Committee on Research Minutes  
of the 12/7/16 meeting

Present: Ron Coutu, Kristina Dreifuerst, Sarah Feldner, Paul Gasser, Ryan Hanley, Andrew Hanson, Jeanne Hossenlopp, Sarah Knox, Michael McChrystal, Phillip Naylor, Chris Okunseri, Daniel Rowe

Also Present: Melody Baker (note taker), Kathy Durben (ORSP), Tom Pionek (OMC)

Excused:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Okunseri at 9:03 a.m. The agenda was approved.

Reports:

Report from the VP for Research and Innovation –

Dr. Hossenlopp reported that between conferences and fundraising she has been travelling quite a bit this semester. Most recently she met with the Charlotte Alumni Group (N. Carolina). Conversations with alumni and potential donors include: building research (priority), the APRC, Innovation Alley, Bio-discovery Complex, and the Global Water Center.

Conversations regarding research areas for the APRC have been divided into five themes: injury prevention, rehabilitation, performance science, nutrition, performance health, and innovation technology (including big data). MU and Aurora teams are still refining possible focus areas and determining the best opportunities. Conversations will be extended beyond MU and Aurora to be open to collaboration, for example in the area of concussion research. Some work has begun with the team of architects.

At the January meeting, Austin Fritsch will lead a discussion on the animal facility. In the meantime, consultants are coming in to help with space needs discussions for short- to mid-range planning for the facilities prior to the completion of the BioDiscovery building. Budgeting for the animal facility is under review to make sure that the needs of the facility are being met.

59 preproposals were received for the current competition for Strategic Innovation Funds. The preproposals will be distributed to the Innovation Council members for review and feedback to the proposers. The final proposals are due at end of February. The innovation fund is another fundraising priority.

Report from the Chair –

Dr. Okunseri reported that he represented the COR in a small task force on budget for animal research. Dr. Hossenlopp added that the search for the EVP for Operations is currently in process, to be followed by a search for a CFO.

Report from the Director of ORSP –
Ms. Durben reported on awards, applications, and ORSP sponsored events. Following another successful Forward Thinking Poster session, ORSP is making 3 awards that will be matched by colleges.

The recent Community Engagement Symposium was also a success, with over 270 registrants comprised of MU people and community personnel. Dr. Robert Fox (CECP), and Dr. Ruth Belknap (NURS), both received awards at this event.

Both the NSF Career cohort and NEH Fellowship cohort will begin in January to assist junior faculty in applying for career awards. They will also learn about best practices and grant writing.

ORSP is working out the final details with budget office to be able to upload Kuali (electronic grant management system), which is expected to happen by end of January, after which training will be offered.

Lastly, ORSP will hopefully be adding staff soon, first to the budget area. If grant numbers rise, this will trigger another addition.

**Business:**

**SFF/RRG Award Outcomes** –

It was noted that some review teams set two sets of comments which necessitated Dr. Hossenlopp having to combine them. Dr. Hossenlopp asked that members submit only one set of reviewer comments for each applicant. Members were also advised to be sensitive to language used, ie – “worst proposal in the group”. Dr. Hossenlopp also noted that on a couple applications where a team had recommended to increase the amount requested, she reduced back to the original request.

Total awards and dollar amount in comparison to last year was shared with the committee. The Center for Transnational Justice funded two SFF’s again this year. 32 proposals were funded for a total amount of $205,883.00.

There was some discussion about criteria and pointed out that it was clear that some of the junior faculty should have had mentoring. It was asked if something could be added to the criteria for junior faculty to help them with budget issues. This will be further discussed at a future meeting.

**Building capacity / mentoring** –

Dr. Okunseri asked the members to think of how mentoring can be improved for faculty in a way that is constructive, not punitive. Looking at different colleges, consider how to create a bridge to convey information. What kinds of mentoring are happening now? Experiences vary by department.

How can department chairs be prepared to help before signing off on proposals? Some chairs are not experienced enough themselves. It’s possible that two areas of mentoring are needed. The committee discussed experiences with offering assistance to faculty in their colleges. The importance of understanding the varying research/scholarship needs, and varying workloads across the campus was emphasized.

A suggestion was made that when sending the next call for SFF/RRG proposals, to have a successful application attached to the RFP, or a line with a direct link to a successful application. It was suggested to add more than 3 examples – this will help
mentor and mentee. Also share a list of successful people that would be willing to talk to new applicants.

It was also recommended to host a session for chairs, and deans, with the COR panel to discuss award processes, and encourage mentoring. The quality of writing and ability to communicate to a non-expert is the single most important job of submitting a proposal – to convey, what do you want to do, and why is it important?

_Haggerty Nominations –_

Four nominations have been received. The review process and ranking procedure was discussed. The link to the nominations and a copy of the ranking sheet will be sent to the members.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.