Minutes – Research and Creative Activity Grants Committee 10/5/2005

Attendance:
ABDEL-SALAM, TAREK; Allen, William E; Alston, Paul P; Bair, Jeff; Corbett, D. Reide; Deena, Seodial Frank H; Gares, Paul; Jones, Mark; Justiniano, Edson; Katsoulis, Elias G; Orr, Suezanne T; Overton, Anthony; Phipps, Jeffery B; Reed, Jonathan Mark; Rosenthal, David; Schreier, Alan; Van Willigen, Marieke; Wong, Daniel.

The chair, Seodial Deena, called the meeting to order at 4:06pm. He thanked the committee for their service and encouraged the members to strive for objectivity and consistency in their rankings of the proposals. In addition he reminded the committee of the importance of being judicious and discrete, particularly by avoiding any discussions of the proposals outside of the meeting. He underscored the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the scores and the comments made about each proposal during the meeting.

Deena reminded the committee that he had forwarded to them a copy of an email he sent to the Vice Chancellor for Research Maeegan and Associate Vice Chancellor Gemperline requesting additional funding for the RCA program, since we have had an unusually large number of proposals submitted this year. In addition, as the university puts a greater emphasis on research, funding for this program should likewise increase.

Deena informed the committee that the original proposals submitted were reviewed by the chair, sub-committee chairs, and Al Schreier. Proposals which violated requirements as outlined by the proposal guidelines were eliminated by a consensus decision of these four members. The decision by this subgroup was to eliminate proposals when the violation of the guidelines (ex. Spacing) gave an advantage to the author. Deena asked for any questions or comments by the committee. The committee voted unanimously to approve these eliminations.

Paul Gares, Assistant Chair and Subcommittee Chair, reported that Jonathon Reed, Psychology, had asked that some psychology proposals that had been assigned to another subcommittee be reassigned to the Social Science sub-committee. Paul informed the committee that, since the proposals had already been assigned, the chair of the committee was out of town, and all proposals would be read by everyone eventually, he had decided not to move the Psychology proposals to the Social Science sub-committee.

Gares also pointed out that a question had been raised about some proposals whose budget amounts in the spreadsheet were over the $10,000 maximum. These were checked and all exceeded the amount only because the researcher included his/her own stipend in the budget amount.

Questions were raised about the following specific proposals:
52 – no budget sheet, but budget justification
   This proposal was eliminated since it did not meet the proposal guidelines.
62 – budget amount exceeds $10,000 (researcher added incorrectly)
   The committee decided to consider this proposal but only fund up to $10,000 if deemed meritorious.
64 – no budget page
   No project expenses requested so budget page is not required.

Gares initiated a discussion of whether proposals that fund the creation of technology should be funded. The committee discussed this issue and decided that each proposal has to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in order to decide whether the researcher has made an argument for the merit of the creation of the technology.

Deena asked if the committee felt that the authors of those proposals that had been eliminated for violations of proposal guidelines should be notified immediately that the proposal had been eliminated rather than wait until the committee had made their final decisions on all proposals.
   The committee voted to send out a letter now to those faculty whose proposals had already been eliminated for proposal guideline violations.

Orr asked if these proposals are meant to be pilot studies or not, since this affects how she might rank the proposals.
   Members of the committee pointed out that this had been an issue of debate for years on the committee and that at this point in time the proposals are not specifically designated for pilot studies.

The whole committee broke up into three sub-committees to review and discuss proposals.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Wednesday October 26th.