

## **COMMISSION ON RESEARCH**

October 13, 2010

325 Burruss Hall

3:30 p.m.

**Members Present:** Jesus de la Garza (Chair), Lay Nam Chang, Kevin Davy, S.K. De Datta, Dennis Dean, Serkan Gugercin, Roderick Hall (for Robert Walters), Terry Herdman, William Huckle, James Jones, Brenton Laing, Bradley Martens, Heather Moorefield-Lang, Robert Seigle, Randy Wynne, Chris Zobel, Tammy Bose (Recording Secretary).

**Absent:** Dennis Dean, Roderick Jensen, Delbert Jones, William Knocke, Steve Martin, Satyavrata Samavedi.

**Guests:** Ken Miller, Sandra Muse, Nancy Ross.

**I. Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made to adopt the agenda and was carried.

**II. Approval of minutes for CoR meeting September 15, 2010:** On a motion made by J. Jones, the minutes were amended as follows: Under IV.b.,1), the academic year was clarified to be 2009-2010. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

### **III. Announcements:**

- a. The March 9, 2011 CoR meeting date was changed to March 2, 2011.

### **IV. Unfinished Business:**

a. Vice Chair for FY 2010-11: J. de la Garza reviewed the role and responsibilities of the Vice Chair of the Commission on Research (CoR). R. Wynne was nominated. The floor was open for additional nominations and none were made. R. Wynne of the College of Natural Resource was elected unanimously as CoR Vice Chair for FY 2010-11.

#### b. Standing Committee Reports:

i.) Library Committee: H. Moorefield-Lang reported that the new Director of Assessment is Sharla Lancaster. The search for a dean is progressing. The application date closes October 15, 2010, and there is an aggressive schedule after that. There is a goal of starting webinar instruction and open-access library methods.

ii.) Personnel Committee: R. Hall reported that no center nor institute directors are to be reviewed this semester, but there may be one next semester. He reported that we should make sure the Dean of Engineering is in agreement that CoR be the lead on the initiative. R. Hall noted that R. Wynne will chair the Personnel Committee in his capacity as Vice Chair of CoR and will report at subsequent meetings.

iii.) Special Research Faculty (SRF) Task Force: W. Huckle reported that the committee will not meet again until October 29, 2010, but the sub-committees had been meeting in the interim:

1. Compliance sub-committee: It was reported that there is a concern by the administrators of Virginia Tech that some of the SRF working with students may feel that

they should qualify for tenure application. There is no implication of tenure unless specifically stated in their contract. The Virginia laws and court findings were reviewed by the legal department.

2. Career Opportunities/ Teaching sub-committee: It was reported that a mentoring program will be recommended. Compensation for teaching by SRF was discussed. Currently there is no means to pay SRF for overload teaching.

3. Classification and Governance sub-committee: It was reported that the SRF have no formal representation in governance. There was a question as to what is needed to support the post-doctoral fellows. Emeritus titles are being reviewed.

4. Job Security sub-committee: No report.

iv.) Intellectual Property Committee: No report.

c. Current Center Reviews:

i.) Nancy Ross reported on the five-year review of the Macromolecules Interfaces Institute (MII). Copies were provided for the Commission members. She stated the review was rigorous, it began in February 2010, was completed in June, and covers the previous five year period. N. Ross reported that the goal of the review was to evaluate the MII on three main items: How well it met its goals; if there should be a recommendation to re-authorize the MII; and whether or not it is correctly classified as a university center. She gave a detailed review of MII's 27 year history with the university. She reviewed its relationship to outreach and research, its diversified research funding that often has a large industrial partnership component, and its financial status. She stated that MII is subsidized by several units on campus. She stated that the management of MII has been effective, that MII is effective in getting proposals awarded, that the institute is interdisciplinary, and that within MII there is a strong sense of energy and camaraderie. She gave details about the undergraduate program, IGERT and NSF proposals, the annual technical conference, and the industrial, company and research partners of MII. She said that the review committee concluded that MII is fully meeting its mission as an interdisciplinary university center; that it is broad in its scope; that it meets the goals of VT strategic plan; it has an excellent return on its investments; and that it does not need to be reorganized.

There was discussion regarding approval of the MII to continue in light of the recent discussions regarding realignment of the centers. It was indicated that there was a delay in presenting the five-year MII report to CoR, and at the time the review was written the realignment of the centers was not yet an issue, and so the report should be viewed in that light. It was noted that there is no official policy yet written about center realignment, and that the re-authorization and the realignment are independent issues. It was questioned whether or not CoR has the authority to say that MII can continue in its current designation. R. Hall recommended that the MII be re-authorized now until such time as there is further policy as to the elimination of the

university center category. It was concluded that CoR gives its recommendations to R. Walters and R. Walters communicates the decision to Dr. Turner, the director of MII.

There was a motion to accept the five-year MII report as presented by Nancy Ross with its conclusions. The motion was passed unanimously.

d. Research Policies Update: R. Hall reported that progress is being made and the current focus is policy 13005 as it relates to 3020. The sub-committee met last week to review the outline to create the final policy. Almost all of 13005 can be handled by the modification of policy 3020, which is the finance policy.

e. Realignment of University Centers: There was discussion about the issue of realignment in general and also in relationship to how it may affect MII. R. Hall reported that there are currently nine university centers, and that the path is clear on six of the nine. The new administrative home for the other centers including MII, ICAM and VCCER, are under discussion. T. Herdman questioned the practice of seeking realignment of the centers before new policies are written and deliberated by the CoR. No action was taken.

## **V. New Business**

a. Nomination to VTIP Board: R. Hall explained that VTIP is a private corporation that receives all intellectual property developed at Virginia Tech for commercial use. The bylaws state that the CoR is responsible for nominating a faculty member to be selected by the VTIP Board of Directors for a three years term. CoR can recommend election for a second term. The Chair recommended that the Associate Deans of the colleges be asked via email to submit a name of a possible nominee. This will then be passed to VTIP with a deadline of October 27. The recommendations of the Associate Deans should be accompanied by a short paragraph about the nominee.

b. Research Administration System (RAS) Open Sessions: R. Wynne reported that it was narrowed down to two possible vendors for the new RAS: Cayuse and Click Commerce. There are pros and cons to both. The RAS will use a single vendor to perform a myriad of research processes, including routing, budgeting, grants.gov, proposal development, conflict of interest, pre-award and post-award, and more. After the on-campus demonstrations, a wide spectrum of feedback is needed from varied individuals. Linda Bucy may construct a survey to collect this data.

**VI. Adjournment** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.