

Research Council
2016-2017 Annual Report
Chair: Dr. Kevin Baer

Four meetings were held during the reporting period. The council's main charge was "To assist the Executive Director of the Research Corporation of Louisiana in fostering a supportive research environment".

The first meeting discussed the Louisiana Corporation of Louisiana Director's position and how the Research Council can assist the Director. Questions arose about how the proposed strategic plan for research (the charge for the committee in 2016-2015) will change with the new direction in research. The Council requested a meeting with Dr. Pani for a Q&A session and to discuss how the Council can be more productive in our charge in assisting the Director.

Other discussions centered on how the Council could help/encourage ULM researchers to collaborate more. One approach was to use the faculty research website pages to help facilitate communication. The last discussion revisited the indirect cost return policy and how the Council can encourage administration to honor the policy.

In the second meeting the Council meet with Dr. Pani to discuss the Research Corporation concept. In addition, the Council would be involved in interviewing the candidates for the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Director of the Research Corporation (one position with dual activities). These interviews would take place in the next couple of weeks. Council meetings would be suspended until the new Director was selected.

Dr. Pani explained that the funding formula at the state is based on the previous formula, program costs, and performance, which includes a heavy emphasis on federal research dollars. ULM recently received the designation as a National Research University, and to keep that designation we need to grow research production (particularly in terms of federally funded research). The University strategic plan will be updated to reflect that recognition. Dr. Pani explained that the goal is to begin rebuilding the research structure and stop a decline in grand funding. He mentioned getting support staff to help, including a grant writer. He believes the Director's strategy should be to get to know the faculty and what they work on, and pursue grants aligned with their expertise. He also believes we need to put in place help with intellectual property. Additionally, the Council members can assist the Director by being ambassadors for research around the campus.

The Council expressed concerns about a position with two different job roles requiring different skill sets (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Director of the Research Corporation).

In the third meeting the Council met with the newly appointed Director of the Research Corporation, Dr. John Sutherlin, to discuss how the Council could assist in fostering a supportive research environment. Dr. Sutherlin emphasized the importance of each area seeking grants. One way to facilitate this is for each Department/School to develop a faculty profile of research interests. A grant writer (to be selected by the end of the week) will then be able to pursue grants that are matched with faculty research expertise.

The fourth meeting consisted of nominations for the Chair and Secretary for the Research Council. Dr. David Irwin volunteered to serve as Secretary but there were no nominations for Chair. The remaining meeting discussed how the Council could improve their advisory and supportive role to the new Director.