

President's Advisory Committee on University Relations (PACUR)
Meeting
15 April, 2008
Jackson Geological Sciences Building
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX

NOTES

PACUR Members present:

Lisa White, San Francisco State University, Chairwoman
Wendy Abshire, NCAR/COMET
Vanda Grubisic, DRI
Eve Grunfest, University of Colorado- Colorado Springs
Greg Hakim, University of Washington
Robert Hart, Florida State University
David Nolan, University of Miami
Richard Orville, Texas A&M University
Len Pietrafesa, North Carolina State University
Alan Robock, Rutgers University
Roger Samelson, Oregon State University
Sepideh Yalda, Millersville University
S. T. Wu, University of Alabama- Huntsville
Sharon Zhong, Michigan State University

NCAR/UCAR/UOP attendees:

Rick Anthes, President UCAR
Jack Fellows, Vice President UCAR Corporate Affairs, Director of UOP
Larry Winter, Deputy Director of NCAR
Susan Friberg, Governance Liaison, UCAR
Aneka Finley, Administrative Assistant, UCAR
Raj Pandya, UCAR SOARS Director
Valerie Koch, Budget Analyst, NCAR
Kathy Strand, UCAR President's Office
Jennifer Wilson, NCAR Budget office

1. Agenda Approval

PACUR Chairwoman, Lisa White, asked for approval of the agenda. No changes were suggested. It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the agenda as presented.

2. Welcome to the committee

UCAR President Rick Anthes welcomed the committee, and thanked them for their attendance. He noted that these are difficult times for the atmospheric and related sciences—that funding for our science is level or decreasing just as challenging questions about climate change and severe weather heat up and need to be addressed. Anthes also read the PACUR charge to remind the committee, especially the newer members, of their responsibilities:

The President's Advisory Committee on University Relations (PACUR) helps maintain good communication and relationships between the Corporation and members. The PACUR acts as an advisory committee to the President, proposing agenda items for members' meetings and proposing activities and programs for UCAR to undertake. The PACUR also reviews NCAR's non-NSF funding and considers any charges of unfair competition by NCAR from the university community, and reviews UOP funding for activities that lie outside the scope of the sponsor agreements that form the core of each UOP program.

3. Approval of the October 2007 Meeting Notes

Chairwoman Lisa White asked for approval of the notes from the October 2007 PACUR meeting. The notes were approved as amended.

4. PACUR Proposal Review Subcommittee Report

Vanda Grubisic, chair of the non-NSF and non-core proposals review committee reported that the committee reviewed 20 proposals that were randomly selected from the July through December 2007 NCAR and UOP proposal submissions. Grubisic reported that the sub-committee had submitted its review to NCAR two weeks prior to the PACUR meeting and that the final report was still in progress. Grubisic said that while all of the proposals were in compliance with the criteria, there were two remaining questions: one regarding the seemingly unfair access to NCAR computing resources that the NCAR divisions and programs have, and the second concerned the perception that researchers in Colorado more often collaborate on NCAR proposals than researchers from other states. Larry Winter agreed to address these with the divisions and programs. After questions from new PACUR members, President Anthes gave a brief history of the PACUR's involvement in this, saying that NSF has requested that the PACUR perform these audits on non-core proposals submitted by NCAR staff to ensure that there is no unfair competition with the universities. David Nolan volunteered to serve on the sub-committee when there is an opening. Richard Orville commended this set of proposals saying they were "the most compliant yet" with the criteria. Anthes suggested that, in the future each PACUR meeting's agenda should include an overview of non-NSF funding—background and current status.

5. UCAR Update:

Rick Anthes reported that the search for a new NCAR director was underway and that the application deadline was 30 April. He is planning that the new director's appointment will commence on 1 July 2008. He reported that the competition to manage NCAR was almost over—the National Science Board is voting in May. The next major project for the coming year will be the development of the Workforce Management Plan. The focus of the plan is to increase diversity, look at the demographics at NCAR, and plan for an aging workforce. Within the next year, Anthes plans to ask PACUR and the Board of Trustees for input into the Workforce Management Plan.

