

USF Research Council

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2023

Present: John Adams (Past Chair), Ponrathi Athilingam, Kelli Barr, Feng Cheng, Ganesh Halade, Richard Heller (Chair), Mark Luther, Taryn Sabia, Kristina Schmidt, Emily Shaffer-Hudkins, Kersuze Simeon-Jones, David Simmons (Vice-Chair), Marilyn Stern, Jenny Qin

Absent: Elizabeth Hadley, James Leahy, Kristian Lynch

Also Attending: Eddie Aikins, Keith Anderson, Michelle Canne, Jennifer Condon, Judi Dorn, Clarissa Grant, Grant Gundle, Sandra Johnson-Austin, Tina Lucas, Allison Madden, Robert Marlowe, Mark McLaughlin, Cerise Mullings, Stephanie Rios, Ben Shnitser, Sylvia Thomas, Deena Vanderbosch

Call to Order

Dr. Richard Heller (Chair), called the meeting of the USF Research Council to order at 12:30 p.m. on October 23, 2023, in-person at the VP of Research Multi-Purpose Room and via Microsoft Teams.

Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

The October 9, 2023, minutes were approved as presented.

USF Emergency Management Program (DEM)

Grant Gundle, Director of Emergency Management; Rob Marlow and Clarissa Grant, Emergency Management Coordinator III; and Michelle Canne, Staff Assistant, visited the group and introduced themselves and reviewed their background. They covered several areas of the DEM's scope and mission, including:

- USF DEM Program Strategic Goals and Areas of Responsibility;
- Proactive planning: Continuity of Operations (COO) Plans, including Comparative Medicine and Sponsored Research;
- Planning for Hazards: Natural hazards and human and technological hazards; and
- DEM Sponsored Programs and Partnership Programs: Emergency Management Accreditation Program, WeatherSTEM, StormReady, Skywarn, and Weather-Ready Nation, USF Safe App, and the *If You See Something, Say Something™* campaign

The Continuity of Operations (COO) Plans are specific for each area, user-friendly, and very useful in case of disaster. Several training programs are available online at the USF Emergency Management website. Having a plan in place helps facilitate funding afterward from government agencies.

Fringe Pool Mitigation Process

Jennifer Condon, VP of Business & Finance and Deputy CFO, visited the Research Council to address concerns regarding the Fringe Pool Mitigation Process. She noted that the percentages have increased; no longer seeing actual expenses. Their intent is to do no harm, to make things better for PIs, and to make PIs whole so they may use the funding that is now being absorbed by higher fringe rates. More than \$200,000 has been paid out with \$75,000 pending. They will refine the process as warranted and needed. After a few years of actual budgets, things should even out. Rates could improve but will settle out after some years gone by.

Research Council members noted that faculty and all stakeholders heard about it after the fact, even though the same decision may have been arrived at. They recommended that USF post any proposed budgetary changes and allow all stakeholders the ability to post comments. Transitions would be smoother because stakeholders will have provided their feedback. A suggestion was made for Business and Finance to have representation on the Faculty Senate.

Deena Vanderbosch explained how the process would work with a grant received just prior to the implementation. Jennifer Condon stated that she is happy to help with any concerns. From her perspective, it was a wonderful partnership with the Research Office, working on behalf of all faculty and researchers. There was a \$2,000 bottom threshold set for administrative purposes, but they will consider a material percentage for a lesser amount. The rates will change annually, approved by DHHS.

Other Business

Visitors have been arranged on November 20 to discuss USF Procurement Policies and Procedures and on December 4 to discuss Foreign Influence as it pertains to USF Researchers.

Judi Dorn thanked the reviewers for the NSF MRI Limited Submission and reminded the group that their reviews are due today.

Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, November 6, but was later cancelled due to no agenda items and to accommodate the Provost's CREATE Grant launch. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, November 20.