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Manoa Faculty Senate Committee on

Administration and Budget Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2009, 12 noon, Hawaii Hall 208

Present: Ross Christensen (chair), Shirley Daniel, Bob McHenry, David Duffy, David Chin, Matt McGranaghan, Judith Inazu, Dave Sanders, Denise Antolini, CN Lee and Mary Tiles UHM Faculty Senate liaison

Invited: Vice Chancellor Gary Ostrander and Interim Vice Chancellor Peter Quigley

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

The committee began a discussion with VC Ostrander on matters relating to administrative mechanisms and support to obtain institutional and interdisciplinary grants. The committee expressed concern that many efforts have been primarily focused on cutting budgets and there might be opportunity to increase revenues as well through new grants. VC Ostrander indicated that the administration is looking at new revenues as well. VC Ostrander stated that his understanding of the current grant funding environment is that it has become increasingly competitive for many funding agencies and foundations. He believes that the level of technical knowledge and faculty commitment needed to obtain funding is very high and he is doubtful about the efficacy of centralized grant offices to obtain such funding. With regard to new federal funding that may be available under the federal stimulus package, he believes that there is more potential for proposals that have already been submitted and are either under review or have been reviewed highly but were not funded due to agency funding limitations. Under the stimulus package, agencies may be given additional money to fund projects that have already been highly scored under prior reviews, to fulfill the “shovel ready” equivalent definition for research. He indicated that there is no single person at UH looking at opportunities under the stimulus package, but that a number of people are monitoring the situation in their areas. The committee also inquired about CIP projects that might be considered shovel ready and needed due to safety issues (e.g. earthquake or flood mitigation). VC Ostrander indicated that we did have a few projects in this category that were being considered.

The committee discussed various experience with obtaining Title III and other types of grants using external grant writers or specific faculty whose teaching load may be bought out with RTRF to allow them to write a proposal. There has been some success with this when there were specific programs in mind with commitments from faculty and departments/units to execute the projects once funded. VC Ostrander indicated that he believes that there is already support available for writing grants where a clear commitment by faculty and departments is there. He indicated that he has discussed this at the Deans and Directors meetings, and the Deans are aware of such support. He also indicated that Hal McArthur in his office tries to inform units of

grant opportunities and has gotten limited response. Similarly, training workshops for grant writing are sparsely attended. The committee indicated that the communication of these resources at the faculty and departmental level was not clear. The committee also inquired about how certain large institutional level grants such as EPSCOR were obtained if not through an administrative support mechanism. VC Ostrander indicated that he is not familiar with how the EPSCOR was obtained since it was before he came to UH.

There was some discussion about the merits of various organizational structures and mechanisms to support grant proposals, and whether there were already sources of support for grant writing assistance for units that had proposal ideas. The question of whether such support should be offered on an ad hoc basis, using an annual seed money competition process, or made available through a standing grants office was discussed.

Interim VC Quigley indicated that he had good experience at a previous institution in obtaining interdisciplinary grants and institutional grants through the assistance of a grants office attached to the provost office. He described some interdisciplinary proposals in the science area that he helped obtained. Such interdisciplinary proposals were facilitated by the fact that the administration had knowledge of various independent research programs across campus that could achieve synergy with an interdisciplinary approach. The units that were funded were required to be self-sufficient within 2 to 3 years, demonstrating commitment from the departments involved to the project.

The committee discussed gathering information about how other universities handle this issue, and also discussed the possibility of creating a short white paper to discuss the topic. The committee also discussed the possibility of developing a menu of services that might be offered to faculty/departments to help them take advantage of the research support that VC Ostrander alluded to. The committee also discussed whether CAB should survey the faculty to determine their level of need for various types of grant writing support.

VC Ostrander left the meeting.

The committee noted that humanities faculty have a different mindset with regard to grants than science faculty. Typically, humanities disciplines do not have a culture of applying for grants. VC Quigley noted that there is great potential to create innovative interdisciplinary projects that combine humanities and sciences. The committee inquired about where this type of grant support office should be located and VC Quigley suggested that the topic be discussed with the permanent VCAA when he/she is on board. However, he believes that for some projects it would be appropriate to have some resources or focus in academic affairs.

VC Quigley left the meeting.

The committee noted that there may be resources and skills for writing such proposals on campus in certain units, e.g. CTAHR, if they were available to other units. The issue of not enough departmental level rewards/incentives for obtaining interdisciplinary and/or institutional grants is also an obstacle.

The committee agreed to the following actions related to this issue for the next meeting:

- Chair Christensen will inquire with a few other universities on the mainland to determine how they support such grant proposals.
- Shirley Daniel agreed to discuss the issue in more detail with Hal McArthur in the Office of Research Relations to ascertain the services he currently provides and solicit input on the organizational structure and services he believes would be effective.
- The committee agreed to invite Hal McArthur and VC Hernandez to meet with them at their next meeting or at the earliest convenience to discuss the issue.
- The committee will also invite the new VCAA to discuss the issue as soon as practical.

The minutes of the February 2, 2009 meeting were approved.

Chair Christensen provided a review of a meeting of the SEC and faculty senate standing committee chairs held last week. The group was provided an update on the VCAA search. The group also discussed the tabled proposal about the Process Committee and the Chancellor's role. The discussion was illuminated by concerns about lack of adherence to the written policies regarding reorganizations. It seems there is considerable confusion about the reorganization policy and the appropriate process for faculty consultation in reorganizations. The flowchart describing the reorganization process is perhaps inconsistent with the written policy narrative. CAB decided to form a subcommittee to look at this issue to present their findings to the committee at the next meeting in early April. David Duffy and Judith Inazu volunteered to work on the subcommittee and report back at the next meeting.

Chair Christensen provided an update of his work on the Budget Committee. The UH Administration is trying to mitigate the impact of budget cuts on personnel and hiring. Peggy Hong spoke to the Budget Committee about various options to deal with personnel. The group also got a briefing by the athletics department discussing their budget shortfalls which are currently made up by various UHM revenue funds. Ross indicated that there has not yet been any discussion in the budget group about cutting specific program budgets. CAB is concerned that many important decisions will be made in the summer when faculty are off duty. The issue is that no one knows how much the budget will actually be cut yet. The Chancellor has already received scenarios of 2%, 3% and 5% cuts that were submitted by the deans (these amounts equated to the higher levels of discretionary budget cuts proposed by the governor). These scenarios were just provided to the budget committee in their last meeting and have not been made available to the units. Ross will inquire about whether this information may be made available for discussion by CAB or other faculty groups.

The Arts and Sciences reorganization is still on hold, most likely awaiting the arrival of the new VCAA.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley J. Daniel

Contact dave at math.hawaii.edu with comments regarding this site.