

## **RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 6, 2017 MEETING**

#### **I. Time, Location and Attendance**

- 3:30 PM, Brookside Room at the Administrative Center
- RAC members present: Lawrence Dreyfus, Jeff Price, Amanda Emerson, Greg Vonnahme, James Murowchick, John Kevern, Bob Groene, Mark Johnson, Chris Holman, Brenda Dingley, Tony Caruso, Jennifer Lundgren, Paula Monaghan Nichols, Mark Nichols, Russ Melchert, Sarah Dallas and Leslie Burgess.
- Others in attendance: Viviana Grieco, FSEC, IFC Representative, Karen Lavendusky Facilities Space Planner/Analyst, Planning, Design & Construction and Bob Simmons, Associate Vice Chancellor, Campus Facilities.

#### **II. Approval of October Meeting Minutes**

- Dr. Dreyfus welcomed the group and asked for members to provide edits and/or additions to the minutes. Members may email input to Leslie Burgess.

#### **III. Transition of RAC to CIE Task Force recommended configuration**

- An updated membership roster for the reconfigured RAC was distributed to members. Dr. Dreyfus noted that most of the units have elected members at this point and all faculty representatives should be in place by the December meeting. He said the December meeting will be the last as the body currently exists in its original format and then moving into 2018 it will be the CIE task Force-recommended, faculty-led configuration. There will be a voted-on faculty Chair with the writing of the charge and structure open for consideration by the new group. He described the Provost's aim that the framework for this type of group be geared toward a client experience council model, where the committee recommends and reports to her research based items and issues based on the research mission, as well as Office of Research operations.
- Dr. Dreyfus opened a discussion regarding the process for electing the new RAC Chair. He noted that internally elected administrative support will also be needed as part of the new configuration.
- Jeff Price recommended the RAC members communicate and express interest by email regarding nominations for Chair. Dr. Dreyfus agreed and suggested Mark Johnson, as an outgoing RAC member, serve as a conduit for collecting information regarding the election. Dr. Johnson agreed to the role, saying members can submit to him via email their interest in the position and he will construct a ballot for voting at the last RAC meeting on December 4th. He proposed the top-voted be Chair with the second place being Chair Elect serving as backup in the absence of the Chair.
- In discussing developing a new charge and structure, Dr. Dreyfus said he will be happy to provide advice and recommendations of operational guidelines based on his experience and, in his new role of 2018, act as a conduit of information to the Interim Chancellor/Provost. In the context of the new committee, he suggested the charge be

- developed under the new Chair, and noted that the role will be responsible for the organization of the committee planning, such as when the meetings are held, what topics are addressed, and who takes the minutes.
- Paula Monaghan Nichols updated the group with the newly elected School of Medicine representative, Jenifer Allsworth.
  - Dr. Johnson said he will be taking nominations for Chair from members by email until Friday, November 17th.

#### **IV. Research Space Allocation Procedure Draft Document**

- The Research Space Allocation Procedure document was distributed to members and Dr. Dreyfus noted that Dr. Monaghan Nichols and Price assisted in its editing. He explained that while the document provides guidelines, one thing it does not provide is a means for faculty to lose their space without cause. He said the overall idea is to provide a template for units with research space to use regarding allocation.
- Dr. Price noted that the research space capacity listed for the School of Biological Sciences is far less than what the document states and Dr. Dreyfus agreed, as it was pre-construction data and the true number won't be finalized until the building renovations are complete. Bob Simmons agreed that the number was too high and that this is a living document that will be updated as space is constructed and renovated.
- Dr. Dreyfus asked for additional comments from RAC members regarding the document. He described the background of the need for the procedural document, saying it goes back a couple of years as space issues have arisen, particularly on Volker Campus and with Flarsheim Hall. He said the building is densely populated, with two academic units and five academic departments, all occupying space with little extra room. The guidelines in the current Appendix B document doesn't include operational procedures regarding space allocation within, and particularly, across academic units. Procedures for defining underutilized or inactive spaces are also missing from the current document.
- Dr. Dreyfus explained that each research space has a MoCode attached to it that either represents the researcher or is a general departmental or unit code that designates research activity. He said sometimes there are spaces on campus that are being held as research space where nothing is being conducted at the time.
- He described the importance of developing a document for providing procedures, saying that research space, from the faculty-perspective, is a lifeline for conducting research. From an academic unit's perspective he said, it's a vehicle that assists to recruit and retain of faculty, while providing means for advancement. He concluded that there needs to be a document that recognizes and encompasses these shared needs and interests.
- Dr. Dreyfus pointed out the productivity scoring rubric on the sixth page, noting that sometimes research space that appears dormant really isn't and activity may be going on across long time periods or put on hold due to lost funding. He said that any sign of research being done will be recognized but that there also needs to be a threshold where activity and productivity will be evaluated. Space that has proven inactive then

