

**Annual Report
Council for Research
2005-2006**

Membership	Appointment	Term
Judy Beckman (Grad School Assoc Dean)	Ex-Officio, Graduate School	
Peter Blanpied (Physical Therapy)	Faculty Senate	2005-2006
Denise Coppa (Nursing)	Provost	2004-2007
Nancy Eaton (Math)	Faculty Senate	2004-2007
John Farrell (GSO)	Council of Deans	2004-2007
Ginette Ferszt (Nursing)	Faculty Senate	2005-2008
John King (GSO)	Faculty Senate	2005-2008
Kerry LaPlante (Pharmacy Practice)	Faculty Senate	2005-2006
Wayne Lee (Civil Engineering)	Faculty Senate	2004-2007
Brett Lucht (Chemistry)	Faculty Senate	2004-2007
Karen M. Markin (Research Office)	Ex-Officio, Research Office	
Thomas Mather (Plant Sciences)	Provost	2003-2006
Michael Milkman (CELS Business Mgr)	Provost	2005-2008
Lynn Pasquerella (Research Office)	Ex-Officio, Vice Provost for Research	
Joan Peckham (Computer Science)	Provost	2005-2008
Joseph S. Rossi (CPRC)	Provost	2003-2006
Brian Brock	Graduate Student Assoc	2005-2006
Emily Anderson	Student Senate	2005-2006

Meetings

Professor Thomas Mather served as Chair for the Council for Research during the 2005-2006 academic year. The Council met on the following dates:

September 12, 2005
October 3, 2005
November 7, 2005
December 5, 2005
February 6, 2006
March 6, 2006
March 27, 2006 (planned)
April 10, 2006 (planned)
May 1, 2006 (planned)

Significant Activities:

The specific priorities for the 2005-2006 Council for Research were:

- Raising the importance of research at URI
 - Increasing the administrative support of research across campus
 - Increasing award opportunities for faculty
 - Promoting focus areas of research
 - Lessening grant administration encumbrances
 - Providing tuition waivers for graduate students
 - Providing supplemental support to researchers to fill grant funding gaps
 - Providing more support for junior faculty
 - Supporting existing partnerships so they may continue their missions
 - Overcoming understaffing of research grant support personnel
 - Providing PeopleSoft support for continuing conversion difficulties
 - Narrowing the infrastructure disconnect between faculty and administration
 - Changing the culture regarding research, particularly increasing resources to promote research
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In September 2005, the Council met with Barbara Silver, program director for the URI ADVANCE project, to discuss ways to make the ADVANCE office become a permanent part of the URI infrastructure. Members of the Council expressed an appreciation for the efforts of the ADVANCE Program to date and noted the quality of faculty the program has helped recruit and retain. Members also recognized faculty mentoring to be an area of need across campus and a key place for the ADVANCE office to apply its resources as it works to institutionalize the program.

To assist the ADVANCE Office in finding funds to supplement its annual ADVANCE Incentive Fund, the Council agreed to incorporate the ADVANCE principles into the Council's Career Enhancement (CE) and Research Proposal Development (RPD) grant programs.

Accordingly, Provost M. Beverly Swan granted the Council's request for additional funding for the CE and RPD programs to promote ADVANCE efforts therein raising the total award amount for both programs from \$85,000 to \$105,000, the first significant increase in funding in over a decade. Subsequently, the Council made key changes to the CE and RPD guidelines to reflect the principles of the ADVANCE project so as to satisfy the conditions of the ADVANCE grant.

Also in September 2005, Bob Rodgers met with the Council to discuss the need to increase the Limited Value Purchase Order (LVPO) limit to \$5,000. Rodgers asked for the Council's assistance in bringing about such an increase.

Council members expressed how such an increase would be a benefit to investigators, but they noted their concerns over LVPO's not being encumbered into PeopleSoft and problems surrounding supply sources for specialty items not bought regularly or in large commodity.

With the above cautions in mind and in support of administrative efforts, the Council charged the Vice Provost for Research to go forward with the support of the Council to pursue the issue of raising the LVPO limit to \$5,000.

In October 2005 in a continuing effort to update and enhance the Council's CE and RPD grant programs, Council members agreed to the following changes to the 2006-07 CE and RPD guidelines:

- All travel restrictions were removed from the grant program conditions.
- Faculty were asked to give budget justification for travel and equipment stating why it is necessary and/or an essential part of the project. Pricing sheets are also to be included for equipment requests.
- For RPD proposals, faculty were asked to list specific funding programs to which they are intending to submit proposals including the names of program officers.
- Proposals were to be submitted electronically.

