

COMMITTEE: 2023 Research/Creative Activities Committee

MEETING DATE: February 16, 2022, at 4:00 PM, via Teams

PERSON PRESIDING: Joi Walker, Committee Chair

REGULAR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Haberstroh, Amanda; Skibins, Jeffrey; Akpan, Uduak; Baker, Rachel Anna, Eseryel, Yeliz; Farwell, Mary; Xiao, Peng; Smith Raychl; Lin, Xi; Wall, Edmund L; Bolin, Linda;

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Alex Manda, Mary Farwell

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Sharon Paynter

ACTIONS OF MEETING

1. Approval of minutes by acclamation, all agreed, and motion made for approval of the January 2023 meeting.
2. The committee decided to add the “chair notification” to the RCA award application process, so that the department chairs are prepared to plan for their department’s teaching load.
3. Yeliz Eseryel initiated a motion to allow the committee members to apply for the RCA award. Uduak Akpan and Alex Manda seconded the motion. 9 members voted yes, and 1 voted no. The motion passed.
4. NOTE: We may be able to increase the number of the committee members to include more diversity in membership. But the bigger the committee, the more difficult it is to reach a quorum, and it may be more difficult to arrange/keep the meetings.
5. Yeliz Eseryel initiated the motion to include in the RCA award announcement that RCA committee members interested in applying must inform the RCA committee chair, who will decide on their eligibility. Those members found eligible to apply must be recused from the review process. Linda Bolin seconded. 8 members voted yes, and none voted no. The motion passed.
6. The committee felt that the process for the RCA awards went well. We discussed that there are two potential improvement areas: (a) We may want to create a matrix of what qualifications are needed for each field, with the input of the committee members from different fields. (b) In the September meeting, we may want to include 45 minutes for award subgroup to meet among themselves, before we meet as the whole group.
7. Dr. Paynter and Dr. Farwell provided information on the two items charged to the committee. The details are summarized below.
 - a. Performance-based funding metric of Research Productivity
 - b. All Funds Budget: F&A planning for PIs
8. Mary Farwell introduced the SPARC award which was announced last week:
<https://rede.ecu.edu/internalfunding/>
9. Linda Bolin motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Study how the institution specific Performance-based funding metric of Research Productivity will be implemented; how it will be measured, and how data will be collected.

This task should be shared in the senate this spring semester. The decision around the performance metric was made given a list of performance metrics that we could choose from. And some of those were not available to our campus and they were removed by the system office because we didn't meet certain thresholds or criteria for inclusion. The period of time under which that decision had to be made was very short. And as we were trying to establish a firm understanding around what the definitions were, there was some shifting in that from the system office to the campus level. And so we needed to be sure we understood what we were making decision about as we were trying to pull the data together to do that. And then the last piece around the definitional peak.

The funded research metric was selected using data and in understanding where we thought the strengths lie in our faculty expertise and the things that we're already doing well, the Chancellor of the Executive Council made the decision based on that analysis that the Provost, the report IPAR who pulled the data together for the different options that were available to us.

Part of this is that the system office told us what the definitions are, what data we will record and pull or report, and so we're doing that based on the way that our sponsored activities have been reported for a long time. This is not a new way to report that it comes out of eTrac's data and allows us to look at our sponsored activities and licensing revenue for that report.

The campus is going to be held to a baseline number and then there's an increase that happens over time that will be measured against. If we overachieve, we get a funding bonus. And so as we looked at that, we think this is the place where we have the best opportunity to achieve that bonus and to achieve that performance that will give our campus a way to really have an investment from the system office beyond what with the formula would have provided had we reached one of those penalties in those areas, we thought we wouldn't perform as well.

Then the last piece is some of those other metrics would essentially be double counting, so it would have a lot of weight on the student side and the other five metrics are very heavily weighted on student numbers and enrollment. And so, we wanted to have something that gave us an additional performance and way for us to show case the work that our faculty are doing.

The data is available on a day-to-day basis on a dashboard.

<https://rede.ecu.edu/metrics/>

<https://rede.ecu.edu/metrics/sponsored-awards/>

As of today (2/16) we have \$50 million and awards, which basically means about halfway through the FY we are more than halfway of what we got last year, 81.831. The baseline metric is 70 million, which we hit every year except 2020.

Report for Faculty Senate about the recent updates on PI spending of F&A.

The UNC system has asked all 17 universities how they will use the different monies that they have available. We have to do an ALL FUNDS budget accounting. So, regardless of what the fund types are, we submit an institutional plan for spending over the next fiscal year. When you think about it as an institution knowing what our cash on hand is and what we expect, it's growth or retraction to be helps to provide a level of physical health for the institution that then gives signals to some of the folks that that deal with our debt. So, our bond rating, those kinds of things, if all of the faculty at the same time said we're going to expend all of the cash in the F&A accounts, it would create difficulties.

Part of what makes this challenging is that the UNC system has put the policy in place, and last year to was the first time we did it. This is the second time, so we're still trying as an institution to make sure that we are building a process that works for all of us and that works differentially where needed.

The university is asking PI's to provide a plan for how they plan to use their F&A funds over the next fiscal year. We are not going to remove monies from their account, no accounts are going to be frozen. But as we look at that institutionally, we've need to be able to understand how do we balance our cash on hand with our liabilities at a very simplistic level and in that fiscal analysis and so the university needs to predict what that spending pattern might look like and be able to balance, then how we are doing the fiscal things that are in the other types of fund, we have funds we have on hand.

If a faculty member, for example, says I'm going to spend \$5000 out of my \$10,000, and in the course of the year, something happens, equipment breaks or you need to go to a conference you didn't plan on or whatever you need an extra student assistant. You can submit a request to change that budget plan and it just needs to go through an approval process at the college level.

[Question] Who is approving changes?

I think it happens differently across our campus depending on what the college. The administrative structures are in the different parts of campus. So, I don't think there's one answer to that question.

This question needs to be answered for PI's and Chairs.