

Research Council

Minutes for meeting of January 26, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Chair: Dr. Linda Walters, Vice-Chair: Dr. David Luna

1. Call to Order at 4:02pm

2. Roll call was replaced with noting people as they entered the Zoom meeting. In attendance were: Walters, Luna, Mendonca, Duranceau, Miller, Major, Dykstra, Yalim, Ram, Johnson, Vitanova, Mansy, Ge, Kim, Roney, Kuebler, Kinchen, Kellogg, Guldi, Kapucu, Hua, Lighthall, Delfyett, French, Sabri, Gabrus, Jurca, Kean, Jensen, Gurupur.

3. Approval of Minutes. Minutes from 11/17/25 meeting were approved.

4. Recognition of guests. Marc Mendonca (Associate Vice President for Research and Scholarship), Joshua Roney (Director, Research Development).

5. Announcements: Walters requests suggestions for speakers for upcoming meetings; for example, representatives from the various research clusters at UCF. Suggestions made at the meeting include: speakers from the Institute for Artificial Intelligence, from the Learning Sciences cluster, from the UCF marketing department to inform them of research activities at the University, or inviting Winston Schoenfeld back for Q&A.

6. Old Business. No old business was discussed.

7. New Business: Joshua Roney solicits comments on the SEED Program documents (application, program description, eligibility,...).

Walters: Recommends considering whether eligibility for Tier 1 should be restricted to researchers who normally do not receive external grants.

Kuebler: Recommends benchmarking against similar institutions. How does UCF match with the top 50 US research institutions?

Mendonca: Universities like Indiana University have significantly more funding, but any increases to UCF funding will be gradual. The first step must be to try to allocate consistent funding year after year. The goal is to have consistent funding between 500k – 1M.

Roney: Research Development office has the data resources to start benchmarking.

Duranceau: SEED is a good program. However, it is important to consider how to achieve equity in the program. Recommends re-thinking matching vs. non-matching funds and allowing course buyouts. Also, researchers with significant external funding should probably not apply for SEED grants.

Roney: Perhaps different types of matching requirements could be investigated.

Duranceau: We should discourage PI's double-dipping.

Kuebler: Course buyouts would be more effective for faculty on higher teaching loads.

Mendonca: Some of the responsibility for course buyouts should be at the College/Unit level.

Johnson: In the humanities, course buyouts and GRA support would be really important.

Yalim: Do we need to have a Tier system?

Major: Maybe an alternative system could be to have different tiers for junior versus senior/more established researchers.

Duranceau: Another idea would be to have an easier program for junior faculty (e.g., microgrants with a streamlined review process), so it is easier to get started after joining UCF.

Mendonca: We can also check to ensure that junior researchers with significant startup funds are not receiving SEED funds.

Kean: Proposes separate funding buckets by field.

Mendonca, Roney: This is done during the review process, based on several factors.

Yalim: Tier 2 requires multiple PI's. Does this match with UCF research priorities? For example, enhancing substantial research and encouraging collaboration?

Kuebler: Can we include funding for maintenance of equipment in the SEED program?

Mendonca, Walters: It is better to keep it in a separate program.

Walters: Asks Roney how many awards were provided by the Equipment grant program.

Roney: 7 awards, selected from 46 applications.

Walters: More funds are necessary given the low funding ratio.

Lighthall: Recipients of SEED funding should give a seminar a year after receiving the funds. This would provide accountability and also help generate enthusiasm for the project.

Ram: Is it possible to donate to the SEED program?

Roney: This is a good idea and will look into it.

Roney: It will be important to calculate ROI of the program and what partnerships can be built to increase resources. Also, another measure of success is to measure the impact of the program in publications' acknowledgements, etc.

8. Other Business: No other business was discussed.

9. Adjournment at 4:57 pm.