

CELS Research Committee Meeting Notes. March 3. 2:00 -- 3:00

Attendance: Thomas Boving (GEO), Marta Gomez-Chiarri (FAVS), Niall Howlett (CMB) (Chair), Jason Kolbe (BIO), Elizabeth Mendenhall (MAF), Carlos Prada Montoya (BIO), Mark Stolt (NRS), Cheryl Wilga (ex officio). Mark Stolt kept notes. **Absent:** Tom Sproul (ENRE)

The meeting was a continuation of previous meetings which focused on ways to get additional support for proposal efforts (budgets, formatting, reviewing, working with Cayuse and now InfoEd, etc)

In previous meetings one suggestion was that instead of a 25:75 split between departments and the college of the returned overhead, all the overhead would go to the dean's office, and with those funds the college would hire another 1 or 1.5 SGRAs to assist in proposal efforts of the faculty. This was very briefly discussed, and committee members reported on how their department felt about this idea. Everyone was mostly against giving all of the overhead to the dean's office. Many would like to return to the 50:50 split (very unlikely).

Another approach mentioned in previous meeting to find funds to support more SGRAs was that we eliminate departments and make schools of 2 or 3. The idea was that this would save money because you wouldn't have to pay chairs additional funds and a month of summer salary.

Marta—as a current chair, and Cheryl as a previous chair, echoed that the chair position is a lot of work, and the little additional pay that goes to the chair does not cover the work involved, and someone chairing a school would only have that much more work. The money saved would not be worth it. It was agreed that if the college were to save money by making schools or taking additional overhead, there is no certainty that the college would use any or all of the of the money saved toward supporting another SRGA.

It was agreed that the faculty need to continue to push for additional support, but it shouldn't come as a cost to the faculty such as loss of returned overhead.

One example of where faculty grants were having to support research facilities formally supported by the college or university is the Seawater/marine research facilities at GSO. CELS and GSO faculty are now expected to support the costs of these facilities – which could be up to \$1000 per month.

The recently announced closure of the Genomics and Sequencing Center (GSC) was also discussed. This facility is key to many research programs on campus. The sequencing equipment will likely move to the RI-INBRE core research facility. Questions remain as to where the other GSC equipment will be moved and how this equipment will be maintained.

So, where do we get the funds for SGRAs or shared research facilities?

Niall mentioned the message from Peter Synder was—“There is a University wide squeeze of research funds” so some costs are being passed down to CELS, and in the end to us.

Discussion followed regarding equipment in INBRE and can the CELS research committee advocate for having decisions made for IMBRI by the actual users?

Jason asked: “Is there a model for how joint space is managed? Who covers the cost to manage (repairs service contracts).” Everyone-- This be where much of the overhead should go, but we don’t know where it goes. Cheryl is trying to find out. Mark mentioned that the faculty senate research committee was trying to find out how the university was using its share of the overhead. At least having more transparency.

Further questions and comments about proposal submissions and SRGAs:

“Who decides how the overhead funds are distributed?”

There is a university-wide list, but who knows how well that is followed and it is fairly broadly stated.

Cheryl—The SRGAs at the university level are now close to full capacity (except in the billing person), so this should help. Also, there was a push for grad levels to be automatically added in InfoEd, and this has likely happened.

Marta—can we get a flow-chart that shows who we need to go to for parts of the proposal? Cheryl will soon have such a document that we can view as a committee.

Carlos: Can we set up a limit for small proposals that don’t need full InfoED submittal? For example, if the proposal is <\$10,000 can the process require much less input or not even go through InfoEd?

Are there certain processes in the proposal flow that we as researchers can do and leave the more difficult for the SRGA?

Can the SRGAs set aside office hours that we know we can go to help us (e.g. every Monday from 1 til 2 pm I’ll be available for your proposal submittal questions). Tom commented that this might not be the best idea because things happen and you need the answer now, not next Monday afternoon.

Meeting adjourned 2:58 pm.