

Research Planning Committee (RPC) Meeting
Wednesday, January 26, 2022
2:30 p.m.
Zoom Video Conference
Minutes

Members Present:

David Ford, Ph.D., chairperson
Noah Hillman, M.D.
Daniel Hoft, M.D., Ph.D.
Ratna Ray, Ph.D.
John Tavis, Ph.D.
John Walker, Ph.D.
Gary Albers, M.D., ex officio
Angel Baldan, Ph.D., ex officio
Enrico Di Cera, ex officio
Richard DiPaolo, Ph.D., ex officio
Daniela Salvemini, Ph.D., ex officio
Jeffrey Scherrer, Ph.D. ex officio (as designated for Kim Schiel)
Tammy Burton, CPA, ex officio non-voting
Ajay Jain, M.D., Ph.D., ex officio non-voting
Oleg Kisselev, Ph.D., ex officio non-voting

John Long, D.V.M., ex officio non-voting
Adriana Montaña, Ph.D., ex officio non-voting
Kenneth Olliff, D. Min., MBA, ex officio non-voting
Willis Samson, Ph.D., ex officio non-voting

Members Not Present:

Ravi Nayak, M.D., ex officio
Kim Schiel, M.D., ex officio

Guests:

Sandra Cornell
Stephanie Decker
Andrew Hall
Scott Martin
Dagmar Ralphs (as designated for Tammy Burton)

1. The Minutes of the December 15, 2021 meeting were approved.

2. SLU Center for Additive Manufacturing (SLU-CAM)

Scott Martin, PhD and Andy Hall, D.Sc. provided a PPT presentation.

- Established in 2019; made possible by a grant from the SLU Research Institute
- Located in the ISE Building, suite 204; hours are 9AM – 3PM Mon thru Fri.
- Mission: enhance research capabilities at SLU
- Leadership team: Andrew Hall, DSc., Scott Sell, PhD, Scott Martin, PhD and Amer Sadikovic
- 3D printing – stereo lithograph, fusion deposition modeling, PolyJet, scanning
- MIMICS – CAD for medical image processing and design
- AAA model for device pre-fit testing
- Mechatronics
- Can support other areas of medical 3D printing, such as prosthetics; molds for medical devices; metal implantable medical device printing; patient specific surgical guides/devices; bioprinting
- Can provide research grant support
- Contact slu.cam@slu.edu, amer.sadikovic@slu.edu or call 314-977-7770
- The cost is based on time, materials, and effort. An estimate is given before they begin the work.

3. Capital Equipment Ranking

Tammy Burton, Associate Dean of Finance, SOM & SLUCare CFO, asked the RPC to help rank the capital equipment requests that her office received for FY23 and beyond. A list of equipment on an Excel file was provided. In her leadership team's opinion, the RPC is the best group to weigh in on this subject.

- Looking for the RPC to identify those needed pieces of equipment with multi-departmental use by a high number of grant-funded researchers.
- Seeking the RPC to rank the equipment based on the above general criteria.
- Dr. Ford was then given the flexibility on how to encourage the committee to make those recommendations
- Dr. Scherrer asked if computer software would be included in capital investments. He stated that the cost of software is dramatically higher since everything has moved to cloud computing.
- Ms Burton explained that software would not be capitalizable if it has an annual license. It's an expense as it is incurred, so it is not seen as a capital purchase. If you're implementing a system, then there is a longer timeframe involved that can be amortized. Ms Burton added that software could be on the roadmap for future considerations.
- Dr. Scherrer added that the university should consider supporting the cost of moving to the cloud since all are encouraged away from servers.
- In response to Dr. Scherrer, Dr. Olliff stated that major purchases for HPC are not being made. However, they're spending out of the operating budget for computing in the cloud. How the costs get accounted for and are budgeted, that is a major issue. The staff who are needed to support faculty working in the cloud is another issue. The biggest question is also around how does SLU support research computing in the future.
- Dr. Tavis asked for a timeline on making the equipment decisions since Dr. Griggs has submitted a grant that might fund a piece of equipment on the list.
- Ms Burton stated that if there is funding from an outside source, then that is great. In the meantime, we will still track this.
- Dr. Walker asked if there is any consideration on cost vs top preference.
- Ms Burton stated that justifying return on investment should be the biggest driver in decision-making.
- Ms Decker reinforced the idea that ranking should be thought of in the context of a rubric to batch the recommendations into high, medium and low priorities. In the spirit of shared governance, she felt this body was the best situated to advise and recommend on these kinds of questions.
- Dr. DiPaolo appreciated the transparency of this new process. However, he suggested that having a dollar amount is needed to determine the ranking. If X, Y and Z are the only items that can be funded, then that will help with the ranking.
- Dr. Montano suggested that service agreements and items belonging to a Core should be managed in a different way – not necessarily included on the list.
- Ms Burton agreed that the service agreements are not included with the capital equipment ranking.
- Dr. Ford commented that there isn't enough information to fairly rank the equipment.
- Ms Burton stated that the list has already been submitted to the main campus. However, we have more time to determine how to spend the dollars the SOM Finance Office hopes to receive.
- Dr. Scherrer asked if it would be possible to link grant dollars to pieces of equipment.

