

University Senate Research Committee Meeting
27 September 2019

1:00 PM

826 CL

In Attendance: A. Cohen, A. Crunk, E. Facher, G. Huber, S. Jones, M. McCall, P. Morel, D. Salcido, S. Sant, M. Scott, A. Sethi, B. Yates

The meeting started with introductions as several new members have joined the committee

Presentation of Pitt Momentum Fund

E. Facher described the new Pitt funding mechanism that is aimed to fill in some gaps in the funding/investment pipeline. These gaps are at two levels – one in the development of strategic research partnerships and the other in the scaling of these efforts to develop larger scale projects. There is no specific focus on commercialization, but the idea is to encourage multi-disciplinary large scale collaborations across the entire campus. An announcement will be coming out in the fall and it is anticipated that the first grants will be awarded in January 2020. There will be 4 awards; 2 new Teaming grants (\$60K each for one year) and 2 new Scaling grants (\$400K each for two years). Requirements include scholarly excellence, high potential impact, and interdisciplinary collaborations across the campus. PIs from 3 separate schools are required. For example, the PIs cannot all be from the Dietrich School or Schools of Health Science, but must include at least one from a different school.

As part of this initiative the applications for all Pitt internal funding opportunities will be streamlined. Thus, applications at all levels will be 8 pages and CVs will be 2 pages.

The committee asked questions concerning the requirement for separate schools and also how these applications were going to be reviewed. P. Morel commented that the time scale seems short, if awards are to be made in January.

Discussion of new COI web-based form

G. Huber discussed the progress on the new COI web-based form, which is anticipated to be ready for April 2020. The form is being built and a committee has been meeting to discuss the elements to be included in the form. P Smolinski is on this committee, and it is led by B. Yates.

B. Yates stated that the last meeting of this committee will be on October 21 and thus it may be possible for the Senate Research Committee to view this form at the October 25 meeting, to provide feedback and additional faculty input.

IP policy committee update

P. Morel noted that the IP policy committee has been meeting through the summer and the charter for the committee was provided. She noted that progress is relatively slow and that,

although most of the deliberations are confidential, specific issues may be brought to the attention of the Research Committee if additional input is required. There is a clear plan for faculty review of the policy as outlined in the Charter.

Update on Foreign Influence Policy

P. Morel reported on the new document circulated by A. DiPalma concerning developments in this area. Of note, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy will be conducting meetings at universities over the next few months to speak about research security issues. It is not clear if Pitt will be included in these visits. This is related to the COI policy since government granting agencies may have different disclosure requirements for obtaining funding. At the extended executive committee meeting of the Senate, the Chancellor, P Gallagher, stated that this is going to a concern in the coming year. He said that Pitt would be working hard to avoid that the disclosure requirements be too onerous – for example having to disclose the nationality of personnel funded by these grants.

It is also noted that the Department of Education is starting to examine the reporting of gifts to universities from foreign sources. Several universities have been audited by the DOE.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm.

The next meeting will be October 25, 2019 in **CL 817 – Note room change**

Minutes submitted by P. Morel