally funded outreach programs, along with internships, through curriculum, and service learning courses, such as the IDEX lab. How do we establish and hold on to these partnerships? Marie Hoepfl reports that the University contributes through state level organizations, North Carolina Institute on Medicine, GEAR UP, College Access, NEXUS, and the Energy Center. Provide Matthew Dockham a one page cheat sheet for talking points that highlight App State research work and researchers.

Announcements

Office of Student Research Day is April 19th. Abstracts are due by March 1st.

Adjournment (Fletcher, Cline) at 5:25 pm