- Dr. Kisselev suggested that the justifications should be beefed up for the equipment requests. Dr. Tavis agreed and suggested providing a standardized form with examples if necessary.
- Dr. Ford stated he might send to the committee members the rubric he has already started working on – see below:
 - Expected capital equipment for research (an example, scintillation counter)
 - Equipment that will be immediately used by 4 or more investigators
 - Innovative equipment that will be used initially by 2-4 investigators, but it is predicted to be used by more than 4 (an example, the NanoAssemblr purchased by ROF)
 - Estimated cost/benefit ratio
- Dr Ford also agreed that service contracts should not be included for these purposes.
- Several committee members went back and forth on how to rank the equipment and their inability to fairly rank them.
- Dr. Salvemini suggested that based on the discussions so far, the priority may need to change from departmental concerns to a broader school of medicine concern. In that way, all can determine what big items should go on that SOM equipment list.
- Dr. Hoft mentioned that none of the items submitted from his division are on the list.
- Ms Burton suggested that maybe a goal for the RPC and Finance would be to determine the strategic equipment to purchase for next year.
- Dr. Samson asked if there was a chargeback fee structure for using expensive pieces of equipment such as the XRAD 320 and would something like that lessen the burden on the service contract going forward. He suggested that this type of structure would off-shoulder some of the financial burden and set a precedent for such requests.
- Dr. DiPaolo stated that the preventive maintenance contract for the current XRAD 320 has been covered by the MMI Dept so far.
- Ms Decker stated that she will inform the Dean that the RPC is not comfortable participating in the process although the RPC is being asked to come up with a process.
- Dr. DiPaolo agreed that the RPC should be making the decisions, however, a process by which the RPC is comfortable with is needed.
- As the ICTS liaison, Dr. Scherrer strongly encouraged groups to get together, develop resource cores, and talk to ICTS about becoming an ICTS core. Then, the faculty can apply, get \$5,000 and pay back the cost of using the equipment. Wash U is doing this to pay for their equipment. SLU should be doing the same. It doesn't take much to become a core. He'd be happy to help anyone who is interested.
- Dr. Tavis recommended that the RPC prioritize getting the standardized request form/rubric figured out. Then, use that data to ask everybody to resubmit their information in a standardized format to help finance this cycle. That information can then be grouped into high priority, really great to have, and low priority. Since there's no time pressure and the money flow would be around the beginning of July, we should be able to hack out a first version for consideration.
- Dr. Montano has reached out to Dr. Grant Kolar about making the microscopy core an ICTS core, which he is considering and working on the proposal. Other cores may want to follow suit.
- Ms Decker asked Dr. Di Cera to give his perspective as a department chair. He agreed with many of the comments thus far. He stated that the capital equipment request process is a little pathological since no one knows how much money is available to spend. It's difficult to prioritize equipment purchases without knowing this information. Dr. Ford agreed. Dr. DiPaolo further stated that the RPC should be

- tasked with advising the Dean on how best to spend investment money for research capital equipment– what will give you the best bang for your buck - rather than ranking equipment.
- Ms Decker further asked the question of whether or not the committee could evaluate the equipment because they don't know what money is available.
 - Dr. Tavis stated that it is difficult. Dr. Kisselev agreed that it was a matter of budgeting and planning.
 - Dr. Ford stated that it would be great if Finance could come up with a specific amount that they're going to invest every year.

