

## **Research & Service Committee Report 2019-20**

**Co-Chairs: Ajay Agrawal and Silas Blackstock**

The Research and Service (R&S) committee worked with the Graduate School and the VPRED Office to communicate faculty issues on campus and work with the graduate program and research administration on research policies.

Summer 2019: In May 2019 the R&S committee provided feedback on VPRED's 5-year strategic plan document, which went into effect on June 1, 2019. The R&S cochairs also worked with the Senate Steering Committee to prepare and submit two priority requests for the upcoming Capital Campaign: (1) creation of an endowment for graduate fellowships; (2) creation of an endowment to support the acquisition, maintenance, and upgrading of research equipment and instrumentation.

Fall 2019 activities: In August, VPRED Dr. Mumper updated the R&S Committee on the new 5 year strategic plan of OVPRED, which included the intention to double UA's external research funding (from \$100 M to \$200 M) in the next 5 years, as well as plans for the 4 major research institutes and the expectation of a 5<sup>th</sup> institute in the future. The former Research Advisory Committee, RAC, was dissolved; primary faculty feedback to OVPRED is now through the Faculty Senate R&S committee. The MINT center is being sunset and its instrumentation is being consolidated with that of the prior Central Analytical Facility (CAF) into a new Alabama Analytical Research Center (AARC) Facility. The committee provided input on the guidelines for the upcoming 'Tide Research Partnership' (TRP) Program guidelines, which was ultimately launched in October. The need for an updated UA policy and recording keeping regarding COI and COC at UA was indicated.

- In September 2019, the R&S committee discussed the meeting with Dr. Mumper and future questions, concerns, and comments for OVPRED and input on draft TRP guidelines.
- In October 2019, the R&S committee discussed graduate program issues and prepared questions for Dean Carvalho in preparation for meeting with her in November.
- In November 2019, cochairs meet with Graduate Dean Dr. Carvalho to communicate committee questions and concerns regarding graduate programs and recruiting. Discussions included the need for a capital campaign to include an endowment for more graduate student fellowships; graduate student recruiting, especially new efforts to enhance the recruiting of US students, including UA undergraduates who may want to enter graduate programs at UA; and ways to enhance the recognition of graduate student achievements in research, such as keeping an online record of graduate student research and creative activity products as part of the University student record (publications, presentations, shows, products, awards, etc.).
- In November 2019, Graduate Dean Dr. Carvalho met with R&S committee to provide an overview of UA Graduate Programs, including an emphasis on graduate student recruiting and initiatives in this area. The Graduate Program recruiting director, Lesley Campbell, also attended the meeting and updated the committee on Graduate School recruiting practices and special programs. Associate Graduate Dean Dr. Andrew Goodliffe also attended the meeting and provided information about graduate admissions and fellowships. A general discussion ensued about ways to streamline the graduate application/admissions process and how to enhance communication of graduate education opportunities at UA on the web.

- The R&S Committee developed recommendations to improve research grant management and shared several concerns with the VPRED. The grant management office will improve reporting of the research expenditure using categories easily understood by the PIs. In January 2020, VPRED Dr. Mumper met with R&S committee to discuss various topics, including: an update on senior personnel hires in ORED related to the research institutes; the TRP Program launched October 1; the recent large turnover in OSP staff; developments at ALRI, including the naming of 8 faculty fellows and a move to new space in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the AIME building; Alan Parrish being named as the new director for ATI; the intention to name a new AWI director by April 1; and COI issues, especially those regarding potential foreign influence, and the need for new guidelines and reporting. Dr. Mumper also provided an update on ORED initiatives and funding: in FY 18-19, funding was up 34% to \$132.5 M; to date in FY 19-20 (Q1), funding was up 42.5%.
- In February 2020, the R&S committee met to discuss VPRED meeting and feedback. Concerns raised included:
  - the need for more OVPRED advocacy, recognition, and specific programs to enhance research, scholarship, and creative activities in areas of Arts and Humanities (which was not mentioned in the January VPR update).
  - the need to increase support and growth of smaller single-investigator grants, and the desire to provide open guidelines for faculty to engage in large proposals submitted through State and Federal Government channels.
- In March 2020, the R&S committee met via Zoom to discuss draft CIO/COC guidelines and disclosure forms for UA. Several concerns were noted and passed along to Dr. Mumper, who revised the draft policy and added a FAQs to address common questions about the policy and what needs to be disclosed.
- In March 2020, R&S cochairs and Dr. Donahoe met with Dr. Mumper to review the revised draft COI/COC policy statement and universal forms. Further feedback was provided to Dr. Mumper, who expressed a desire to have the Faculty Senate endorse the policy prior to taking it to the UA System for approval.