- needs to become part of inventory that could be accessed by another unit through the outlined procedures.
- Dr. Monaghan Nichols pointed out the difference in score on the productivity rubric between graduate school training and post-doc, saying that, in theory they would take up the same space in a research lab. She said that while they are two people with different levels of expertise they occupy the same space as full-time researchers. She pointed out that she can see why part-time student work could be seen as less and that graduate student training should have greater designation. Dr. Dreyfus said he can see her point, but had viewed it more in analyzing the investment. He said that this rubric can be adjusted.
  - Dr. Johnson said that in thinking of research space there are different types, from wet labs to field work and teaching spaces. He explained that some spaces are very specific to the type of research and work being conducted while other scholarly activities are more literature-based and may not require lab features. He asked if Dr. Dreyfus wants to distinguish between these. Dr. Dreyfus deferred to Bob Simmons and Karen Lavendusky saying if you look at assigned space on campus, that which is coded as research space is only within specific units. For instance, he explained, units like Geology don't have assigned research space and could be examples a unit with literature or computer based spaces. He said that most of the research space are those wet lab spaces by in large. Bob Simmons agreed, saying those designated research are a very limited group, with departments like Geology having more dual-purposed spaces. He said Karen addresses dual-purposed spaces by breaking them down to activity by percentages. Bob said there are a few exceptions, but that 99% of those designated research are wet bench type spaces that would not be used for other purposes.
  - Dr. Dallas pointed out that the document fails to include funding levels in analyzing space productivity. Dr. Dreyfus agreed that this is an excellent point to consider and that this should be included. Dr. Dallas said that the number of those employed by the grant should be counted as well. The question of using a dollar amount as analysis was brought up and Dr. Dreyfus said he's hesitant because as soon as a minimal amount is set then someone will be disqualified for bringing in just below in expenditures. Dr. Johnson suggested that you could designate research awards with F&A and no F&A, giving those with no F&A a slightly lower score. Dr. Dreyfus said you might modify it further to say full F&A to be clear.
  - Dr. Dreyfus explained that this first draft was written to provide a clear template to show guidelines for units to consider and use by adapting it to their particular needs. He compared the School of Dentistry to the College of Arts and Sciences with very different research space needs and different needs in the administration of them.
  - Dr. Caruso asked if intra-unit space swaps will be addressed, saying that most units are typically good with sharing space within, but that when it comes to sharing or trading space with other units it can be challenging. He asked if this document will address how Deans work through issues if they can't work together in dealing with space. He pointed out that this is a complex algorithm, needing data and development,

