Rollins College

Rollins Scholarship Online

11-7-2019

Minutes, Faculty Research and Development Committee, Thursday, November 7, 2019

Faculty Research and Development Committee

Attendees: Katie Sutherland (Chair), Robin Gerchman, Jie Yu, Jenn Manak, Denise Cummings, Nancy Chick, Nick H., Shan-Estelle Brown, Chris Fuse, Devon Massot (meeting minutes taker)

Katie Sutherland calls meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

1. **Discuss Student-Faculty Collaborative Scholarship (SFCS) grant proposal guidelines and review process.** Chris Fuse is present today. Chris will be stepping down as director of the SFCS program and states that the last major changes to the grant proposal guidelines occurred 7 years ago. The program used to include Type 1 and Type 2 proposals. Type 1s were not funded at same level as Type 2s. They were much briefer, which tended to mean faculty didn't have as much buy-in. They were also reviewed last, so not all were funded. These tended to be a lot more work for Chris and the review committee. Chris plans to send out the 2020 program guidelines this month.

   Katie states that we are a new committee, and we don't have time to make major changes at this point with the timeline and with a new director coming on board. Nancy recommends one quick change to page 4 of the guidelines: rewording the sentence that states "pedagogical scholarship will not normally be funded" and adding "results in peer-reviewed publication will be considered." Chris states he is fine with making this change.

   Question/Discussion re: Independent Course Credit. Nick asks if the credit hours for the proposal development is justified. Chris responds that it is. As an example, a faculty member and student may meet 1 hour per week in the fall, then 2 hours per week in the spring. Students are learning a fine-tuned discipline by developing a 15-page proposal with a fairly extensive background. Students are often involved in multiple full version edits. Nick asked if just going through process gets the 2 hours of credit. Chris responds that this is left up to the faculty, and every field is slightly different. We trust faculty colleagues know what a 2-credit independent research project looks like and what students need to do to get an A or B. Some faculty award an A if they feel the student's proposal is good enough to submit. Chris doesn't think anyone has received less than a C. He also doesn't recall any student who received the 2 credits and was not able to submit the proposal. Students have traditionally made a strong commitment to this work.

   Question/Discussion re: Summer vs. Academic Year. Jie asks if there is a reason the program is only over the summer. Chris responds that faculty are supposed to be conducting research during the academic year as part of their positions, and while it may be appropriate to have students help with that, the College can't pay faculty for working on research during the academic year when it should be included as part of their regular full-time duties. There may be possibilities to integrate into the classroom. Right now, the program is a full-time summer program (30-40 hours/week, over several weeks). Students and faculty won't be able to have that experience during the academic year.

   Question/Discussion re: Number of Students Working with Faculty. Jie asks how many faculty receive multiple stipends for working with more than one student. Chris responds that in the past we had faculty who amassed 8 or more students. This was the reason for putting a cap on the stipend. We want to emphasize that working with 1-2 students intensively is the priority for this

program, but we left it open to situations (i.e., <u>theater faculty</u>) where a group of students is necessary. Currently, probably 40% of faculty in the program have more than one student. It very much depends on what they're working on and whether more than one student is truly justified (e.g., co-authoring a book, conducting field research, etc.).

<u>Question/Discussion re: Program Requirements</u>. Katie asks for clarification on what exactly is required, as some language that seems contradictory. Chris outlines the core requirements (p. 3):

- Emphasis must be on the student (it's their proposal). He acknowledges that it's hard not to know the faculty member involved based on the topic proposed.
- A proposal is required.
- Must include a non-tech summary and lit review. Open to what this means; varies by discipline.
- Must have a timeline, which ends with submitting a manuscript for publication or equivalent.
- Must include a budget, which must include student and faculty stipends and conference travel. It's important for students to understand the costs associated with their research.
- Must include references.
- Must include a personal statement.
- Contract in which the team enumerates what they will get done, dates, etc.
- In addition, any collection of data from humans must go through IRB and animal use must go through IACUC. The requirement is for submittal to these, not approval.

Chris also outlines the following reasons for students not receiving high scores/not getting funded:

- Timeline doesn't mention final outcome (publication).
- Budget is missing components. We just need an estimate. Teams can use previous conferences as a guide for estimating costs. The goal of the program is to allow students to understand what it's like to be an academic researcher. Developing a complete proposal and budget (that includes travel estimates for conferences) is an important part of this.

