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MINUTES

BOARD OF REGENTS’ COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION MEETING

APRIL 6, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Eugene Bal, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. on Wednesday, April 6, 2016, at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, Information Technology Building, 1st Floor Conference Room 105A/B, 2420 Correa Road, Honolulu, Hawai’i 96822.

Committee members in attendance: Committee Chair Eugene Bal; Committee Vice Chair Jan Sullivan; Regent Barry Mizuno; Regent Ben Kudo.

Committee members excused: Regent Coralie Matayoshi.

Others in attendance: Board Chair Randy Moore; Regent Simeon Acoba, Regent Wayne Higaki; Regent David Iha; Regent Michael McEnerney; Regent Lee Putnam; Regent Michelle Tagorda; Regent Stanford Yuen; Regent Ernie Wilson, Jr. (ex officio committee members); President David Lassner; Vice President for Legal Affairs and University General Carrie Okinaga; Vice President for Research Vassilis Syrmos; Vice President for Budget and Finance and Chief Financial Officer Kalbert Young; Interim UH-Mānoa (UHM) Chancellor Robert Bley-Vroman; UH-Hilo (UHH) Chancellor Donald Straney; Interim UH-West O'ahu (UHWO) Chancellor Doris Ching; Executive Administrator and Secretary to the Board Cynthia Quinn; and others as noted.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2016 MEETING

Regent Mizuno moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2016 meeting, seconded by Board Chair Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board Cynthia Quinn announced that the Board Office received no written testimony, and no individuals had signed up to testify.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

Committee Chair Bal reordered the agenda to take up the action items first upon request by Administration, and there were no objections.

B. For Action

1. Recommend Approval of Proposed Amendments to Regents Policy Chapter 12 - Research
VP Syrmos provided a slide presentation and explained how the proposed amendments to Regents Policy Chapter 12 – Research incorporated work by the Research Policy Task Force (RPTF), which had diverse representation of faculty, administrators and staff, had undergone a process for consultation with stakeholders. He highlighted that the most substantial comments regarded RCUH, and Principal Investigator provisions, and administration is creating a small task group with representatives from HGEA and UH System offices to review RCUH hiring processes to improve efficiencies, ease of implementation, and transparency.

Questions and comments were raised regarding occurrences of terminations of organized research units (ORUs) within the past 5 to 10 years; need for a clear strategy hiring plan for the various types of ORU faculty; deferring action to consider comments; and how proposed language in RP 12.206 regarding delegation of authority to administration to terminate ORUs appears contrary to existing board policy that requires board approval. In addition, regarding RCUH, concerns were raised regarding need for clarification on dollar threshold for service orders, purchases or contracts; considering providing executive policies for context in reviewing proposed board policy amendments; consideration of maximizing service ordering to RCUH to fund positions, save money on fringe benefits; clarifying the role of the board and president regarding the RCUH contract with UH; how the deletion of “not limited to” language in RP 12.201, Ethical Standards of Conduct may unintentionally over broadens the applicability and scope; inconsistent terms regarding service ordered projects and types of funding; and proposed revisions regarding appointment of regent members to the RCUH board lacking guidance on selection criteria.

Regarding ORUs, it was explained how no terminations but reorganizations of ORUs had occurred, such as the functions of the Industrial Relations Center was reorganized under Library Services; the intent is to conform policies to regents current policy regarding thresholds currently stated in RP 8.201, Contracts & Official Documents (e.g., consulting contracts over $1 million and construction contracts over $5 million require board approval); and that UHM is in the process of an extensive strategic planning for research across all disciplines, including ORUs, that will consider the hiring issue, with a report back to the committee in August on the progress.

Regarding RCUH, it was explained how intramural funds includes all appropriated funds, including bond funds which are also appropriated, and that while no specific policy prohibits CIP projects from being service ordered to RCUH, it is recent practice. Regarding appointment of regents to the RCUH board, it was explained that the language was intentionally vague to accommodate uncertainty of future legislative mandate that may impact the relationship between RCUH and the Board of Regents.

