

**University of Louisiana at Monroe
Research Council
Minutes**

**December 3, 2008
Room 420, ULM Library**

Meeting Began ca. 3:15 p.m.

Members Present

Girish Shah (Chair)	Russ Minton
Stephen Fox	Joe McGahan
Carl Kogut	Ann Findley
Don Smith	René Hearn

Members Not Present

Belinda Morgan	Keith Jackson
Ivona Jukic	Florencetta Gibson
Janet Haedicke	Ken Clow

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved (RM proposed motion). JM and other council members acknowledged receipt from RH of an example of a Research Council Mission Statement. The document is referred to throughout these minutes as the RCMS.

The following discussion was held:

GS opened the meeting to discussion of possible items that the council might want to recommend to the ULM administration. One example, he added, is to invite the Deans to address the council. CK requested clarification of what the address would entail. RM responded that the Deans should be essentially interviewed, and that the council should consider it a fact-finding endeavor to ask the Deans questions such as: what is research, and how is research counted? GS added he would ask how the Deans anticipate the 100% improvement in research in the next 5 years as stated in the ULM strategic plan.

JM proposed that the council establish a definition of research and scholarship. He pointed out that the council in the RCMS reported to a Vice-President of Research and that ULM did not have such an administrator. Hence, the ULM Research Council would serve well by reporting to the Deans, hence he supported the invitation of the Deans to address the council. AF indicated that the position of Vice-President of Research has been discussed by various ULM faculty for a long time. She added that we should not expect the Provost to serve in this capacity because that individual already has enough other priorities. She also added that in her department a 12 hour contact load has become

the norm and this is not compatible with the research requirements of the department M.S. program (which used to operate with 9 hour research faculty teaching loads).

JM said ULM must grow graduate programs in order to grow at all because declining numbers of high school graduates (and eventual ULM undergraduates) are expected in future years. He added that the growth of graduate programs revolves around research and scholarship. GS added that strong graduate programs will attract good undergraduates. In contrast, AF noted that a vibrant undergraduate degree program is needed first in order to establish a graduate program. She continued that ULM has suffered through the loss of graduate programs and the increasing transformation of core programs (e.g. Biology and Chemistry) into service-oriented roles that feed students into professional programs such as Nursing and Pharmacy. She noted further that the recent emergence of online courses also diminishes program strength because those courses are perceived by students as paths of least resistance to advancement. JM introduced the notion of Research Associates – the counterparts of Instructors but with relatively small teaching loads and significant research responsibilities. He added that if ULM values research they must somehow make an investment in it.

RH arrived from an earlier appointment around this time. She clarified that the strategic plan proposes a 100% increase in the number of funded awards in the next 5 years. She clarified further that a dollar amount has not been attached to the plan, and that currently there are about 120 funded awards ongoing at ULM.

RM repeated that we need to bring the Deans to the council. JM added that the Provost should also be invited. SF added that we need to formulate a clear agenda and apprise all visitors of it beforehand so an open discussion can be held. AF asked how, as a faculty mentor, she should advise her charges with regard to research? JM noted that recently he observed mixed signals at dinner with some of his colleagues and an interviewing candidate. He said that while some faculty supported research at ULM and expected the candidate to perform it, others clearly did not, and did not have a research expectation. RM suggested that the council members send a list of questions to GS that they would pose to the Deans and Provost in the event of their visit. He added that the council can formulate their list at a future meeting. JM closed with warning that some DH's are not disseminating research information to their faculty, presumably because they do not consider research important. RH confirmed that she had encountered this problem while attempting to inform faculty of the Pfund program, and she solved it by sending funding information directly to faculty and not only to DH's.

Next Meeting

No obvious agreement was reached as to when the next meeting would occur.

Meeting adjourned ca. 4:15 p.m.

Stephen Fox,
Member, Research Council