<u>Question/Discussion re: Conference vs. Publication Requirements</u>. The program funded 47 projects last year. The amounts vary based on length of project and conference costs. Katie asks how many people actually spend their conference travel money. Chris states between 60-75%. This fluctuates from year to year. Chris keeps a record of all this and follows up with faculty on the travel piece through their final reports. The program expended $250K for the 2019 awards. Chris reiterates that the goal of the program is to have the student co-author a paper. Approximately 20% of all projects end in a publication, but that's high compared to the publication rates occurring elsewhere in the general field of research (roughly 1%). Chris actively follows up with faculty to get publication info. Those ending in artistic display don't end up in the Scholarship Online portal, so they're harder to catch. But if 1 in 5 are ending in publication, we're still so far ahead of everyone else in the field of academia doing collaborative scholarship in this form. We're unique in requiring this.

Katie asks if it would it help if we did a quick revision to clarify some of this, as it seems the requirement of presentation vs. publication is currently very unclear. For example, is a conference proceeding a publication? Why is a presentation required if the guidelines state publication is the goal? Chris responds that conference travel is an easier metric to measure than whether the student will actually get published. Chris also states that the guidelines go through slight revisions every year. Nancy suggests adding the presentation in the timeline, even if they don't know the conference. Katie feels the cover letter from faculty should also state how they will meet goals of

the program, so conference costs/expectation is made clear. Chris states in the past, faculty took students to conferences that were less than high-quality. One quick fix was the student sections (conferences). We made the change to add NCUR, which is by default a student conference. We've made slow changes to help with this, but different conferences are appropriate for different fields. Chris states that it's also important to note that what students are capable of doing has fundamentally changed over last 20 years.

Shan-Estelle says it seems the emphasis is on conference presentation, with publication being a bonus. For example, there's nothing in the budget guidelines for publication costs. Chris sees presentations as steps to turn something into getting published. Shan-Estelle feels both are important goals, but they aren't represented equivalently in the guidelines. Jenn says this speaks to the need for a rubric. Not including a conference in the proposal shouldn't knock someone out entirely. Katie respects that the program is seeing value in conferences, but it needs to be made clear in the document. Nancy suggests that the *potential* for publication is a better way to phrase it. Chris states if there's any ambiguity, let's get rid of it. Every time we add a new major or program, we have to tweak the guidelines. He is open to comments/edits, but also wants to preserve as much as we can for next director, so we don't box someone in. Chris departs meeting.

Discussion/Plan for Suggested Revisions to Guidelines. Shan-Estelle asks if there are potential barriers for Holt students and how we might open this up to them. Jie states that the requirement for research to be done over the summer is very hard, especially for those in Education. Denise suggests identifying 1-3 major items we have issues with and not tackle the whole thing at this time. Jenn states that a rubric would help break it down. Nancy states that we need consistency and clarity in the guidelines first. Jenn comments that it's what on paper that should get scored, not anything that precedes them as a faculty member. All the grants we review have this issue. Katie states that this is where the cover letter from faculty member comes in. They can provide additional information there. Nancy believes there are proposal samples and info on where people can publish on the website. Jenn recommends a separate undergraduate travel grant, for both summer and during AY to address conference travel issue. The focus of this program should be on promoting research. Nick poses the question as to whether conference travel is an incentive for students to participate. Katie, Shan-Estelle, and Nancy believe it may be for a few, but not across the board. Shan-Estelle states that it's interesting that conference travel is prioritized over publication, but this isn't how it really works in academia. Travel is just a more realistic, attainable goal. Nick notes that it's important that we have the input of the new director before making major changes.

The committee members agree that there's too much lack of clarity, and we should address this now and delay major changes for a new director. Nancy offers to edit the guidelines and focus only on the following:

1. Making clear the goal of potential for publication vs. required conference travel (must be included budget)
2. Cover letter from faculty should include a statement of how they will meet the goals of the program.

Katie and Nancy will start revising and send to the committee for review.

2. **Grant Request for FYRST Proposal # 4.** All committee members are in favor of recommending. Denise asks if a budget was required. It was determined it was not.

3. **Approval of meeting minutes**. No concerns noted for meeting minutes from 10/10/19. Minutes are approved.

4. **Other business.** Katie reminds the committee that FYRST final reports are coming up. We don't have to review but we can, or we can be thinking about a rubric for SFCS. The committee agrees that a rubric for SFCS is a priority. Katie will ask Chris if he's done anything with the rubric Jenn provided him and if he's feels the committee could use a rubric like that next semester. The committee also agrees that we should read all proposals and not just the ones that Chris has screened. Katie will confirm with Chris who technically makes recommendations to the Dean: the committee or the program director.

    Katie thanks Nick for serving as the FRDC representative on the Global Initiatives Committee's subcommittee for the review of Rollins Internationalization Grants (RIG). Nick states that there were 12 applications. Eight were accepted, three were recommended to revise and resubmit, and one was not eligible.

    Katie will circulate meeting times for next semester to get on our calendars. All agree that common hour on Thursday works for everyone.

Meeting adjourned: 1:45 p.m.