- with rules to go by. He asked if this committee is able to take on the role. Dr. Dreyfus noted that the void left by not having a document such as this exacerbates the already sensitive nature of intra-unit space disputes. He said providing the first step is defining and measuring the productivity of space to see which are being underutilized. He said that while this process can't be automatically fed data at this point, he hopes that sources like MyVita and Academic Analytics will one day be able to do that. Regardless, he noted, it will still require that Deans and Chairs practice due diligence to identify underproducing or inactive space. Policies and guidelines provided by the document need to be used as incentive for this to happen.
- Bob Simmons concluded that much time has been spent on spaces concerns and that having this document will at least be a start to a more efficient process in dealing with issues. He said he would certainly not want to negate the process simply because it will take time and effort, as it will save both in the long run once it's worked through. He said the first data set and the first year will be the most challenging, but that will get easier with time.
  - Dr. Price explained that he sees this document as a means for compelling units to justify their research space usage based on setting reasonable standards. Dr. Dreyfus said this could be a part of the annual evaluations of tenure track faculty who occupy research space. Dr. Caruso asked how Deans and Chairs are kept honest in this process, when their interest is to maintain space. Dr. Kevern pointed out that we have solid data to use and that we are looking for the outliers. He explained that with data from MyVita as well as data from F&A, there should be a limit set where someone who is two standard deviations away is examined and given a remediation plan. Dr. Monaghan Nichols agreed, saying the data is solid and all factors are quantifiable.
  - Dr. Dreyfus explained that a list will be given from Facilities with those occupying research space as the target group and that the outliers will then be identified. Dr. Caruso asked who will be in charge of the analysis, saying it will take much time. Overall, the group agreed that it's important to begin the process despite its challenges.
  - Dr. Dreyfus said that when he first approached this, he thought it would done centrally through the Office of Research Services in working with the Provost's office and Academic Affairs. After some thought he opted for moving the process to the units, however, this is where the "conflict arises". He proposed that oversight of the process go back to a central approach where a space activity profile is assembled that will point to the "outliers". These data could be organized in a report given back to the academic units for evaluation and explanation or apparent underutilization of research space (as the case may be).
  - Dr. Monaghan Nichols identified the bullet points in the document that begin on the first page, saying that members should look toward those as being a means for analysis and to see if anything is missing from this list. Dr. Price pointed out that undergraduate work is missing and should be included. Dr. Caruso added that sharing space between units should be included as well.

- Jenny Lundgren pointed out that there was still little included in the document regarding how to bring issues to an upper level, particularly when they are between units. While we can start with units trying to work together, there isn't much incentive for cooperation when there's such a need to retain space for faculty recruitment. Dr. Dreyfus said this returns to the point of who manages the process and he is leaning more toward someone at his level with the authority to oversee this process based on data provided by units. Dr. Lundgren noted that in looking at annual evaluations, departments set their own criteria with their own expectations. Brenda Dingley said that MyVita will provide pullable data for this.
- Dr. Price suggested that Dr. Dreyfus set up a system where his office sends a report every two years to units to address problem areas in productivity in research space and then the units have to respond with data. Dr. Dreyfus agreed that this is a possible solution and dependent on obtaining data from the Facilities Management office. Karen Lavendusky said that, while challenging, producing the output needed can be done. Dr. Dreyfus suggested to the group that he should redraft the document to reflect a more central administrative approach.
- Viviana Grieco provided the point of view as representative of the Faculty Senate Committee that these type of problems come through their meetings too despite the group having no structure in place to provide guidance or recommendations. She said she agrees that there should be a layer of executive authority that the Senate can turn to with conflicts regarding research space.
- Bob Simmons explained that the current approach of addressing special needs is that Karen Lavendusky meets with units to evaluate and assess their situations. He explained that base line policies are what is needed and by focusing on the outliers at this point progress can be made.
- Dr. Dallas observed that while sharing space is currently being proposed, it is a short-term solution to the ever-growing space needs of the University. Bob Simmons explained that there is planning currently being done for building onto Flarsheim Hall and the School of Medicine in the future.
- Dr. Melchert shared that it is important for the committee to keep in mind the campus climate regarding budget and hiring when considering the big picture of space policy. He said that Deans are in the current positions of needing to defend every faculty hire and recruitment needs are another point to consider.
- Dr. Dreyfus concluded that he will edit and reconfigure the document considering all the points discussed in the meeting. A test case was proposed as being a good first step in using the various databases.