

Faculty Senate HOP Committee: Melvin Laracey (Chair), Donovan Fogt, Robert Hard, Thomas Coyle, Lars Hansen, Manuel Berriozabal, Maryellen Garcia, Gayle Nicoll, Cherylon Robinson, Juanita Firestone, Michael Miller

Report concerning Vice President for Research proposed (additions) HOP policies:

- 10.05 Effort on Sponsored Programs – recommend revision
- 10.06 Cost Sharing on Sponsored Programs – recommend rejection
- 10.07 Base Salary on Sponsored Programs – recommend acceptance
- 10.08 Cost Transfers on Sponsored Programs – recommend revision

Dr. Wenk and Faculty Senate-

The HOP Committee has reviewed the four proposed Vice President for Research policy additions to the HOP. We sought additional insight from a specialist in a college's Research Grants and Development Office as well as research-intensive faculty members with good knowledge of the current sponsored projects practices. Additionally, this report was influenced by input from faculty members who may serve on the faculty senate. We found most of the proposals to be generally in line with the current understanding and correct practices for sponsored research. We can, however, identify potential general issues with all four policies. They are listed below. However, we feel that the overall language and tone of the policies is overly legalistic and much more detailed than that normally contained in the HOP. These policies seem to be written in order to protect the Office VPR as opposed to a clear and user-friendly document that stakeholders will be encouraged to utilize.

The Faculty Senate HOP Committee suggests that these potential problems be discussed further with the Office of the Vice President of Research such that the proposed policies can be revised. We note the Senate is working to form the Research Advisory Committee. This committee should work with the VPR in formulating policies.

Specific points of contention and recommendation by committee:

10.05 Effort on Sponsored Programs

- a. Request a revision that becomes more helpful and useful to faculty.
- b. Why has the VPR named him/herself as the institutional compliance officer? Would we be better served if this role was appointed to another administrative office?
- c. There should be a component included, where appropriate, that clarifies and documents the role that NTT faculty/researchers' effort and compensation play in sponsored programs, especially NTTs who are less than 100%?
- d. We request that the discussion of Maximum Effort be deleted (p. 5). This presumes knowledge of faculty responsibilities and workload that may not be correct.

10.06 Cost Sharing on Sponsored Programs

The Faculty Senate HOP Committee identified a major problem with proposal 10.06 regarding cost-sharing (i.e., "It is the policy of The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) to provide only the minimum Cost Sharing required on extramurally funded Sponsored Programs. Voluntary Cost Sharing is discouraged."). We feel that this policy would be in opposition to the mission of the VPR. Since there are grant programs where voluntary cost sharing increases the competitiveness of a grant proposal, it is unacceptable that the VPR's office would develop a policy that opposes such efforts. When required by the sponsor of a granting agency, it should be the policy of the university to provide an appropriate level of cost sharing which will best promote the successful award of the grant from the sponsor. Therefore, we recommend that the senate reject the proposed VPR HOP policy 10.06 and that the VPR be encouraged to support faculty efforts to obtain external funding when cost sharing is an important element in proposal development.

10.07 Base Salary on Sponsored Programs

- a. This policy is consistent with regulations and current practice.

10.08 Cost Transfers on Sponsored Programs

- a. These policies do not mention any regulation/oversight of "budgetary shell accounts" that the university sometimes sets up for faculty to cover salaries, etc. prior to an award getting to campus (especially at the time when departments are preparing their course load assignments, etc.). Should this be an additional policy as any potential (regardless of how slight the chance) change in institution, individual, or agency policy or standing could disrupt the process of research and teaching allocations.
- b. What is the role of the newly established "college-level" research and grants development offices (as found in the COEHD <http://education.utsa.edu/research>) in these policies? We feel this needs to be clarified and documented appropriately. The potential exists for misinterpretation of policy and accountability issues between UTSA and college-level research entities.
- c. The requirement that cost transfers must be requested within 90 days for initial posting of an account is unrealistic and inconsistent with normal grant management. Frequently funds are not expended in exactly the manner originally budgeted. We request that this be deleted.
- d. Similarly requiring that salary transfers must be approved the Senior Associate VPR is an example of unnecessary over regulation on the part of the Office of VPR. Similarly eliminating cost transfers for effort appears overly restrictive. We request that this entire paragraph be struck. Such a routine part of grant management should not require this sort of high level oversight and elaborate justification. In our experience this is not routine, nor to our knowledge, required by funding agencies.