

# Research Council

Minutes for meeting of September 11, 2023, 4:00 p.m.  
Zoom Meeting

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

## 1. Call to Order at 4:00pm

**2. Roll call** was replaced with noting people as they entered the Zoom meeting. In attendance were: Walters, Luna, Harrington, Gesquiere, Yalim, Turgut, Eadens, López Castillo, Johnson, Okumus, Weremchuk, Welch, Listengarden, Coffee, Yu, Dil, Delfyett, Norris, French, Sonmez, Jurca, Ge, Mansy.

**3. Approval of Minutes.** No call to approve minutes was made as there were no minutes to approve.

**4. Recognition of guests.** Joseph Harrington (UCF Interim Associate VP for Research).

## 5. Announcements:

Walters announces three broad topics to be discussed within the Research Council this semester:

- Workday and how researchers are interacting with the system. Council members should ask their constituencies whether there are questions/issues to discuss with Gerald Hector.
- Artificial Intelligence in research. Stephen King asked the Council to explore this topic and discuss how UCF researchers are impacted by AI, and how some researchers within the University may be doing research on AI topics.

Several committees within UCF have been formed on the topic of AI so the Council should investigate what our role would fit with those groups'.

Turgut mentions their college is hiring faculty in the AI area and they had a taskforce on research and AI in the College of Engineering and Computer Science.

Harrington mentions a NASA/Space Science and AI project. A program proposal is being written.

Dil (College of Medicine) mentions that several of their faculty are interested in the topic of AI and population health. Asks that if others are interested, to contact them.

- Council to provide input to UCF's Research Enterprise Plan from the Office of Research.

Walters introduces Joseph Harrington, who will discuss the draft of the Research Enterprise Plan.

**6. Old Business.** No old business was discussed.

### **7. New Business:**

Harrington presents the Plan. Mentions that its goal is to outline ways of supporting research at UCF. It is an early draft that has not been approved by the Provost's office yet. He is seeking feedback from the Council. In the future, there will be faculty forums to seek faculty input. He requests that we help publicize those with our constituencies.

Below are the topics Harrington covered from section 6 of the Plan, which he said was the most important from our perspective. In general, his plan provides ways to support these:

- Hiring
- Research strategy councils in focus areas
- Data awareness and decision making
- Large/complex research proposal development support
- Infrastructure investment
- Pegasus research institute
- Institutional investment in Centers and Institutes
- Review of institutional research expenditures (i.e., commercialization)
- Establish a robust innovation unit (UCF Innovate)
- Reinvigorated communications strategy
- Faculty and staff retention, recognition, and leadership
- Strengthen support for scholarship and creative works.

Harrington mentioned that the last two points are important for the Council to address. For example, feedback requested on:

- Importance of faculty and staff retention
- Reasons why faculty stay
- Faculty and staff outreach: making sure OR is actually meeting the needs of faculty.
- Awards and recognition.

After presentation of the Plan, Harrington requested feedback from individual members of the Council.

Luna: need to do more systematic research on reasons why people leave/stay, beyond the exit interviews conducted by Provost's office.

Delfyett: Wonders if goals of increasing grant totals can be achieved by increasing the number of faculty as stated in the Plan.

Eadens: It is important to increase proposal submission rates. Faculty is not taking advantage of the services offered by OR. A big problem preventing faculty from submitting more proposals is the high teaching load and other obligations (teaching PhD seminars/workshops, supervising PhD students...). This load is higher than at other SUS campuses.

Coffee: There needs to be more research to find satisfaction levels. Maybe using focus groups.

Okumus: Social science and other fields need more recognition. Start-up funds for junior faculty in those fields would help recruitment of productive research. Journals housed at UCF need to be recognized and rewarded. How can we re-engage disengaged faculty? Emphasize that article publication is also important, not only grant-getting.

Walters: One way to improve proposal success may be to recruit faculty that have a proven record of obtaining large grants.

Mansy: Faculty must do too much administrative work. In particular, related to Workday. Workday is too unwieldy. One cannot get a simple answer, particularly those related to budgets, easily or at all. There is no qualified help from the administration. The way time is allocated at the moment provide a disincentive to collaborate with other faculty.

As the meeting ran over time, Harrington asked Council members to send other feedback via email to him.

**8. Other Business.** No other business was discussed.

**9. Adjournment** at 5:19pm.