

Research Council Minutes

November 17, 2016

Memorial Union – Badlands Room

Attendance – Michael Strand, Svetlana Kilina, Bernhardt Saini-Eidukat, Todd Lewis, Mark Strand, Molly Secor-Turner, Xiangfa Wu, Kevin McPhee, Sheri Anderson, Jolynne Tschetter, Kelly Rusch

Call to order at 3:30 PM

Minutes approved for the October 19th meeting without changes.

Old business

Policy 110.1 – VPR Rusch thanked everyone for the great input on the policy during the last meeting. The draft policy is being revised and a process/procedure document is being developed. A revised version of Policy 110.1 will be brought back to the Research Council for review once the process/procedure documents has been completed.

New business:

Bylaws:

There was a brief discussion about the need for bylaws. Svetlana (?) inquired if there were other committees on campus that had bylaws that the Research Council could use as a template. Molly Secor-Turner indicated that the Grad Council has just passed new bylaws that could be used as a template. VPR Rusch asked for volunteers for a subcommittee to focus on the development of bylaws. Svetlana Kilina indicated that she would be willing to serve on the subcommittee. VPR Rusch will send out an email to the entire Research Council asking for volunteers to fill out the remainder of the subcommittee.

CORE Facilities

The Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Progress Report support CORE laboratories on campus. Specifically, the Strategic Plan Progress Report includes:

- Review of the CORE labs including an analysis of current labs, criteria for new CORE facilities and compilation of a plan for sustainable operation and maintenance of such facilities.

In 2012 then Provost Rafert developed the CORE Advisory Committee to identify CORE laboratories and provide a budget to the President for the support of these facilities. The resulting CORE facilities include the Electron Microscopy Lab (EML) and the Advanced Imaging and Microscopy (AIM). Two other CORE facilities (CORE Biology Facility and CORE Synthesis Facility) are currently under the Center for Protease Research (COBRE).

A pool of appropriated funds has been identified that supports AIM and EML. The budget that was submitted to the President in 2012 requested \$300,000 to support the CORE facilities and that amount has remained constant. However, budget reductions will impact the core facilities as well. The \$300,000 has been used to support the AIM and EML CORE facilities; both AIM and EML have recharge centers. EML is in good shape now and has been increasing revenues for the last 2 years. User fees at EML cover 30-40% of their budget.

The AIM Lab now charges everyone that utilizes the facility. State appropriated funds have not been used for the CORE Biology Facility or the CORE Synthesis Facility because they have support through the Center for Protease Research.

The Center for Computationally Assisted Science and Technology (CCAST) is not designated as a CORE facility but it provides services to anyone on campus that is in need of high performance computing capabilities. Facility was scheduled to close at end of fiscal year but additional funding has been secured to keep the doors open next year.

Additional laboratories are available for campus use that are not designated as CORE facilities including the labs and equipment in R2 and R1A. Equipment was purchased on earmarks initially focused on microelectronics but scope/capabilities broadened over time. Equipment is available through the RCA service center and has two rate structures (internal to NDSU and outside entities).

Several groups have put forth applications to add additional CORE facilities but all have been denied.

Questions were raised about the definition of a core facility.

Institutional COREs provide services broadly to campus, without preferences to colleges or departments. CORE facilities provide annual reports to the VPRCA with some metrics.

CORE Facilities are not always equipment based. The University of Minnesota has the Minnesota Supercomputing Institute which offers High Performance Computing capabilities along with highly trained staff familiar with advanced analysis and visualization expertise spanning a broad range of fields that can be hired, on an as needed basis, to work on research projects/proposals.

Numerous questions need to be addressed regarding the CORE facilities.

1. What do we do with the CORE facilities?
2. How do we grow them?
3. What constitutes a CORE facility (for designation) and what metrics do they need to meet to remain a CORE facility?
 - a. What are the institutional priorities? These would guide:
 - i. Development of guidelines or policies defining what constitutes a CORE facility
 - ii. Development of guidelines or policies for resource allocation
 - b. What are appropriate metrics?
 - i. Track use by campus units?
 - ii. Number of proposals or publications submitted?
 - iii. Revenue?
 - c. Reporting of metrics

- i. CORE Facilities now report metrics to VPR Rusch in an annual report but what is reported may change depending on the discussion around appropriate metrics.
4. What model do we use to finance the CORE facilities?
 - a. Currently commercial funds can roll across fiscal years in the facility recharge centers but there is a limit of internal funding that can be maintained. The limit is a rolling 3 month average of the operating budget. Is there a way to change how the internal funds are routed or earmark them in some way that can be used by the CORE facilities for equipment purchases?
 - b. This raises questions of how CORE facilities replace equipment. One model would be to give CORE facilities preference for submission of MRI proposals.
5. How do we grow CORE facilities?
 - a. Current CORE facilities focus on biology. What about other areas of campus? Michael Strand brought up potentially allocated resources towards a makerspace as a potential CORE facility.

A question was raised regarding the status and charge of the CORE Advisory Committee. VPR Rusch indicated that the Advisory Committee members now submit annual reports to the VP RCA on their respective core laboratories.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:02