

School of Medicine Research Coordinating Council (RCC)

Minutes for Thursday, October 19, 2006

8:00-9:00 a.m., 301 BRB II/III

Present: Drebin, Gaulton, Gur, Kaestner, Metlay, Schnall, Sehgal, Strom, Passante, Pomager

Absent: Johnson, Lazar, Rader, Winston

Agenda

• Institutional Barriers to Innovation and Collaboration

- The promotion process is a major impediment to innovation and collaboration as the current process tends to: count the number of published papers by a faculty member; reward faculty that publish in top journals but not necessarily those who challenge the current dogma; and reward faculty in small fields where there is greater ease in establishing a defined reputation. The goal would be to create a more balanced faculty incorporating both consistent performers and innovators. The RCC members agreed that the institution needs to identify and encourage innovative potential in faculty at our institution, as well as building emerging disciplines and nurturing the team concept.
- There is a need to introduce structural changes within the institution. It was noted that a system should be devised that better positions the Dean as a mentor to the chairs, guiding their performance and educating them to expectations. In turn, a system of accountability would also be enacted.
- A proactive culture should be enacted which would enable Penn to more aggressively identify faculty and emerging research areas, and then proceed toward them aggressively, as we are always in competition with other institutions. Moving forward we need to decide whether we will invest in the large established group or the young innovator on the fast track.
- Space constraints and funds continue to be an obstacle for future development. If we expect “big science” at Penn then we have to provide for “big science” in financial terms. Leadership decisions will also have to be made that will reinforce the message that Penn expects great science and that is what will be rewarded.
- The members discussed extending the junior faculty promotion track beyond six years when warranted. The group also recognized that the consensus at the University level was that progression within the designated period of time (six years) was appropriate as currently structured. Also, when this was last raised, a number of junior faculty in the School objected to lengthening the track.

• New Research Building (NRB) Faculty Survey

- The RCC members received a draft of the NRB Research Space Survey for review and comment prior to posting to the faculty at large. The survey is planned to be distributed to all faculty the week of October 23, 2006, and will also be posted on the Vice Dean for Research and Research Training website.

- **Define Key Scientific Areas/Research Priorities**
 - This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Pomager

The next RCC meeting will be held on Thursday, November 2, 2006 in 301 BRB II/III from 8:00-9:00 a.m.

Past Action Items:

Dr. Gaulton will circulate the current list of endowed chairs to the RCC.

Drs. Gaulton and Strom will discuss with the Dean the idea of increasing the number of endowed chairs for junior faculty, as well as soliciting and updated list of potential faculty candidates from the chairs.

Support for faculty in the area of childcare and auxiliary services.

Evaluation and improvement of the COAP process.

Dr. Gaulton would like to discuss the revisions of centers and institutes policies and then present at the SCDC meeting.

Drs. Irwin Levitan and Francisco Gonzalez-Scarano to return to review their proposal for a Comprehensive Neuroscience Center.

Dr. Goldman to return to discuss his proposal regarding nanobiology.

Revisit animal space constraints.

The Committee will also request that Dr. Trojanowski present the status of the IOA at a future meeting.

Drs. Gaulton, Strom, Rubenstein, Rustgi and Johnson will meet to discuss this joint structure and proposed funding for the Type II Center/Institute for Digestive, Liver and Pancreatic Medicine.