6. Diversity Update

Rajul Pandya, Director of SOARS and UCAR Community Building, reported that he is working on a "Diversity Summit" that is planned for January 2009. The goal is to strengthen partnerships with minority serving universities and provide a model for increasing diversity at institutions around the country. He also outlined the "Africa Initiative" at UCAR in which a group of

scientists at NCAR are interested in helping African scientists more effectively conduct their scientific and operational work.

Discussion centered around the diversity summit. Dean of the Jackson School, Eric Barron, who has offered to sponsor the summit, noted that corporations are very interested in this sort of thing for science-leaning minority serving institutions, and that it is important for these institutions to partner with nearby existing program partners in order to preserve their resources.

7. NCAR Update

In NCAR Director Tim Killeen's absence, NCAR Deputy Director Larry Winter gave the committee an update on recent activities at NCAR including an update on the proposed Supercomputing Center. He reported on the partnership between NCAR and the University of Wyoming, with strong collaboration with the University of Colorado. NSF has created a review panel to look at supercomputing needs for the atmospheric sciences and will give its recommendation to NSF. Winter also reported that even with the delays in NSF approval, NCAR has a project management team in place, and remains ready to proceed with the design and development once approval is given.

8. Transition Document and UOP Update

UOP Director Jack Fellows gave the PACUR an update on the activities in UOP over the past six months since the fall PACUR meeting, as well as an update on the so-called Transition Document that UCAR has developed along with AMS and AGU, the Weather Coalition and others. Fellows said that the Transition Document is aimed at the Clinton, Obama and McCain campaigns to clearly define for them the research and operational needs to address climate and weather issues; the document can be found at www.ucar.edu/td. He said that there are a series of recommendations and an opportunity to nominate people for key weather and climate leadership positions. He also said that one of the more important aspects of the document is recommending that the Executive Branch take a leadership role in coordinating efforts across the agencies, and to possibly do this through the US Global Change Research Program which was so successful in the early 90s at this very thing.

Fellows gave a brief description of the differences between UOP and UCAR/NCAR for the new members of the committee; he also reported that DLESE had moved into NCAR. Fellows also reported on his site visits to Brown University and the University of Connecticut—both are applying for membership.

9. Planning for the October 2008 Members' Meeting

Taking a cue from Jack Fellows' previous presentation, and after discussing some interesting ideas with Jackson School meeting host, Dean Eric Barron, the PACUR decided that climate change adaptation and mitigation was a good theme for the October 2008 Annual Meeting. It was suggested that there be a keynote speaker to set the tone, and panels and/or breakout groups to further explore the most effective ways for atmospheric and related sciences community to help local, regional and national decision makers make adaptation and mitigation decisions. Lisa White suggested that a sub-committee form to look closer at this idea for the Members' Meeting. Lisa, S.T., David, and Greg all volunteered to be on this sub-committee.

10. Open Discussion

The discussion centered on the Advanced Study Program (ASP) and the Post-doc competition run through that office. The ASP normally receives about one hundred applications for post-doc positions at NCAR, and out of those hundred applications only a few are selected. NCAR scientists can go through the applications and look for candidates for other post-doc positions. David Nolan asked if it would be possible for member universities to have access to those applications/ or resumes with the consent of the applicant of course. Larry Winter said, after a strong caveat about protecting applicant's privacy, that he would talk with ASP Director Maura Hagan, about the possibility. There was some concern that it would be difficult to carefully manage this—managing workload and protecting privacy of the applicants were the main concerns.

11. Student and Faculty presentations

Eric Barron, Dean of the Jackson Geosciences School presented a history of the school and introduced three faculty members—Terry Quinn, Jay Banner, and Charles Jackson—who gave presentations on their programs and current research projects.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

The committee was hosted at a reception at Eric Barron's house.