

**CFR Meeting Minutes**  
**25 October 2024**  
**VCLS 14 & Zoom**  
**9:15 – 10:45AM**

Representatives Attending:

Bonamy, Drapela, Fortin, Grigar (Chair), He, Olson, Pascoe, Reisz, Schimelpfenig, Welchel

Ex-officio members in attendance:

Dimitrov (Senator, TT), Sekhar (Past Chair), Stephen Solovitz (Senator, TT), John Barber (Senator, CT)

Guest: Christine Portfors (WSUV Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education)

Recording Secretary: Paul Bonamy

The meeting began with *a conversation with VCRGE Portfors*. Discussion included:

- Reasons the research office tends to focus on grant income rather than other forms of output like books or exhibitions. *Grant income represents not only direct funding of those projects but a primary source of funds to reinvest in research via F&A (Facilities and Administration) returns.* For example, the entire budget for the Vancouver office of research comes from F&A, including support for mini-grants, Research Showcase, and staff salaries, specifically 25% of Portfors' own salary this year.
- When the campus was young, funds for supporting the research mission came from other revenue streams because there was not enough F&A money coming in. As the campus has grown, so too has research output; thus, *increases in F&A income over time have allowed the research mission to become more self-supporting.* This approach to research support is optimal because it frees central dollars to go to other purposes while the actual amount of money supporting research has gone up and can sustain research. It is also very important because, by law, F&A dollars may only be spent to support research. Thus, while the office of research experienced the same 1% cut as everyone else this year, those F&A dollars cannot be moved to non-research expenditures *and cannot be cut.*
- *Undergraduate enrollment is critical to supporting research.* While F&A funds do a lot to cover maintenance, equipment, supplies, small grants, and so forth, central funding from the state is what pays faculty salaries. Thus, the 40% of a tenure-track faculty member's salary that goes to research (and potentially 10-30% for career track) is centrally funding the research mission.
- There's a lack of transparency around where F&A funds go. *There are plans to do a comprehensive overall of the office of research website as part of the University website migration.* This update will include much more detailed information about F&A funds.

- The search committee for the head of research currently underway includes Deepti Singh from the School of the Environment.
- *The new contract with the grad students continues to be a learning experience for everyone.* New templates and guidelines outlining best practices and advice continue to evolve. The fundamental reality remains that ASEs are now (deservedly) more expensive, and that level of support for our graduate students has a direct impact on how many can be supported. It's also important that, while TAs can have different duties, their workloads need to be consistent across campuses.
- *Research Showcase is Wednesday April 9 at 9 a.m.*

Following discussion with VCRGE Portfors, the *11 October minutes were approved* with two small amendments.

Chair Grigar then presented brief announcements. *The CFR website now offers a calendar of events.* Because the site is built on DRUPAL and WSUV is shifting to WordPress, the calendar choice is limited to the one stylistically outmoded selection that CFR could use, but it means we can better show off the new events being planned. Faculty can find, for example, the book party that the History Department is hosting for Andra Chastain on November 13. Additionally, the *Laptop Lunch series is switching to Mondays and Wednesdays* for the next few weeks, with the next one on setting up a site on WSU Labs. *The Three Minute Flash Talks are also coming up on Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup>.*

*The Faculty Senate's Faculty Salary Committee is going forward.* Drapela been nominated to serve on it.

*Committee reports will be on the agenda going forward.* The bylaws subcommittee has not met yet.

*The Chancellor's Advisory Committee has met twice.* The October meeting was primarily walking through the new lab spaces. Drapela noted that many of the people she spoke to during the walk-through were undergraduate researchers. She has the impression that the sciences seem to be doing a good job of getting undergrads involved in research and this may be something other areas can learn from.

The September meeting was more of a sit down, conversational event. *There is a strong focus on efficiency in the administration.* Interestingly, the University has claim to the water rights for the water that runs under campus. This resource is being investigated to help offset landscaping costs. The September meeting also focused on the budget and chancellor search. A call has gone out for nominations for the position. Faculty are also more involved than in the last search.

The Event Planning Guide group hasn't meant yet but will be starting up soon. We need to find people to be part of it.

According to Solovitz, Senate discussion has been largely focused on money (faculty salaries, graduate salaries), and some discussions on what it means to have unions involved.

*The Senate has also been having a lot of discussion around Rule 60 recently.* There's a desire for CFR to reach out to our units for feedback on the rule and the waiving of same. We'd also like to reach out to the undergrad student government, grad student union, and other campus groups to get their perspectives on the issue.

*The meeting then transitioned into a discussion of the hiring of a new Associate VCAA, a topic of shared concern from constituents.* The conversation focused on the timing between the vacancy and rehiring announcements. CFR members also expressed concern about the fiscal impact of filling the position, that the new Chancellor would not get a chance to be involved in the process, and that the position seems to have been reimagined or updated without faculty involvement. CFR members are asked to gather feedback from their constituents on the issue.

The meeting closed with comments on two remaining topics.

*The increasing prevalence of electric bikes and scooters on campus is a source of worry for some,* including campus police. A solution for handling the issue is impacted by ADA compliance in regard to motorized wheelchairs.

Finally, *Chair Grigar will be organizing an institutional study group.* The idea is to form a hybrid laptop lunch looking through the documents that affect the faculty and underpin university operations.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Bonamy, Recording Secretary