The committee requested a report by VC Bruno on the strategic plan in August to include grant funding levels and financials for each of the ORUs; a copy of the policy on organizational units; a report on all tuition and fees special funds that had been service ordered to RCUH, if any; a copy of RCUH hiring processes; and the Internal Agreement between UH & RCUH.
Recognizing varying degrees of significant concerns raised for administration to consider before seeking board approval, Board Chair Moore moved to recommend board approval of RP 12.202, RP 12.203, and RP 12.208, and defer RP 12.201, RP 12.206 and RP 12.207 for further consideration by administration, seconded by Regent Kudo, and the motion carried unanimously.

The committee further requested that VC Bruno report back to the committee in the next few months on current or best practices at other Tier I public research institutions for (1) hiring of research faculty, use of tenure, instructional requirements, and incentive compensation; and (2) what current UHM ORUs do and how modern research units or institutes are formed at other institutions to provide context and allow the committee to begin discussion on the policies.

A. For Information

1. Report on Extramural Awards

VP Syrmos provided a slide presentation on the quarterly summary report on extramural awards as of March 25, 2016, that showed that given the large awards issued the prior year, the volume for the current quarter is flat with small fluctuations. UH System decreased by approximately 10% ($15 million) compared to last year, which is mostly attributable to the Applied Research Laboratory (aka University Affiliated Research Center) receiving two large task orders on energy last year. However, there is indication from the National Science Foundation (NSF) that the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) submission will be funded, and administration is currently negotiating the approximately $20 million in funding by the end of June, which will have a positive impact for UHM, UHH and the community colleges.

He reported how UHH overall has been doing very well with extramural funds, with a small decrease this year, likely impacted by prior year large awards including the School of Pharmacy $6 million Pharm2Pharm grant; and $2.5 million for the United Kingdom Infrared Telescope restoration. Several proposals have been submitted, but all are smaller amounts than last year. Regarding UH Community Colleges, most of last year’s increase in extramural awards of 7% to 8% came from the community colleges, for Title III programs and a large Community College Career Training (C3T) grant with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment & Training Administration, both of which they do not have this year; the community colleges have submitted other proposals, but do not expect to see a huge increase.

He reported how UHM has a flat year, but noted how in the prior year awards from UH Foundation (UHF), that do not go through ORS, went to UHM valued at $40 million from NSF for microbial oceanography, as well as the community colleges valued at $6.8 million from USA Funds that also went through UHF. Because these awards did not come through the Office of Research Services, they are not reflected in the extramural reports the committee received, a total value of approximately $46.8 million. He explained how it is typical among research institutions nationwide that not all awards go through the respective ORS unit, but are important to capture to provide a comprehensive report on the entire research enterprise. Addressing capturing other awards is underway,
but all historical detailed information is readily available online. Analysis of extramural awards is done quarterly, and the decrease in volume is not as concerning as the decrease in the number of proposals being submitted for the UH System, which impacts the probability of obtaining funding, and the cause is unclear at this time.

Comment and concerns raised regarded consideration of a campus based strategic method to predict or gauge goals, expected rate of return, cost benefit and impact analysis to be fiscally responsible; and monitoring trends for proposal submission to address and improve submittal rates. Discussion ensued on how funding levels and trends are linked to the federal funding environment, and currently holding steady with small fluctuations; how the 5% goal approved by the board was exceeded last year but unlikely to be met this year given the low number of proposals; how campuses align resources to support proposals and pursue multi-million large proposals that generate great interest, while the majority are smaller proposals under $500,000, and seek grant proposals for the public good and align with the global good; need for a five year vision for multi-dimensional, cross disciplinary research enterprise tied to UH’s role in helping the state build a tech sector and diversify its economy, with alignment of resources to research areas to achieve goals. Regent Sullivan provided a copy of University of California San Diego’s (UCSD) Jacobs School of Engineering Spring 2016 Pulse magazine to share information for UHS consideration regarding a model research enterprise that is multidimensional, strategically tied to the institution’s strengths and relevant to the education mission.

The committee requested future summary reports include more years to show trends; a copy of the number of grants applied for and awarded by campus and ORU be provided to the board office to distribute to the committee; and providing a clearer explanation of how research is monitored and support coordinated, and update on improvements to the process to ensure all sources, including those that do not go through ORU, are captured and tracked to provide a comprehensive system-wide research enterprise report to the committee.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Committee Vice Chair Sullivan moved to adjourn, and Regent Mizuno seconded, and with unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/

Cynthia Quinn
Executive Administrator and
Secretary of the Board of Regents