Additionally, in an effort to help train faculty new to the grant funding process by bringing the CE and RPD grant programs more in line with federal grant requirements, the Council added the requirement that new line items require pre-approval and that such changes must be consistent with the stated objectives of the proposals. The Council also opened up the competition to non-tenure track faculty.

In November 2005, J. King and J. Farrell agreed to represent the Council on a joint subcommittee along with three members of the Graduate Council and Dean Nassersharif. The subcommittee, chaired by J. Beckman, is charged with assessing the issue of student tuition waivers, specifically regarding: 1) covering tuition for graduate research and teaching assistants

when there is a shortfall on grants and fellowships, and 2) waiving out-of-state fees for students on research grants. As noted by Council members, one of the main concerns of the subcommittee will be justifying the apparent inequalities associated with some tuition being waived and some not. Beckman, King, and Farrell were asked to keep the Council updated with the invitation to consult the Council as needed.

Also in November 2005, Brian Brock, the Graduate Student Council for Research representative, proposed that the University offer graduate students an incentive fund. Council members generally agreed such an incentive fund would be a good for graduate students and the University, enhancing graduate student research and serving as an effective recruiting and retention tool.

Council members recommended the following issues also be addressed before the Research Office implements such a program:

- Making graduate students more aware of current funding opportunities available
- Developing a program infrastructure to provide assistance beyond a cash incentive
- Providing students assistance throughout the process (i.e. writing proposals, providing feedback on proposals, and getting faculty to serve as mentors).

Another consideration raised by Council members was to use incentive funds to prompt faculty to work with graduate students to identify research questions, find funding opportunities, and write proposals to obtain money to begin gathering answers.

In December 2005, the Council met with Vice President Robert Weygand and CELS Dean Jeffrey Seemann as a part of a continuing effort to allow researchers more flexibility and greater efficiency to compete in an increasingly competitive research environment as well as attract higher-level researchers and investors.

Weygand discussed the concept of a Research Enterprise at URI and updated the Council on the progress of developing a Research and Technology Park on the Kingston Campus. Seemann discussed the EPSCoR project proposed to the National Science Foundation to increase resources statewide to compete in the growing field of life sciences. He also informed the Council of the benchmark report to be issued by the Science & Technology Advisory Council (STAC) to be used to focus state efforts on innovation in science and technology. As Co-Chair of the STAC, Seemann invited Council members and all faculty and staff to contact him with regards to any innovative ideas they have to be included in the benchmark report.

Also in December 2005, a subcommittee (B. Lucht, K. Markin, L. Pasquerella, J. Peckham, and J. Rossi) was formed to review applicants to the NSF Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) program. The NSF allows only three proposals to be submitted from each university, and this year URI had seven investigators wishing to submit. The subcommittee made recommendations to meet this requirement choosing proposals from Chemical Engineering, Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Oceanography.

In February 2006 the Council approved recommending the temporary authorization of the Center of Excellence in Undersea Technology. The Center would bring URI scientists and engineers and their counterparts at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Newport together to perform technical work. The work would have civilian as well as military applications.

Also in February 2006, T. Mather proposed the use of tuition waivers for graduate students as a way to encourage multidisciplinary research aimed at the University's core areas of interest. He and J. Beckman will explore whether such waivers are available.

In March 2006 the Council approved recommending the temporary authorization of the Center for Wellness Research & Education. The Center would play a supporting role toward the Governor's executive order to promote wellness, healthy lifestyles, and prudent health care among Rhode Islanders and RI state workers.

Also in March 2006 a subcommittee will be formed to select honorees for research for the Research, Outreach, Graduate Studies, & Intellectual Property Recognition Luncheon. Faculty will be selected with outstanding career research accomplishments to be honored at a luncheon on May 12.

Finally, on March 27, 2006 the Council will review and recommend funding proposals submitted to the 2006-07 Career Enhancement and Research Proposal Development programs. Fifteen proposals will be reviewed for the CE program with requests totaling \$83,100.41. For the RPD program, 22 proposals will be reviewed, requests totaling \$180,615.90. As mentioned above, the Council has \$105,000.00 to distribute between the two programs.

For the remaining meetings of the year, the Council will:

- Consider a redistribution of indirect cost recovery.
 - Discuss and pursue incentives to encourage collaborations in focused areas of research, particularly multidisciplinary projects.
 - Discuss the Survey Research Center as a possible centralized data collection facility.
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Report submitted by Thomas Mather, Chair
Council for Research
March 8, 2006

