

The University of Tennessee  
Research Council  
Minutes of the Meeting  
December 12, 2018

**Attendance:**

**Elected Members present:**

David Butler, Graciela Cabana, Jay Chen, David Icove, Julia Jaekel, Michael Kilbey, Rebecca Koszalinski, Andreas Nubenfuehr, Tore Olsson, Stephen Paddison, Casey Sams, and Soren Sorensen (Chair)

**Ex-Officio Members present:**

Katherine Ambroziak, Chris Boake, Bruce LaMattina, Holly Mercer, Charlie Noble, Robert Nobles, Bill Nugent, Bill Nugent, Hollie Raynor

**Ex-Officio Members present:** Anna Banks

**Call to order:**

Soren Sorensen called the meeting to order. A regular meeting of the Research Council was held at Blount Hall room A004 on December 12, 2018. The meeting called to order at 3:35 pm.

**New Business**

[Current and Future Activities Related to Research Development - Bruce LaMattina – Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Development](#)

This presentation provides growth analysis to spur conversation. Takeaways + Capacity = Growth Strategy. Assumptions were made: some small sample size, trends and order of magnitude. The presentation begins with takeaways from F&18 with a review of current status of external funding awards rolling off steadily through 2018. NSF awards drop to a 10 year low; NSF awards drop by 30% between 2017 and 2018; and excluding JICS, NSF award growth has been steady or growing in the last 10 years with the exception of FY18. After reviewing the takeaways, the University's research capacity was discussed. A review of a five-year average (July 2012 through August 2017), shows that on the average 42% of the tenured/tenure track faculty receive external funding awards, whereas 65% of the research faculty receive external funding. Please see presentation for additional analysis by college and rank.

Assumptions were made to energize research non-active faculty to active: Only R&D, Analysis by Department Growth based on median annual project amount (awards over \$1M eliminated this part of the analysis), Departments can grow to 100% active, Steady state – faculty count remains at current level, Once faculty member becomes active they remain active. If all assumptions are true, we create potential for kinetic energy by growing the base resulting. With the annual 10% increase of research active faculty, 100% capacity will be achieved by the 10<sup>th</sup> year with an annual \$23M increase from external funding awards. Please see presentation for additional data analysis by college.

In conclusion, large awards have been critical but UT needs to work further out on a timeline to increase the success rate by cultivating external strategic partnerships to increase the success rate. UT's young faculty have significant potential energy and need more and specialized support different from active researchers. Recommend priority be on publishing for non-active faculty first as well as measure their interest to work with industry. Lastly, a deeper understanding on why only 65% of research faculty are active.

Statements or Question from Council:

- Some departments do not require external funding as a requirement
- It may be difficult to increase with those who do not publish
- Q: Are all department considered? A: Yes, did not remove those departments who have less opportunity for research.
- Timeframe for success should be considered in the assumptions
- Some faculty do not want to be active.
- Research awards have a STEM bias; not 100% realistic
- Non-STEM faculty do not teach while performing research which in unlike STEM faculty
- Recommend defining research active faculty by STEM vs Non-STEM
- Because departments have different metrics, recommend a subset for numbers who have high expectations for research.
- \$23M increase is aspirational but still a small expectation compared to overall research expenditure
- Q: Do we have peer comparisons? A: No
- Those Non-STEM faculty who are research active are not measured by the amount of external funding awards
- Q: Will you meet with Department Heads to understand their expectations? A: Yes
- Q: What is the definition of research expenditures? A: All expenditures dedicated to research.
- UT's junior faculty need to have extra help with more dedication (hand holding) from senior faculty members
- Recommend avoiding concentration on large projects. Arts and Humanities work in small groups with smaller awards.

#### ORE Support For Graduate Students – Discussion led by Chair

A review of graduate support was reviewed by each council member in attendance. Please see attached presentation for each department. [Did not receive from all members]. It was agreed that this topic will be a Spring semester discussion item focusing on how do we help research by research assistantships to encourage them to be more research active.

#### Communicator's Council – Award notification process – Erin Chapin

UT's Communicator's Council has 22 members of those with communication roles at director-level and above. This Council determines how we share, what to share, and what is newsworthy. The Communicator's Council members may approach the Research Council members to discuss how they share information and create an open-line of communication. Erin will send Communicator's Council members list to Research Council members. It was suggested to invite the new VC for Communications to present at a future Research Council meeting.

#### Additional Statements or Questions:

- After the graduate student discussion, it was suggested to invite Stacy Patterson from UTRF to present the differences between campus and system.

**Adjournment:** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:20 pm.

**Minutes submitted by:** Paula Brown

**Next Meeting:** February 13, 2019 @ 3:30 pm in Blount Hall A004.

**NOTE:** The January 9, 2019 meeting is canceled.