

Voting Members Present: Ernie Canalis, Breno Diniz, Emily Germain-Lee, Pedro Mendes, Carla Rash, David Steffens, Anthony Vella, Riqiang Yan

Non-Voting Members Present: Michael Centola, Marc Hansen (until 3:10PM)

Guests: Julie Schwager

Dr. Germain-Lee called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

1. **Approve Minutes** - Upon a motion made by Dr. Steffens seconded by Dr. Vella the Council members voted unanimously in favor to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023 meeting.

2. **OVPR Research Update** – Ms. Julie Schwager provided the following research update:

- **Fringe benefits** – With the state now covering retirement benefits and legacy costs, the fringe rates reduced significantly for all employees except non-resident alien postdoctoral fellows. Ms. Schwager explained that several years ago, non-resident alien postdoctoral fellows were switched from the UHP professional pool to the graduate assistant pool because their fringe benefit program more closely aligned with graduate assistants because they were not eligible for retirement benefits. With the state now paying the retirement benefits, they were moved back to the UHP professional group, or what we are now calling the employee pool. The difference between the two pools is health care options.

Research Finance is currently looking to see on a grant-by-grant basis how many faculty were impacted by this change.

- **F&A proposal** – 2024 is the next base year for the Facilities and Administration (F&A) rate proposal. Space surveys will be collected, and faculty interviews scheduled soon.
- **Strategic Planning** – The University is actively involved in developing a new, collaborative strategic plan, and they are hoping to engage faculty, staff, and students in the process. In-person forums are being held at all campuses, as well as virtual forums. Additionally, surveys have been sent to the UConn community asking for feedback on key priorities and issues that should be prioritized.

Dr. Vella stressed the importance of responding to the surveys that have been distributed from the Provost and Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

- **Formation of two new committees:** Two new faculty committees have, or will be formed, with representation from both UConn Storrs and UConn Health. 1). The IDC Faculty Committee will

look at how the indirect cost returns are distributed to stimulate and support research; 2). The Space Allocation Faculty Committee will review space policies and develop procedures around implementing those policies.

3. **Other Business:**

- **Rare Diseases** – Dr. Emily Germain-Lee has been appointed to the Connecticut Rare Disease Advisory Council and will serve as an advocate for the University.
- **Oversight Representative** - Dr. Hansen announced that since Dr. Mendes is now serving on the Oversight Committee, he will take over as the liaison between Research Council and the Oversight Committee.

A question was raised whether Dr. Mendes' appointment on the Oversight Committee affected his right to vote on Research Council. Ms. Holden agreed to follow up with the Office of Faculty Affairs.

- **IRB** – Mr. Michael Centola asked Research Council for their advice on non-UConn researchers posting recruitment studies on campus. Currently, these requests are going through the Institutional Review Board, but since this research isn't actually happening here, and has been approved by the prime institution's IRB, he would like to find a more appropriate mechanism for vetting these requests, i.e. Department Chair and/or Dean. After some discussion, Research Council recommended continuing this discussion at an upcoming meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Holden