Senate Research Committee  
Georgia State University  
Minutes from August 25, 2003

Present: Jeff Ashby, Albertha Barrett, Tim Bartness, Al Baumstark, Dan Benardot, Roberta Byrum, Kirk Elifson, Crawford Elliott, Anne Emanuel, Michael Galchinsky, Sandra Garber, Amy Lederberg, Charles Louis, Steve Manson, Joyce Many, Art Murphy, Tom Netzel, Don Reitzes, Mary Ann Romski, P. C. Tai, Susan Talburt, Laurie Tis, Geoffrey Turnbull, Vijay Vaishnavi, Bill Waugh.

Meeting called to order at 3:05 PM

I. Past Minutes
The minutes from the meeting of April 21, 2003 were approved by the Committee.

II. Elections
1. Don Reitzes was elected Chair and appoints Al Baumstark as Vice Chair.

2. Amy Lederberg and P.C. Tai were elected as the Committee’s members on the GSURF’s Board of Directors and Bill Nelson was elected as the faculty member on the GSURF Board.

III. Special Guest
Robert H. Curry, Professor and Director of the Center for Health Services Research, addressed the Committee as the chair of the Georgia State University Institutional Review Board. Recently, at the request of the VP for Research, two outside consultants were asked to review the human subjects compliance program at GSU. Based on their findings, the VP for Research has made a number of significant changes to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) including appointing a new Chair, Dr. Curry. He spoke about the changes that have occurred since his appointment, the additional changes contemplated, and his interest in having the Senate Research Committee’s input on an on-going basis.

Items of change that were presented to the Committee included: 1) a Human Subjects Manual (Policies and Procedures of the IRB); new policies regarding review of all protocols requiring Full IRB review (primary and secondary reviewers); new forms (Study Closure; Amendment/Modification to Protocols; and Adverse Events Report form); and a new GSU IRB Application form. In addition, Dr. Curry reported on a new requirement for GSU researchers involved in human subjects research that they take a certification program on-line before their next application for approval (anticipated delivery date is January 2004). Dr. Curry also discussed a proposed electronic management system for the IRB that would include on-line submission of protocols as well as timely feedback on protocol review, approval, and renewals. This latter change will occur if GSU can purchase the needed hardware to support this activity.

Discussion centered around the IRB Certification process, the Human Subjects Manual, and the electronic IRB management process. Bob passed out copies of the new IRB Manual and asked for comments and suggestions for revisions. The Committee will appoint an IRB Advisory Subcommittee to assist in the task of overseeing the changes that are underway and provide feedback to the Committee.

IV. Report from the VP Research

V. Standing Committee Reports
1. Internal Grants
Mary Ann Romski (chair) reported on two issues before the Subcommittee. First, she introduced a proposal to create a new internal grants program funded by GSURF to support Scholarly Research Conferences. After discussion, the Committee voted to approve the new program. Second, the Subcommittee reviewed the description and instructions to investigators for Research Program Enhancement (RPE) Grants. Following the recommendation of the Subcommittee, the Committee voted to add a provision that if a proposal undergoing competitive renewal (Category III) review is not funded that it “will receive one additional year of ‘bridge funding’ in the amount of 50% of the GRA positions funded in the previous cycle.” The Subcommittee also discussed the criteria for the evaluation of proposals: in particular, the expectation that the research group “has developed a common research agenda and focus that integrates the research activities of the individual members.” No consensus was reached on a change and Mary Ann agreed to take the issue to the new subcommittee.

2. The Committee defers until a later meeting the remaining Standing Committee or Ad Hoc Committee reports.

3. Subcommittee members were requested to sign-up for subcommittees including Internal Grants (Mary Ann Romski, chair), Research Center Review (Don Reitzes, chair), Research Infrastructure (Roberta Byrum & Steve Manson, co-chairs), IRB Advisory (Laurie Tis, chair), and Strategic Planning (Chuck Derby, chair). The IRB Advisory and Strategic Planning subcommittee is new and their responsibilities will be discussed at a later meeting. The Research Infrastructure Subcommittee is specifically charged with the task of developing a university policy on investigator eligibility and a policy on research openness/secrecy.

VI. Announcements
1. Professor Charity Scott has been invited to our September 22nd meeting to discuss the IRB Blue Ribbon Committee that was established this summer.

2. We will also consider the recommendations of the Internal Grants Subcommittee on the criteria for Research Enhancement Grants, as well as other standing and Ad Hoc committee reports.

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 PM