Georgia State University
Senate Research Committee Meeting
August 22, 2005
Minutes

Present: Don Reitzes (Chair), Paul Alberto, Mary Jane Casto, Missy Cody, Robert Curry, Chuck Derby, Stephen Dobranski, Crawford Elliott, Anne Emanuel, Laura Fredrick, David Houchins, Kim Huhman, Amy Lederberg, Steve Manson, John Medlock, Robin Morris, Christine Roch, Mary Ann Romski, Tammy Sugarman, P. C. Tai

Dr. Reitzes called the meeting to order at 3:29 pm.

Approval of July 18, 2005 Meeting Minutes

The first order of business was review and approval of the minutes from the July 18, 2005 meeting. No member present at the meeting asked that changes be made to the minutes. A motion was made for approval of the minutes; the motion was seconded and the minutes were approved by those Committee members present.

Opening Remarks by Committee Chair

Dr. Reitzes noted that this meeting is viewed as a second orientation of the Senate year and asked Dr. Morris to provide an overview of where he sees the Research Office going over the next year. He stated that the September meeting will be devoted to review of the Roles & Responsibilities document and the October meeting will focus on the Internal Grants program. Dr. Curry remarked that the university Academic Misconduct policy is being revised and the Committee may want to review it at a later meeting, Dr. Reitzes stated that an ad hoc subcommittee will be formed to review the revised Academic Misconduct policy.

Report from the Vice President for Research

Dr. Morris reported that growth in grant activity for the university was flat from FY04 to FY05. For FY04, grants awarded amounted to $59.3 million, for FY05, grants awarded were $57.5 million. He stated that most of the large departments kept pace with last year’s activity, but the College of Education did outperform versus last year thus making up for some of the units which had declines from the prior year. He noted that there were a total of 753 proposals submitted for FY05 versus 827 in FY04. The proposals for FY05 requested $139 million in awards while the proposals in FY04 requested $111 million, so the university overall requested more funding with fewer proposals in FY05 versus FY04.

Dr. Morris stated that one of the issues the Research Office will be working on for the coming year is to devote resources towards increasing grant awards. He added that the design of the new Science Park is also an important initiative this year. An RFP for a new project director is being put together to get someone in place on campus by October 1. Architectural design should start shortly thereafter with groundbreaking scheduled for next summer. The legislature has provided money for the design of the Science Park, but has not yet provided funding the construction of the buildings.

Dr. Morris stated that the Research Office will also focus during the coming year on reviewing the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) Best Practices for Externally Funded Research Universities document and conduct a risk review of related GSU policies and practices. This initiative stems from the various audits
which GSU has undergone during the last year in an effort to shore up our compliance.

Dr. Morris stated that the Research Office is also considering sponsoring a research blast day at the university which would highlight our research activities and reach out to the community to inform them about GSU’s research. He suggested a format which would include undergraduate students, faculty and community members and would showcase research and scholarship at GSU. He noted that the Colonial Athletic Conference, which GSU recently joined, puts on an undergraduate research conference day each year for its member universities. Dr. Morris stressed that there is a real need for the university to do more marketing and public relations about the research that is going on here at GSU.

Dr. Lederberg added that the idea for this event would be to have posters from different GSU departments, and perhaps conference rooms with oral presentations for those disciplines that do not usually present posters. Dr. Morris said he is coordinating this with Dr. Fritz of the Provost’s office to target specific potential undergraduate student segments, probably high school juniors and guidance counselors. The event would likely be held in the early spring, probably starting in 2007, in order to permit ample time for planning the initial event, afterward it would be held annually.

Dr. Alberto commented that the number of graduate students at GSU has been declining, so an effort needs to be made during the proposed research blast event to attract graduate students to GSU in addition to undergraduates. Dr. Morris was open to this idea and suggested that another event which could be combined with this would be a research awards event where faculty members receive recognition for their research activity during the year. Dr. Manson commented that it might not be a good idea to combine the faculty awards event with the student recruiting event. Dr. Derby agreed with Dr. Manson. Another concern raised was the problem of getting GSU faculty members to participate in this type of event. Dr. Morris reiterated his interest in creating an event which will get both potential students and interested business/community members to come to campus to learn more about the research that is going on here at GSU.

There was additional discussion about the Research Day event; and in general the Committee members present were supportive of the idea of GSU putting on such an event. Dr. Morris said his office will begin working out the details and present them to the Committee at a future meeting.

Dr. Morris stated that the new chair of the Board of Regents has formed a special committee to analyze the impact that research universities have had on the state’s economy and overall quality of life. He was invited and has agreed to serve on this committee.

Dr. Morris reported that the GSU Research Foundation has approved funding to purchase land to build some interest housing use of which would be dedicated to graduate students. The type of construction would be multi-level town homes and would be built to have a 15 to 20 year life. He stated that rent per student is projected to be around $350 - $400 per month, which could hopefully be included as part of the graduate assistant stipend package. After the useful life of the student housing ends, the land could then be used for future high rise buildings.

Dr. Morris stated that his office will be working over the coming year on implementing the recommendations contained in the Huron report. He noted that one of the initial tasks is coming up with a new name for his department which will better identify and differentiate it from other research units at the university.

Dr. Alberto stated that he met with Ann Kruger and learned that the IRB is understaffed. He stated that there have been discussions about adding a second IRB because of the administrative overload on the existing IRB. Dr. Morris remarked that there are a large number of compliance committees in place now, and it is a real challenge to find faculty members to serve on these committees, much less to get new members to serve on a
Dr. Alberto suggested that the 2 to 3 month delay required to get full IRB review of protocols is impeding research at GSU and that Dr. Morris could use this information when he asks a faculty member to serve. Dr. Reitzes recommended offering honorariums as an incentive to faculty who would agree to serve on the compliance committees.

Dr. Curry noted that over the last few months only 3 or 4 protocols required full board review at each monthly IRB meeting and the current committee can handle that number each month. He added that the administrative overload for the IRB is due to graduate students submitting incomplete protocols which are supposed to have been reviewed by their faculty mentor, but require an inordinate amount of IRB committee members’ time to review because they are incomplete.

Dr. Romski asked if a checklist would be helpful for IRB protocol submissions. Dr. Lederberg stated that the Office of Sponsored Programs provides a checklist to PIs after they submit grant applications to let them know how complete a job they have done with their application, this type of feedback may be useful for IRB protocol submissions. Dr. Emanuel suggested possibly postponing resubmission of protocols for PIs that do not do a complete job on their initial protocol submission. There was additional discussion on this topic, and Dr. Morris stated that it is critical to get the Roles & Responsibilities document adopted by the Senate so that his office can make sure everyone is educated about their compliance requirements.

**Announcements**

The next Committee meeting will be held at 3:00pm on September 19 in 718-G.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.