

**University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Research Council of the Faculty Senate  
David R. Evans, Chair  
2008-2009  
Minutes  
February 6, 2009**

**PRESENT:** J. Adams, L. Button, L. Clarke, D. Evans, A. Foulkes, C. Jacelon, J. Kent-Braun, M. Lowance, M. Maroney, J. Miller, D. Ostendorf, W. Patterson, L. Sievert, M. Taunton, E. West, N. Khan, M. Malone, A. Mangels, B. McCandless, J. Schafer, L. Shea, C. Sprague

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Chair David Evans welcomed the Research Council back for the spring semester and extended a welcome to John Mullin, Dean of the Graduate School, returning to the Council today and hopefully in the future.

The minutes of the December 5, 2008 meeting were amended to reflect Jay Schafer's participation and the minutes were unanimously approved.

The Chair provided a recap of the activities since the Research Council last met, including a memo from the chair on the impact of budget policies on the research enterprise at UMass Amherst and a PI/RTF analysis sent to the Budget Task Force on Dec 9, 2008; a Visiting Scholar Safety Guidelines document sent to the Faculty Senate; and the DuBois Center Approval, also sent to Faculty Senate on January 31, 2009.

Carol Sprague, Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts Administration presented the *PI/Co-PI Eligibility, Roles, Rights, Responsibilities and Obligations* document for the Research Council's review and comment. Dean Mike Malone raised some additional commentary on the document and agreed to send those items to OGCA for review. Chair David Evans will distribute the revised document electronically to the Council for approval.

Andy Mangels provided a status report on the Effort Reporting system. The Committee working on this has met and has worked with a demo of the electronic system. Plans are underway to implement the effort reporting system for FY09 this fall with the e-system. Included in this effort will be various training opportunities, pilot programs and training materials. Bruce McCandless, Director of Research Affairs asked the Research Council for volunteers to load their data in the system for use as a live pilot. Andy Mangels will provide additional updates at the next Council meeting

David Ostendorf, Civil and Environmental Engineering, provided an update on the Curriculum Fee and noted a joint meeting of the Curriculum Fee Task Force and the Research Council Policy Committee scheduled for February 13, 2009. Given the current financial state of the campus, David noted that it will be interesting to see what happens to the Graduate Student curriculum fee and stated that he needs real information about the fee increases on campus before the Task Force can complete its current analysis of the impact of the Curriculum Fee on Research. David will provide another update on the Task Force at the April Research Council Meeting.

David Ostendorf indicated that the Research Policy Committee will take the lead on the evaluation of the Centers and Institutes. Andrea Foulkes has been asked to review the pending application Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies.

Bruce McCandless provided an update on Faculty Research Grants with a Faculty Research Grant (FRG) Summary spreadsheet for fall 2008. There was a sizeable pool of applications and the cut off line was \$261,000 this past semester. Bruce also distributed a second spreadsheet showing the FRG Summary of Awards for 2003 – 2008 fiscal years. This summary showed the distribution of proposals and awards for each year. The spreadsheet reflected a fairly balanced distribution of awards and this data is also published as part of the annual report to the Faculty Senate.

Jane Kent-Braun, Kinesiology, provided an update from the Capital Asset Task Force (CATF). The CATF has met four times since the last Research Council meeting. The Task Force is currently reviewing the Wilson Architect report which evaluates the campus needs for physical plant and will provide the guiding principles for the design of the New Science Building (NSB). Vice Chancellor Kostecki sent out a request for proposals which identified 51 clusters across campus that could potentially use the core facilities of the NSB. The firm of Burt Hill has been hired to evaluate the classroom/academic needs of the NSB and reports from both Burt Hill and Wilson Architects will be folded into one single master plan. A site for the NSB has been identified behind the Integrated Science Building (ISB) and the decisions for occupancy will not be made until six months prior to completion.

John Mullin, Dean of the Graduate School, made a presentation on the state of Graduate Education and a snapshot of the Graduate School (attached). Dean Mullin noted that there has been a steady decline in the value of the packages we have been offering to students. He also noted that UMass/Amherst ranks 4<sup>th</sup> from the bottom on stipends in relation to our 15 peer institutions. Dean Mullins estimates that it would take an infusion of approximately \$2.5 million to get the campus to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peers. Another point raised by Dean Mullin is that of all graduate students the campus admits, we graduate only 57% ten years later and the graduate school is implementing a “tracking system” to focus on keeping the students we have through mentoring, advising and counseling. Current graduate applications are up due to the downturn of the economy, but many students can’t get the loans to fund their studies. Dean Mullin shared an action plan for the graduate school for 08-09 and a several points related to the Strategic Plan.

Dean Michael Malone announced that he is vacating his appointment to the Research Council as a representative of Provost Seymour and that Marjorie Aelion, Dean of the School of Public Health has been appointed as his replacement. The chair thanked Dean Malone for his valuable contributions and service during his tenure.

Chair David Evans requested that discussions about the campus reorganization be tabled until the next meeting and asked that the Research Council send any ideas or concerns on how the reorganization might impact the research community directly to him with a copy to Jane Fountain, Professor, Department of Political Science, who is Chair of the Chancellor’s Task Force on Reorganization.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.