

**University of Massachusetts Amherst
Research Council of the Faculty Senate
David R. Evans, Chair
2008-2009
Minutes - April 3, 2009**

PRESENT: J. Adams, L. Clarke, D. Evans, C. Jacelon, M. Lowance, M. Maroney, J. Miller, D. Ostendorf, W. Patterson, M. Taunton, E. West, Y. Levi, N. Khan, J. Mullin, P. Kosteck, M. Aelion, A. Mangels, E. May, B. McCandless, J. Schafer, J. Donais

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

The minutes of the March 6, 2009 Research Council meeting were unanimously approved.

Chair David Evans welcomed new member **Yarif Levi**, a Computer Science Graduate Student, to the Research Council.

Recent Activities. The Chair provided a recap of the activities since the Research Council last met, including the presentation by Bruce McCandless, Carol Sprague and Dave Evans to the Faculty Senate (FS) on the PI Roles Document which was approved and is now posted on the Faculty Senate web site; Bruce McCandless and Michael Maroney's representation at the FS Rules Committee to discuss the reorganization report; Dave Evans' participation on the FS Panel on Reorganization; and Mike Maroney's successful recruiting of three faculty members willing to be nominated for the Research Council. The Committee on committees will make final selections for next fall.

Search for VC of R&E. Vice Chancellor Paul Kosteck excused himself for this discussion. Chair David Evans introduced Dean Steve Goodwin, Chair of the Search Committee for the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, and thanked him for attending today's meeting to provide a statement to the Research Council about the search. Dean Goodwin shared with the Council the aggressive timeline for both the submissions of nominations and full applications, and sincerely encouraged members of the Research Council to get engaged in the process, especially when it comes to the interview process. Several members made statements about the desirability of maintaining the current system of distributed indirect cost revenue and the importance of a VC that understood and supported that system. Chair David Evans invited members to email suggestions and comments about the Council's participation in the search process to the search committee.

African-American Language Center. Jenny Adams shared with the Council a memo drafted by herself, Lynnette Leidy Sievert and Bruce McCandless supporting the official approval of the Center or the Study of African American Language. The approval was voted unanimously by the Research Council. The chair will send it to the Faculty Senate.

Center Review Procedure. The Council discussed expanding the process of center review to include a more formal outline of criteria to be considered, including how the proposed center fits into the strategic goals of the department, college or school, and the university organization and mission. Jenny Adams volunteered to prepare short outline of the procedure and criteria for the Council's review.

Center Policy Document. Paul Kostecki shared with the Council a Report on the Official Policy and Current Practice of Establishing and Reviewing “Centers” and “Institutes”. This report is an outcome of an action item following the September 2008 Chancellor’s Retreat to develop a better procedure on evaluating the campus’s centers and institutes. Paul asked the Council to review the document with that charge in mind and reminded the Council that we have an obligation to the Trustees to conduct these reviews to insure centers and institutes are aligned with the university’s best interests in mind. Paul indicated that a “one size fits all” approach would not work when it comes to evaluating the numerous types of centers and institutes we have and asked the Council to provide additional comments directly to him. He also asked the Research Council to review the list of current centers and institutes in the report and notify him of any center or institute that does not appear on this list.

The Vice Chancellor also recommended that the one – two year “provisional” phase for new centers or institutes be kept in place because it allowed for time for a more solid argument to be made in favor of the center/institute. It was also noted that a five college center would require a different process for evaluation. The Vice Chancellor will keep the Council updated on the status of this effort.

Curriculum Fee Task Force Report. David Ostendorf provided the Council with a draft report from the Curriculum Fee Task Force. The memo expands on the analysis done in previous reports and indicated a continued decline in the number of FTE-RAs along with data on the increase of the Curriculum Fee for RAs. The report also highlighted the relatively small number of RA appointments that seem to be paying the full curriculum fee.

General discussion – two outcomes: 1) a feeling that the administration would serve itself well by making explicit its investments in research so that PIs would understand that they are in fact getting substantial returns, whether or not the investment is directly linked to the income from the curriculum fee; and 2) Mike Maroney argued that external forces were likely to put a ceiling on startup costs and curriculum fee charges that would make this issue less pressing in the future. He argued for improving communications between PIs and the administration to promote better understanding of the reality on both sides.

In addition to this memo, 37 pages of survey data are available to support the findings. The Chair thanked David Ostendorf for his work on this task force and noted that he would be finishing his service to the Research Council and the need for new volunteers to work on this. John Mullin of the Graduate School volunteered to help on this effort along with Paul Kostecki and the Office of Research. Linda Shea was also nominated to assist. The Chair will work to develop next steps in collaboration with the RPC.

Questions for Joyce Hatch. Chair Evans noted that Joyce Hatch, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, will attend the Council’s meeting in May. David requested members email him questions or issues they would like to see addressed by VC Hatch. Andy Mangels emphasized the ongoing interest of the VC in supporting research on this campus.

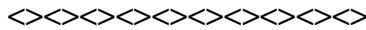
COACHE Survey. Cynthia Jacelon summarized the findings of the COACHE Survey related to research at UMass/Amherst, that was conducted in 2008. 152 of 231 tenure- track (untenured) faculty responded to the online survey which rated UMass Amherst among 22 peer institutions. With regard to research, identified areas improvement included research services, pre-tenure

leave for research and travel funds to present findings. Complete results of the survey can be found on the Office of Faculty Development web site.

Future Leadership for Research Council. The Research Council will have some changes to its leadership in the coming 09-10 year. David Ostendorf's service on the Research Policy Committee is completed. The RPC appointed a recruiting selection committee made up of Evans, McCandless, Foulkes & Sievert which will both solicit and nominate the new chair for RPC. If no nominations are received, the committee⁴ will appoint someone from the Council to serve as chair of RPC. Chair Evans also offered to continue in his role as Chair of the Research Council for the next academic year, and this offer was greeted with unanimous endorsement by the members.

Effort Reporting Task Force. Bruce McCandless gave a short update on the Effort Reporting system including online training sessions and pilot testing to be carried out in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.



Announcements for Research Council Meeting – May 1, 2009

Submitted by Linda Shea, Chair, Graduate Council

The Graduate Council hosted Chancellor Holub at the April meeting for a Q & A session. The Council was encouraged by his supportive remarks on the priority of graduate education in achieving the mission of the university. The Chancellor noted awareness of the curriculum fee issue, the competitive disparity of graduate student stipends, and the importance of fellowships to attract the best students. Also discussed was the upcoming evaluation of departments, programs and centers on campus. A common thread throughout the discussions was that departments have to specify and justify productivity outcomes resulting from funds requested and allocated.