

COMMITTEE ON PLANNING & BUDGET
MINUTES
APRIL 18, 2023

PRESENT:

Peter Atkinson, Entomology, Chair
Juliann Allison, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Subramanian Balachander, Business
Roger Lake, Electrical & Computer Engineering
Bronwyn Leebaw, Political Science
David Lo, School of Medicine
Hiroki Nishimura, Economics
Ayala Rao, Microbiology & Plant Pathology
Frances Sladek, MCSB

ABSENT:

Reza Abbaschian, Mechanical Engineering
Dana Simmons, History, Vice Chair
Yadong Yin, Chemistry

Chair Peter Atkinson called the meeting to order at 11:05am.

Contingent on a revision suggested by Professor Balachander, the committee approved the April 11, 2023 minutes.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES/REMINDERS

Chair Atkinson attended a Campus Finance Committee meeting on April 13 at which Central Human Resources requested three possible tiers of increased financial support following a review of their unit. The lowest tier would result in staff currently on temporary funds to be switched to permanent funding. The highest tier would include this, more staff, and training infrastructure and would approximately double their current budget. No decision was made.

Chair Atkinson also attended a Special Enrollment meeting where discussion centered on how UC enrollment shortfalls could lead to decreased state funding to UCR.

Chair Atkinson will attend a forthcoming PhD Funding Workgroup meeting. Thus far, there is no agenda for that meeting.

The committee further discussed the campus' proposed research lab policy/guideline. Currently the committee has documented the following as pros and cons of the proposed policy:

Pros:

- *It saves money in the short term if the decision is made not to upgrade an existing lab to a new standard, be it with biosafety, chemical safety, or reconfiguration of the casework.*

Cons:

- *It assumes appropriate space is either idle elsewhere on campus or that it is occupied by faculty not requiring the increased level of security. The former is an invalid assumption, the latter is disruptive.*
- *Faculty may end up being placed in buildings outside their discipline.*
- *It does not account for research organism incompatibilities between faculty, especially in open plan labs.*
- *It could frustrate departmental planning if space designated for new hires is suddenly allocated to faculty outside of the department. The same applies at the college level.*
- *It does not address the central issue, that is the state of our existing, older research buildings. Rather it seeks to manage the outcome of this chronic issue.*
- *The short-term cost saving may be a false saving if a) it further delays the chronic issue of aged buildings and b) we lose faculty who are being moved (new recruitments needed) and will suffer loss of productivity during their move.*

One P&B member conveyed it is helpful to know the genesis of the proposed policy. Who (which campus parties) felt it was necessary to draft and propose this policy? Why now?

As comments on this proposed research lab policy/guideline are due back to the Senate Office by April 28, P&B will aim to finalize its comments at the April 25 meeting.

**MEETING WITH COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHASS)
FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FEC) CHAIR**

John Kim, CHASS FEC Chair, indicated the CHASS FEC consists of 10 voting members and 6 ex-officio members. The CHASS FEC meets twice per month: once in the earlier portion of the month with the ex-officio members present; then two weeks later for an executive session, without the ex-officio members. The CHASS FEC primarily reviews systemwide/campus review items and proposals forwarded to them. Professor Kim was in favor of a more substantive role for the CHASS FEC in advising the CHASS Dean on matters of planning and budget and with a formal interaction being developed between FEC Chairs and between the FEC Chairs and P&B.

MEETING WITH VICE CHANCELLOR FOR PLANNING, BUDGET, AND ADMINISTRATION

Regarding whether there are financial planning strategies that would enable strategic planning, given UCR's budgetary dependence on enrollment growth, VC Bomotti indicated the issue centers around setting and following priorities with respect to a core budget of over \$700M and total budget over \$1.1B.

VC Bomotti has never worked on a campus that did not have limited resources and many competing priorities. In his opinion, although it is not always easy to set priorities, that is a main reason for a strategic planning process. It does take some balance, as enrollment growth has to be considered and identified as a priority along with other priorities at the top of UCR's list. As a priority, VC Bomotti believes Information Technology Solutions (ITS) very much needed \$8M of a core budget increase. That was during a big bump in state funding, and UCR should be prepared to make other opportunity allocations to the highest priority.

VC Bomotti noted that UCR should identify the focus of new research space. There are competing priorities. Some individuals believe the pressing priority has to do with ensuring there is enough "animal space." Others believe it should be "greenhouse space." Then, there are "wet lab spaces" (new and renovated), etc. UCR has made progress in getting its highest priority capital projects from its Capital Financial Plan (CFP) funded in recent years—but it requires a focus on the highest priority.

As a proposed idea for a capital project, VC Bomotti agreed with P&B members that a (very) large building/facility focused on interdisciplinary climate-related research and instruction could spark public and cultural interest. It would impact successful faculty hiring and retention and would address the inadequacies of the quality of research spaces in many of our older buildings, some of which could be repurposed for other uses across the campus.

To provide for the hiring of research faculty rather than instructional faculty, a strategy VC Bomotti suggested is working is to receive more external funding to support research faculty. A new large cross-disciplinary building designed for 21st century research and scholarship would enable this. VC Bomotti said VCRED should certainly be included in a discussion of this matter. He suggested that P&B/PRP/the Senate propose this, but acknowledged that the priorities usually come from Deans. There appears to be some latitude to pursue this.

With respect to possible changes with how P&B interacts with the administration, VC Bomotti sees great benefit in meaningful annual engagement between administration and P&B. Focused meetings between P&B and the Provost, VCPBA, VCRED, and even perhaps a key meeting with the Chancellor would be instrumental in setting campus priorities.

The meeting was called to a close at 1:10pm.