4. OVPR Update – Kenneth Olliff, DMin

Dr. Ken Olliff, Vice President for Research, provided an overview of what his office has been working on.

- He circulated research data this morning; goal is to provide data access to the RPC and department chairs when they want it. Also, the goal is for them to use Tableau on their own – all developed for this steering committee.
- The Research Institute re-upped AHEAD, IDBI and Big Ideas for another two years.
- They're working with Dr. Hoft on the next stages for the Institute for Vaccine Sciences and Policy and with Dr. Salvemini on the Neuroscience Big Idea.
- The Research Institute has contributed \$7 million towards the 21 hires that Dean Jacobs has approved. That also includes funding for clinical buydown time if that's how the school decides to use that.
- They're considering whether to do another round of RI-funded buyouts; twelve were done last year. The Research Institute provided funding for the first year of a new person, which allowed the school to be able to offer buyouts to faculty who might be interested. Of the twelve, only two came from the SOM.
- A combined scholarly works, grant winners and Research Institute fellows induction is scheduled for April 8.
- Concerning the research capital investment issue, Dr. Olliff stated that he is working with the CFO to carve out of the overall university budget a piece designated as a research capital budget. David is open to this, and it will be planned on a three-year basis.
- Jyoti [Malhotra] is new to the OVPR and is building connections with outside companies such as Pfizer, Merck, J&J, Ono and Novartis.
- Dr. Olliff left the meeting early to attend another meeting.
- Dr. Baldan was disappointed that the promise of a realistic timeline for access to the data was not fulfilled by the OVPR.
- In response to Dr. Baldan, Dr. Tavis stated that he had a meeting last Friday morning with Matthew Christian, Tammy Burton and others. He said it was the single best meeting he's had in years at SLU. Lots of progress has been made in a very short span of time. An interim plan is in place for gaining access to the data.
- Dr. Montano stated that Ms Burton and Ms Ralphs have been working together to accelerate the process. Ms Ralphs stated that Finance is working with IT Services to grant access privileges. They hope to hear back from ITS soon.

5. Interim Sr. Associate Dean for Research Update – Adriana Montano, PhD

Huron Update

- Dr. Montano provided a PPT presentation. Where are we in the process?
 - Phase 1: conduct discovery; goals and objectives (Dec – Jan)
 - Phase 2: future state design collaboration (Feb)
 - Phase 3: design guide and implementation approach (Mar)
- She announced the SOM Science Day – Feb. 28 – a tribute to our research enterprise
 - Collaborations – VIR, ICTS
 - Research faculty
 - Clinical faculty
 - MD students
- Dr. Samson suggested that the PhD students be included. Dr. Tavis agreed. Dr. Jain suggested the MD/PhD students be included as well. Dr. DiPaolo agreed and suggested selecting medical students from the recently judged AOA cohort.
- Dr. Montano stated that the Grant Incubator is open, and three grants are waiting to be submitted.

6. Old Business / New Business

- Dr. Ford sent requests to all research opportunity fund (ROF) recipients for input on the progress of their projects. This information will be used as ammunition to the Research Institute to get further funding.
- Only eleven PRF's were submitted. Dr. Ford stated that the low number of applicants was disappointing.
- Dr. Scherrer suggested the low turnout might be due to Omicron and an inability to come into the lab. Dr. Ray suggested that people are already funded. Dr. Samson suggested it's a certain amount of work for a small reward. People are under pressure to submit the bigger proposals. He also added that people are discouraged by the quality of the reviews they're getting back.
- Reminder: next month's meeting will be the SOM RPF review session – not a regular meeting. Ms Cornell with Dr. Ford's help will determine who will review those grants.
- Dr. DiPaolo reiterated that it is important to get a commitment from the Dean, if possible, concerning the funding for capital equipment requests. A one-to-three-year commitment would be ideal. If the RPC makes that recommendation, it may go up higher on the priority list.
- Ms Decker stated that she had already shared those thoughts with Ms Burton.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Cornell
SOM Research Planning & Operations Manager