

DRAFT

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
RESEARCH CHALLENGE COMMITTEE**

May 11, 2010

Attendees:	Walker, G. E., VP Research	Sawicki, J. Interim VP Research
	Belovich, J., Engineering	Goodell, J., Education
	Komar, A., College of Science	Krasniansky, M., HR
	Long, T, Budget	Mazumder, B., Science
	Sridhar, N., Engineering	Tabeau, M., Liberal Arts
	Wayman, C., Faculty Senate	Wilson, W., IS&T

Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies Dr. George Walker opened the meeting with comments that the purpose of the meeting is to identify issues that impede faculty research progress; solve major issues that impede research; set the tone and style of the committee; identify grant needs, i.e., infrastructure, personnel and resources; and attempt to resolve these issues.

Grant hiring issues: a post doc candidate has been identified, but due to Human Resource policies, it is difficult to hire the individual without going through the CSU hiring process;

- i) Maria Krasniansky advised the committee that a waiver of posting can be obtained if sent to Affirmative Action and Human Resources with a thorough explanation;
- ii) as the researcher develops the grant, they should notify Human Resources if someone has been identified as a potential grant funded hire; and
- iii) transfers of personnel from one grant to another, notify Affirmative Action and Human Resources as soon as possible.

Complications with multi-discipline research collaborations – terms agreements can be barrier to success. No specific issue(s) identified at this time.

Electronic signatures – Simply using an electronic signature does not mean documentation (hiring) is complete. The transaction is completed when all involved persons have viewed and approved the document(s) and the submitter has been notified of the results.

Publicize Resources – More CSU resources should be publicized so that researchers do not use valuable time trying to find what is available to them on campus, where to obtain, how to reserve, and how to transport. A resource guide would be extremely helpful to new faculty as well as researchers.

Indirect Cost Recovery - CSU receives \$1-2 million per year in indirect cost recovery. The institution would receive more, however, because of several grant failures over the years grantors scrutinize proposals from CSU more closely than other institutions. The unfortunate result of this scrutiny is that CSU receives fewer grants with indirect cost recovery allowed, which in turn, reduces the amount of money received for distribution through Research Challenge to support faculty research activities.

Balancing teaching/research loads – Researchers have a difficult time balancing teaching/research responsibilities because CSU only allows 33% buyout of faculty time rather than the grant allowable maximum. Researchers with multiple grants are working more hours than employment contract allows which is not sanctioned under CSU's Human Resource/Union contract policies. Researchers frequently use creativity to remain within the federal/union legal requirements.

Contract Salary Negotiations – The issue is with grant funded vs hard dollar funded positions. The current working contract(s) at CSU treat all employees equally regardless of where the funds originate. However, grant funded positions should be exempt from this process because CSU funds are not being used, and frequently the grantor allows higher wages. In addition, it restricts the researcher from hiring the best individual for the job as the offered wages may be considered too low and the complexity of the hiring process to onerous. The Human Resources representative suggested the researcher(s) provide documentation of need for specialized hire(s) and the salary for the position to Human Resources and Affirmative Action as soon as a candidate is identified. Human Resources will take into consideration the documentation submitted with new hire/salary recommendations once the paperwork is received. The Research Challenge committee also suggested Post-Doc and grant funded hires not be included in contract salary negotiations as they are not “regular” CSU hires.

Institutional Memory - A written institutional memory depository should be established in each College/Department.

Imbedding of Personnel – The suggested personnel would reside in each College, be funded with a combination of hard/grant dollars, and have local cultural knowledge of Cleveland State University and the ability to work collaboratively with all Colleges. The purpose of the personnel is to work collaboratively with each other and faculty to achieve mutual goals, interface with colleges/departments to facilitate grant applications, receipts, accounting, auditing,

and report preparation. The imbedded personnel will have dual reporting lines – to the Dean of the College and to the Research Challenge Committee.

PeopleSoft – Has many issues

- 1) Hand entries – PeopleSoft does/is not updated timely and the only way an investigator know how much money has been expended, or their account balance, it to maintain “hand” entries.
- 2) Poor usability – does not allow forecasting, was not designed with investigators in mind
- 3) No investigator input was solicited when PeopleSoft purchased/installed
- 4) No Grants Management module
- 5) No champion for change
- 6) Would require large expenditure to modify

There is a proposal for a grants management system with appropriate modules going forward at this time. Hopefully, the new system will meet both the needs of CSU and investigators.

Faculty Summer Salary Compensation Policy - Current policy states that a typical faculty member’s official academic year appointment and obligation is 9 months which constitutes the “base salary period.” The three month summer salary converts from the base salary by applying 3/9ths, or by using 33.3% as the multiplier. Previously applied rate of 34.7% was arrived based on number of hours worked by faculty during summer/number of hours worked by faculty during academic year.

Summer Research – The Research Challenge Committee stated that it would like written policies from Sponsored Programs & Research regarding summer research activities, outlining allowable activities and how much time can be spent on each activity.

There will be another meeting of the Research Council during the summer. Date/time TBD.