Senate Research Committee Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2016; 3:00 PM
522 Centennial Hall

Attendees: Amber Amari, Elaine Bryan, Andy Butler, Brenda Chapman, Candace Kemp, Lawrence Kiage, Amy Lederberg, Unil Perera, Vincent Rehder, Ed Rigdon, MaryAnn Romski, Erin Ruel, Rose A. Sevcik (Chair), Brian Sinclair, Monica Swahn, Kelly Stout, Jelena Subotic, Duane Truex, Kris Varjas, Brett Wong, and Yali Zhao

Absentees: Susan Auslander, Elena Del Rio Parra, Dabney Dixon, Florian Enescu, Julia Hilliard, Paul Katz, Jill Littrell, Carrie Manning, Greta Mason, Sally Robertson, Bill Robinson, Mary Stuckey, James Weyhenmeyer, Leslie Wolf, and Ying Zhu

Minutes: Rose Baldwin

1. The October 17, 2016 minutes were approved.

2. Dr. Chapman briefly provided the following URSA’s updates:
   a. A positive report on the annual disclosure of significant financial interest and renewal course was presented.
   b. A broadcast message will soon be disseminated from Dr. Weyhenmeyer on the operational procedure for the holiday closure. It will include the schedule for the PSC and NSC’s stockrooms as well as the on-call schedule for emergencies during the holiday.

3. Chair Sevcik reported that the Senate Research Subcommittee on internal grants recently reviewed and scored the conference grants and recommendations for funding were forwarded to Dr. Weyhenmeyer. This was a new process for the processing of conference applications. Dr. Stout stated that the awardees will be announced in the December newsletter.

4. Dr. Stout provided assessment data on the internal grants dissertation program between fiscal years 2008-2017. A handout was provided. In historical review, the submission and award rates varied year to year by disciplines with the highest volume from College of Arts & Sciences. At present, the average years to graduating from a doctoral program after receiving this award is 1.4 years. In FY15, the award amount was raised from $1K to $2K, and in FY16, the grant program received additional financial support from the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Programs. Dr. Stout extended an invitation to the members to email her of possible other statistics for this report that could lend additional insight in order to effectively understand and develop strategies to enhance this program in diverse research settings. Dr. Lederberg made a request to modify the report to also list the total amount of awards per fiscal year.

Some senate members raised concerns with the lack of submissions from certain colleges. In addition, there was concern expressed about the awardees that do not complete their doctoral degrees within two years from receiving the award. Dr. Romski and Dr. Rigdon suggested that there may be an existing student population who “choose” not finish their degree program due to a poor job market at the time or other factors like increased academic responsibilities in teaching. Chair Sevcik requested that Dr. Stout amend the internal dissertation application so that the advisor will include information on the expectation of degree completion from his/her PhD student. An illustration was provided where Psychology doctoral students are required to fully concentrate on degree completion (in one academic year) when awarded the department’s dissertation award. Dr. Swahn offered a suggestion to compare to broader completion rates in order to better assess the dissertation grant program. Ms. Amari added a comment that a trajectory plan with measurable goals is equally important (along with funding) to have overall success. Chair Sevcik and Dr. Perera proposed to increase the grant amount for full-time doctoral students to offset rising costs (e.g., fieldwork costs, computers) associated with their dissertation
efforts. Dr. Stout offered a solution to email the dissertation advisors of students who have not yet graduated within the expected timeline and will request that they supply the reasons for the delay. Members present were in favor of such action.

5. Chair Sevcik provided information that an invitation has been extended to Dr. Rackliffe, VP of Finance, to join the committee next month.

6. Chair Sevcik and Dr. Subotic shared information on an interesting article from Cornell University related to faculty productivity and shadow work. A link to the article will be forthcoming via email.

7. Dr. Stout announced that the refurbished URSA website was launched recently and requested feedback.

The next meeting will be held on December 12, 2016 at 3:00 PM in 522 Centennial Hall.