

**University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Research Council of the Faculty Senate  
Paul Utgoff, Chair  
2006-2007  
Minutes  
November 3, 2006**

PRESENT: I. Agha, L. Button, C. Clifton, K. Danai, D. Gilbert, D. Ostendorf,  
W. Patterson, S. Scarpati, L. Sievert, M. Taunton, P. Utgoff, A. Mangels,  
T. Butterfield, E. Glogowski, P. KostECKI, M. Malone, B. McCandless,  
C. Sprague, J. Donais, H. Woodcock

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Paul Utgoff.

The minutes of October 13, 2006, were approved with the following revisions:

- In the second-to-last paragraph (Bill Patterson's report), add the sentence, "Most of the discussion focused on curriculum fee effects. There was discussion of priorities for the coming year." after "...AFRs." and before "The committee..."
- In fifth paragraph from the bottom, correct "...5-year assurance" to "...4-year assurance".

Dean Michael Malone, representing the Provost, indicated that the Provost is looking forward to meeting with the Research Council on December 8, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. in 370 Whitmore.

Vice Provost for Research Paul KostECKI announced cooperative efforts on campus to submit large proposals are underway to respond to a CRADA RFP issued by US Dept of Energy for a wind blade testing facility (estimated at \$120 million). The folks in RERL (Jim Manwell's group) are spearheading the effort for UMass working with MTC and an outside group. RERL will be involved in the technical/scientific side, but not the facility management. Paul further reported on a \$125 million DOE RFP for bio-fuel research. Dean George Langford and Shaw Ling Hsu are involved, hopefully coordinating with universities of Maine and New Hampshire. MIT is partnering with Purdue, and Paul anticipates "stiff competition" but says the effort will be a valuable experience nonetheless. Paul also reported that the outside consultants engaged to review the intellectual property (IP) policy will present their findings to an executive body of the University system on Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Dean Malone and Paul met with the Chancellor, and Paul believes he will have a proposal regarding the IP policy to take to the University system soon. He anticipates some possible exciting news regarding IP at the next meeting.

Andrew Mangels briefed the Council on his recent attendance at a Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) meeting. COGR is an advocacy group that liaisons with the federal government on issues such as export control, compliance, etc. He said Office of Management and Budget (OMB) representatives and Whitehouse science and technology advisors also attended this meeting which had a regulatory focus. Andrew said one topic covered was unannounced site visits or audits to inspect such things as animal use, etc, on research projects. Andrew said it was clarified at this meeting that grantees have a right to defer such meetings until central administration can be involved. Here at UMass, the process is to notify either OGCA or the Controller's Office (the audit liaison) of any impending visit or audit and coordinate through central administration as appropriate. Mike Malone suggested that a memo regarding audit procedures on campus be sent to PIs. Andrew also said effort reporting is a big focus currently. UMass Amherst's systems aren't as complex as medical school campuses, but we have had some issues that will be reviewed and possibly addressed in the future and changes could be likely.

Tony Butterfield, representing the Graduate Council, reported that the Council would be looking at the current graduate school application deadline (February 1) to determine whether it should be changed. Some schools currently have much earlier dates (such as December 1) and the concern is that we may be losing students as a result of not issuing admission decisions sooner. Tony also said the Council would be engaged in the broader examination being undertaken by the Faculty Senate of the academic year calendar and potential changes to it. There was some discussion about how this would work given the other five college campuses would then be on a different schedule. Tony said that the Chancellor is aware and agreed to discuss this with the other campuses as the process continues.

Carol Sprague, OGCA Director, said October numbers (proposals and awards) weren't available yet because it was only November 3<sup>rd</sup>. There was some discussion about the Council meeting schedule and its timing with regard to "month close" numbers being available. Dave Ostendorf was asking if anyone was paying attention to numbers that may be declining. Bruce McCandless indicated that award numbers were down because of the federal continuing resolution and its effect on award issuance. Carol reminded the Council that proposal and award statistics were available on-line usually by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Carol said one area that OGCA and the campus could use help with is the project closeout process when a PI leaves UMass. There is often no way for OGCA to get the PI to provide final reporting as required once they have left campus, and while OGCA works with department heads to fulfill the sponsor's requirements, even the DH often can't generate the technical report. Mike Malone said departures also impact equipment disposition and laboratory cleanup as well as raises data ownership questions. It was agreed that this would be a good area for some procedure development efforts.

Hilary Woodcock, Compliance Coordinator, reported that one of two ongoing issues with OLAW is still bubbling. UMass is "in the hot seat" on issues raised by last year's USDA report, which wasn't very positive. OLAW is now asking for a copy of the semi-annual report to the Chancellor, which they typically wouldn't do. Part of the problem is that we

promised a new full time staff person to handle the “housekeeping” issues we were cited on (expiration dates on materials, for example) and that person didn’t start until October 30<sup>th</sup>. Hilary hopes we can satisfy OLAW that we are making good faith efforts to address issues raised.

Elizabeth Glogowski, Graduate Student, reported that the election of a new president has been finalized and the GSS can now move forward on its plans and goals.

Leslie Button, representing Jay Schaffer, provided information on the library’s current budget status and said they are approximately \$3 million below where they should be funded to keep pace with inflation. More of the resources being purchased are electronic, but ironically that doesn’t necessarily reduce costs. She agreed to provide a copy of the charts and graphs to be included with these minutes.

Bill Patterson, Chair of the RC Policy Committee, reported that the committee met two weeks previously and discussed curriculum fee. Bruce McCandless is drafting a survey to determine how PIs are adjusting to the fee and what impact it is having on their research programs. The Council will review the survey and it could go out in mid-December. Bill also said the Committee will be undertaking a review of some 20-40 current policies posted on the web and making recommendations for updating, etc. In some cases, it may be as simple as updating the date so that people know they are still effective. There was some discussion about the decline in graduate students enrolled and employed and that this should be a concern for the campus.

Carol Sprague gave a presentation on the functions and workflow of OGCA, particularly for proposal processing. A slide presentation was given and questions and answers discussed. It was agreed that much of the information would be useful context to faculty members as they work on their proposals – particularly how many proposals may be in the work queue for a given deadline. There wasn’t enough time to cover the award process in great detail, but Paul said perhaps a future meeting could include this aspect of OGCA’s responsibilities.