MINUTES
ECU Faculty Senate Research/Creative Activity Grants Committee
9 February 2005

1.0 Called to Order, Steve Estes presiding.

2.0 Minutes 11/4/2004 were read and amended:
The 11/4/2004 Minutes should note that the PIs whose proposals were under discussion were not present for the discussion. Also, Randy Parker's comment regarding PIs who are also on the R/CA Grants Committee was repeated before these PIs left the room.

3.0 Committee members were asked to contact Paul Gares if they would like to be on the R/CA Grants Committee again.

4.0 06-07 Procedures and Calendar document was discussed.
4.1 Returning committee members noted and discussed.
4.2 Date changes made for September/October/November 2006 Calendar. Note that the proposals are due Wednesday, Sep. 14.

5.0 06-07 R-CAGrantProposal.doc. discussed and changes made.

6.0 Vice Chancellor John Lehman spoke and commended the committee on its work. The committee thanks Lehman for securing funding for an additional 10 proposals for the 2—5/2006 period.

7.0 Faculty Feedback
Email from Robert Hunting discussed. Referred to next year a discussion of Huntings' proposal. The committee will either have to make better comments, or provide no comments at all. The discussion seemed to evolve to those two positions.

8.0 R/CA Grant Committee members submitting proposals
Moved that R/CA Grant Committee members be excluded from the process while they are sitting members of the Committee. Discussion noted that faculty may not be willing to serve on the committee if they will not be allowed to participate in the sole university R/CA internal grant competition. Motion failed.

It was agreed that feedback, if it is provided to PIs, will not be made available to committee members if they have made a proposal. All PIs will receive committee feedback at the conclusion of the review process, including members of the R/CA Grants Committee.

9.0 Review Process Discussion
9.1 "... some sort of weighting of the scores from the primary subcommittees." Also: "We need decide whether or not to change the scoring process. I am not in favor of radical changes, but I would be willing to consider a total score consisting of the average of the two subcommittee averages. That way there is no penalty if the two subcommittees have different numbers of members (i.e., different number of voters). I think that the good proposals will survive scrutiny of the reviewers from the other subcommittee. No decision made on this topic. Moved to next year's committee for discussion; that committee will choose its methods of review.

9.2 If we allow R/CA Grant Committee members to submit proposals, committee members "... should not see the comments on that proposal (or participate in ANY discussion related to them...) Completed in Item 8.
9.3 Feedback to PIs: ... We should just ask that they write a paragraph rather than a line or two. Also, "We need revise our comment recording/reporting procedure. I think that a checklist would be a great start. That way we could ask the same questions about every proposal. Of course, there should also be room for questions and comments that are not on the checklist. Moved to next year's committee to develop a checklist if it wishes to do so.

9.4 Faculty members who have received multiple committee awards: should they have the same access to these awards that young faculty should have? Moved to next meeting for discussion.

9.5 We need to consider better clarifying the application process to make the style rules more clear. I would like to go an electronic submission and review process. I am not sure that we could do it by next year because it would have to undergo some serious testing. Discussion ensued. Agreed to continue paper submissions with multiple copies until all committee members are provided laptops.

9.6 revise our calendar so that we know the correct dates for everything at the first meeting. Completed at this meeting.

9.7 Another solution would be for the committee and subcommittee chairs to get an objective review of the committee member's proposal from an expert outside of the committee. The subcommittees could use the review to help them evaluate the proposal so that they do not have to rely on the author's expertise. If we had done that this year, we would only have had five external reviews (one for each committee member's proposal). I think that kind of expert analysis would have helped us! Discussion concluded that this review process cannot have experts in each field because of the nature of this grant competition.

9.9 How about a session for people to meet with the committee to discuss proposal writing? Discussion concluded that the Committee will not hold meetings for this purpose. The Committee meets too much already.

9.10 Expending funds by June 30: "This is news to me. I'm sure ... that there are ways to stretch the funding across the summer months, but I cannot figure out how (the letter speaks of "exchanging funding types" but we have no overhead or discretionary fund with which to exchange). Either there are tricks out there that I am unaware of, or else this provision is a serious problem for those who wish to use R/CA funds for extended summer travel. If the former, I would welcome suggestions; if the latter, I think we may want to consider adding some cautionary remarks to the application packet. Consensus that the expending of funds by the end of the fiscal year needs to be better understood by PIs, but there is not much we can do about it because of the nature of the funding process.

It was agreed that the Committee will meet again this Spring. Agenda Items for next meeting:

1.0 Summer support for faculty who already have summer support or will have summer support from another source.

2.0 Mission - what are we trying to accomplish with this grant process? For instance: funding new investigators, or seed grant support, or funding those who have received multiple awards in the past, etc.?

3.0 Accountability: productivity from previous awards. Detailed accounting for past awardees – grants, pubs, other.

4.0 Committee consider that, if we fund multiple times, that we have some other additional criteria other than what we have now,