Committee on Research Minutes
of the 9/4/13 meeting

Present: SuJean Choi, James Gardinier, Steve Goldzwig, Jeanne Hossenlopp, Tim McMahon, Kristy Nielson, Chris Okunseri, Chad Oldfather, William Pink, Joe Schimmels, Robert Topp

Also Present: Melody Baker (note taker), Kathy Durben (ORSP), Austin Fritsch (ORC), Kevin Gibson (Grad School), Ben Kennedy (ORC)

Excused: Olga Yakusheva

The meeting was called to order by Dr. McMahon at 9:04 a.m. Introductions were made and the mission of the COR was explained. The agenda was approved.

Reports:
Report from the Vice Provost for Research –
Dr. Hossenlopp reported that the CTSI of SE WI (8 partners) will be engaging in strategic planning this year and she hopes the COR can be a sounding board on MU’s participation.

Dr. Gary Meyer has convened a group to discuss undergrad research participation. If anyone is interested in joining the group, let Dr. Hossenlopp know. Dr. Choi and Dr. Nielson both said they would be interested.

Enterprise Risk Management, a review of potential institutional risks, has been undertaken with direction by the Office of General Counsel, who has asked task groups to identify potential areas of risk on campus. Dr. Hossenlopp described a set of 15 risks that have been identified; one involves support of research. A couple of faculty members are needed in this group to provide feedback. Dr. Okunseri and Dr. Choi volunteered.

Report from the Chair –
Dr. McMahan reported that goal setting for the year will be discussed today.

Report from the Director of ORSP –
Ms. Durben shared handouts of the annual report summary, summer activity and awards, and upcoming events and discussed them with members. Dr. Hossenlopp pointed out that Ms. Durben has worked diligently to get media coverage for research. She also suggested inviting Dave Murphy, VP for Marketing and Communication, to a COR meeting to further discuss how MU’s research can be publicized.

Report from ORC –
Mr. Kennedy reported the ORC’s new website went live a couple of weeks ago. Also, the Animal Care Facility is now fully staffed, Radiation Safety received a 5 year license approval, and they are working on a liquid disposal process. There are no
compliance issues and ongoing renovations of the animal facilities are still in process. He noted MCW is looking at a compromise in cost for usage of their facilities by MU researchers.

Dr. Gibson added that many graduate students are involved in research and that student research travel awards are available for students who present at conferences. There is also a webpage encouraging students to write grants, with help being offered from the Writing Center. Students are encouraged to publicize their papers. Dr. Nielson asked about the timing because most of the Psych conferences occur in spring and funds are usually depleted by then. Dr. Gibson said money is allocated equally between fall and spring.

Dr. Gibson also reported that an IDP (individual development plan) is a new requirement for NIH grants with grad students. Templates are being generated for IDP’s that will help students with career planning. Dr. Hossenlopp said the UBGs will be discussing this also.

Business:

Elect Vice Chair and Secretary -

Dr. McMahon asked for nominations or volunteers to serve in the two open officer positions. Chris Okunseri offered to serve as vice chair and a vote was taken and unanimously passed. Kristy Nielson offered to serve as secretary.

Strategic Planning –

Dr. McMahan briefly discussed the importance of COR award selection.

At the request of a member, Dr. Hossenlopp commented on the large health insurance increase for international students in particular. Student total cost for a year went up to about $1300 from $700. Dr. Hossenlopp explained eligibility for grad student health insurance and that a reasonable policy was found for domestic students. However, international students have different requirements for insurance and are mandated to have a policy. Policies are selected by the Office of Risk Management. While grad students are in a healthier population in general, they are also heavy users of health insurance. Consequently, costs were increased, and domestic students had to contribute beginning a couple of years ago.

Meanwhile the policy for international students went up substantially, though MU did give them more funding to try to offset the cost. The Office of International Education (OIE) was not consulted regarding insurance, but going forward OIE will be included in policy selection. While the Grad School does not get to make the selection, they can contribute opinion and will insure DGS’s are better informed next year. OIE has to estimate the cost of living in Milwaukee and some lower end stipends are not currently meeting the level. Dr. Hossenlopp has requested an increase in budget for stipends.

Dr. Gibson added that the coverage is better this year for both domestic and international students than in the past when it was more focused on covering catastrophic events rather than wellness. Dr. Hossenlopp asked members to encourage
students to take any concerns to the Grad Student Organization (GSO), who should also have a voice in this topic.

Some universities require all GA’s to take the policy. Dr. Hossenlopp asked for member opinions, and there was some opinion to charge the grants. The cost for domestic students is approximately $1300 for the total policy, and students pay about $550. Dr. Gibson explained the Grad School has to estimate each year how many students will take the insurance, but if a higher number take it, the Grad School could go over budget and resources would have to come from somewhere else. The possibility of self-insuring, using MU resources for primary care, and offering a separate, less expensive catastrophic policy was offered.

The discussion next turned to broader strategic planning. Dr. Hossenlopp stated that COR must prioritize and identify the most important things to do first. In order to move up in the Carnegie classifications, more Ph.D.’s must be graduated. More support would help this goal. DGS’s are asked for benchmarks. One barrier to raising the Carnegie classification is the inability of grants to support grad students, making it difficult to employ the number of students that a researcher should have. Cost sharing of tuition was discussed in the context of the loss of $750,000 in tuition budget about 8 years ago (funds are annually requested to increase the tuition budget).

Dr. Hossenlopp explained how MU ranks in the Carnegie classification, referring to the handout on Carnegie rankings from the Deans Council Retreat. MU reports expenditures related to research support to NSF, but in the past there was an issue with under-reporting, sometimes due to items not being separately budgeted as research expenditures, which had an effect on the ranking. These issues are being worked on to make a more accurate report for this year.

A recommendation was made to set research as the priority and cost out what it would actually take to bring MU to where they want to be in the rankings. It was pointed out also that faculty need time to write grants. There was also opinion that the proportion of people who are grant holders needs to change. This may mean that MU needs more faculty, or different faculty.

Finally, a member requested the topic of *challenges of how work load and buy out are done in different colleges* be placed on the next agenda.

The conversation on strategic planning will be continued next month. In the meantime, Dr. Hossenlopp asked members to give feedback on the draft stewardship plan.

The meeting adjourned at 10:53am.