

## Senate Growth and Development Committee 2015/2016

Meeting Minutes 3/11/16

10:00-11:15 am

Senate Conference Room, Hall Dorm

**Present** – Larry Renfro (Chair), Joseph Crivello, Andrew Moiseff, Maria Gordina, Cheryl Galli, Lyle Scruggs, Tracie Borden, Karl Guillard, Dave Benson, Robert Bird, Greg Bouquet, Larry Silbart, Faquir Jain

**Missing** – Suzanne Wilson, Alec Calva, Kristen Schwab, Kathy Hendrickson, Michael Accorsi

**Guests** – Jeff Seemann, Vice President for Research

Discussion with the VPR was centered on the activities of the Research Foundation

1. Larry first discussed that the bylaws change will be presented to the Senate May meeting.
2. We then discussed the current status of all financial/grant expenditures, which are growing but federal support has slowed. The decrease in federal support started in 2012 and is at best flat, including non-federal support. Part of the problem is a flat-line or decreasing NSF/NIH Budget. Vice President Seemann provided an updated annual report of the University's research activities. Dr. Moiseff noted that there has been no growth in federal grant dollars at UConn. Dr. Bird asked if this was due to a "shrinking pie." Dr. Seemann agreed that federal grants were more competitive. One way to improve competitiveness is to increase collaborative proposals.
3. Moiseff asked about how we can increase internal collaborations and requests for external support. We discussed the role of *Lincus* on faculty collaborations. Dr. Seemann noted that the Research Foundation Excellence Grants include incentives for collaborative proposals but that better quantification of outcomes from these grants was needed. Dr. Silbart noted that the Academic Plan programs are meant to foster collaboration. The VPR mentioned that there is a project to derive data on why some proposals are successful and some are not. Also, he noted that there may be some more subtle issues such as institutional reputation, bias and access to facilities. Dr. Moiseff mentioned targeting faculty who are close in federal funding by helping with logistical support for preliminary data gathering.
4. We discussed means to better mentor faculty when they apply for external funding. Drs. Crivello, Gordina and Silbart stressed the need for adequate mentoring and grant writers as well as award managers. VP Seemann noted that multiple vendors have been retained to help develop grant writing skills, and more help with grant pre-award and post-award has been provided. Dr. Silbart noted that the use of In-Residence faculty for major teaching roles has provided increased research time and may help grant support. Dr. Guillard cautioned that allowing buyouts from teaching could reduce student interaction with some of our best teachers. Dr. Seemann agreed that UConn was special in part because researchers were also in the classroom.
5. We discussed the activities of the RAC, which is currently tasked to improve extramural

support, the effectiveness of internal support and the travel policy. The Vice President indicated that the Research Foundation was promoting University:Industry partnerships but needed to catch up. Karen Woodward of Technology and Innovation Services is working on these arrangements which seem to be tougher in the life sciences. More arrangements with the financial industry were encouraged.

6. The current very high fringe benefit charges to grants were discussed. VP Seemann indicated these would be further examined.
7. The meeting ended at 11:15 am.