

University Budget Committee

Monday April 20, 2015

MINUTES

Members in attendance. Rajeev Bansal, Thomas Bontly, Angela Brightly, Janine Caira, Ellen Carillo, Eleni Coundouriotis, Philip Mannheim James Marsden, Suresh Nair, Daniel Stolzenberg. Guest: VPR Jeff Seeemann.

Following introductions, the committee discussed a number of issues bearing on the cost of research, including:

- Tuition on grants
- Fringe rates. As recently announced, fringe rates for employees on federally sponsored projects are going up dramatically for FY16. The increase is especially sharp for grad students on grants. In order to lessen the effects of the increase, the VPR has proposed that OVPR put up 50% of the additional fringe if the deans and departments will cover the rest. Fringe rates for university employees on state time are different from fringe rate on federal grants.
- Indirect cost returns. The total return on IDC is about \$20M. Historically, when state funded dollars got tight, universities have moved people from state funding to IDC dollars. That may be how we got here. About 50% of OVPR operations is funded by IDC. However, not all indirect cost dollars go into OVPR—just the IDCs off “research” grants. 2.2 mil in IDC from other types of grants flow to the Controller’s office at uconn. No 10-10-10, no share to principle investigator.
- How IDCs are reinvested.
- Proposal Development Service. OVPR is working on setting up a centralized shared service on grant writing. More uniform in quality of help available to PIs, and more efficient and allow them to put out substantially more proposals. Would have better capacity to deal with surges, deadlines, etc. Right now 5 or 6 people in that area. The worry about centralization is the idea that you get better, more specialized service. OVPR aims to provide specialized support, but take advantage of efficiencies to be gained through centralization.
- Compliance.
- The increasing use of non-tenure line faculty with in-res appointments and no research responsibilities. This leaves us with fewer people to generate research grants.

Following the discussion with the VPR, the committee met separately to discuss our report on tuition on grants. Several points were emphasized.

- Reduce the 60%.
- Top priority is that the \$ should go to support students coming in with individual prestigious national fellowships and not for other things.
- Lots of other ways to get matches on the training grants.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.