

Faculty Senate Committee on Research, Scholarship,
Creative Activities and Engagement

Meeting on March 7, 2012 at 2:00 pm in PCA 254

Minutes

The meeting of the Committee was called to order by Committee Chairperson Allan Rosenbaum. Committee members present included Alexander Agoulnik, Orlando Garcia, Werner Boeglin, and Steven Heine. In addition, Vice President for Research, Andres Gil was present to meet with the Committee.

The first topic on the agenda was for Committee members to review the latest draft of the Faculty Questionnaire on Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities and Engagement here at FIU. The Committee concluded that the questionnaire was ready to be administered to the FIU faculty. However, there was some uncertainty as to whether the questionnaire needed to be approved by the University IRB. An initial version of the questionnaire had been sent to the IRB. However, Vice President Gil indicated that he did not believe that was necessary and would check further on the matter and report back to the Committee Chairperson. The final version of the questionnaire is attached here.

The remainder of the meeting focused upon two issues raised by Vice President Gil. The first involved alerting Committee members to the fact that increasingly the University as an institution was being held accountable for the actions of its individual faculty members in terms of its research activity. He noted in that regard a recent case occurring at Penn State University in which an individual faculty member was being prosecuted for having submitted the same proposal to two different agencies and not having informed the two agencies that each had funded it. Apparently, this had been able to occur in part because one of the two proposals had not gone through the normal review and sign off process. Nevertheless, the University was also being called into account for not having ensured that both proposals went through the review process. Vice President Gil mentioned other similar examples.

The second topic which Vice President Gil addressed, was his recent series of initiatives to encourage the development of research activity here at FIU. He distributed a memorandum that he had prepared outlining a series of new initiatives which is attached here. He discussed at some length with the Committee the proposed Mentors in Residence Program as well as the Interdisciplinary Research Initiative. The Committee indicated its support for the activities that Vice President Gil was initiating.

Questionnaire on Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity and Engagement

The Faculty Senate Committee on Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity and Engagement has developed the very brief questionnaire that follows and would greatly appreciate your cooperation in filling it out. As you will see, the questionnaire has three different major sections: research and/or scholarship; creative activity; and engagement with the community. Please fill out all parts which you feel are relevant to your activities as an FIU faculty member.

Please indicate the number of years that you have been here at FIU and your rank.

Less than five years _____ Five to fifteen years _____ Over fifteen years _____

Assistant Professor _____ Associate Professor _____ Full Professor _____ Other _____

Area of Research, and/or Scholarly Interest

Biological and Physical Sciences _____ Social Sciences _____ Arts & Humanities _____

Health Professions _____ Engineering _____ Law and Other Professions _____

College or School (Optional) _____

I. Research and/or Scholarship

1. Please identify those factors and conditions here at Florida International University (FIU) that are most helpful to you in supporting your research and/or scholarship.
2. Please identify those factors or conditions here at FIU that complicate or inhibit your ability to carry out successful and productive research and/or scholarship here at FIU.
3. What policies or procedures should be changed or new initiatives undertaken to support your research and/or scholarship activities and create a more productive research and/or scholarship environment here at FIU?

II. Creative Activity

1. Please identify those factors and conditions here at Florida International University (FIU) that are most helpful to you in supporting your creative activities.
2. Please identify those factors or conditions here at FIU that complicate or inhibit your ability to carry out successful and productive creative activities here at FIU.
3. What policies or procedures should be changed or new initiatives undertaken to support your creative activities and/or create a more creative environment here at FIU?

III. Engagement with the Community

1. Please identify those factors and conditions here at Florida International University (FIU) that are most helpful to you in supporting your engagement activities within the community.
2. Please identify those factors or conditions here at FIU that complicate or inhibit your ability to carry out successful engagement activities within the community.
3. What policies or procedures should be changed or new initiatives undertaken to support your engagement activities and/or create an environment more conducive to engagement activities here at FIU?

10-Step 'Upstream' Research Development Initiative

1. *Homegrown workshops/roundtables using FIU experienced faculty (April 2012)*

- Will occur monthly.
- We will use DoR Mentors-in-Residence (see below).

2. *Foster more visits by federal program officers (May 2012)*

- Have already partnered with UM, FAU, Barry, St. Thomas, MDC, FMU (Federal officers can only visit for "regional" meetings. Targeting 1-2 visits per semester.

3. *Quarterly Awards Newsletters (April 2012)*

- Will list PIs and Co-Is, and will include selected stories from PIs regarding all the steps the team took to obtain the funding.

4. *Successful Proposal Collections (April 2012)*

- Obtaining copies of successful grants through 'Freedom of Information Act.'
- Several FIU faculty have already agreed to share copies of their successful proposals.

5. *DoR Mentors-in-Residence Program and Coordination of Mentoring with Colleges (Summer 2012)*

- Mentors-in-Residence Program will consist of cohorts of grant-funded experienced faculty members (2-3 per cohort) who will be based at DoR for two semesters (spring-summer and summer-fall) to provide mentoring to less experienced faculty submitting grants.
- Both cohorts will overlap during the summer semester in an attempt to make summer a semester of high grant writing intensity.
- For spring and fall semesters, DoR will pay for a course buy-off.
- For summer semesters, DoR will pay for summer effort (perhaps .50 FTE).
- Mentors-in-Residence efforts will be coordinated with new Faculty Mentoring Program initiated in Arts & Sciences (which will be joined by the College of Engineering (<http://casgroup.fiu.edu/mentor/>)). They will also coordinate the workshops under #1 above.

6. *Research Forums and Interdisciplinary Research Networks (Ongoing)*

- Sponsors are increasingly interested in broad interdisciplinary themes.
- Funding opportunities are increasingly requiring quick "turn-around" (often 45 days)
- Will create Interdisciplinary Networks consisting of faculty working together on common areas of interest with administrative support from DoR.
- Existing Faculty Research Support Program (FRSP) [internal research funding opportunities] will be focused toward these networks
- Existing Networks:
 - 1) Interdisciplinary Nuclear Research Group (currently very active) – Led by Bernard Gerstman, Inez Triay and Davie Roelant
- Planned Networks
 - ✓ Extreme Events/Disasters, HIV/AIDS & Substance Abuse/Addictions, Health Disparities, Environment/Climate Change, Immigration

7. Proactive effort to place more FIU faculty in federal Grant Review Panels (Ongoing)

- Serving on review panels is like graduate education in grant writing.
- Agencies need new reviewers each year and are seeking to enhance diversity.
- DoR will focus on connecting PIs with program officials (PO's) and offering reviewers with specific expertise.

8. Coaching and Editing of Grant Applications – Grant writers in colleges and/or DoR

- DoR will provide central support and will partner with colleges to provide grant writer support.
- The UGS-DoR Graduate Research Center is currently providing support for graduate students writing grants.

9. Development of better online tutorials for grant writing (April 2012)

- New DoR website will have online tutorial for grant writing
- Website will provide links to best materials for researchers working on grant applications. For example:
 - NIH: www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/default.htm
 - Foundation Center Short Course:
<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/index.html>

10. Provide opportunities for internal reviews of proposals (Summer 2012)

- Encourage a culture of proposal reviews prior to application submission.
- Grant reviewers will be recruited from VPR Research Advisory Council, from college mentoring program and from DoR Mentors-in-Residence.
- Early-Stage Proposal Reviews by Mentors: PI provides summary/specific aims of research idea for early feedback 3-4 months prior to submission deadline.
- Late-Stage Proposal Reviews: PI provides draft of application 6 weeks prior to submission deadline and receives feedback within 2 weeks.