**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

Date: November 8th 2017 after Full Faculty Senate Meeting

Location M&V715 and webex\*

Present: Nirupa Matthan (Chair, Friedman/HNRCA), Brent Cochran (Sackler), Roman Schumann (SoM), Rob Jacob (SoE),\* Roger Tobin (A&S)\*

Regrets: Mitch Mcvey (A&S), Virginia Chonitz (SoM)

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. **Day, Time and Location**

Once a month on Wednesdays, 10 minutes after faculty senate meeting is adjourned. More frequent meetings may be scheduled if required. Meetings will be in person and via Webex. ***Next meeting will be on December 13th.***

1. **Matters for consideration**
   1. ***Pre- and post-award support:*** Concern was expressed by Roger about the lack of administration support for grants. Issues range from no clear lines of authority, delays in approvals for business pieces of grants, grants not being submitted on time, and others. Upon further discussion it appears that Friedman/HNRCA, SoM and Sackler seem to have adequate support systems in place so this might be a school specific issue. However, input was not available from all schools.

*Recommendation:* Survey the faculty senators to gauge the pervasiveness of this issue across schools and degree of concern.

*Action item:* Roger has agreed to put together a short survey to be distributed among the members of the faculty senate. Next steps will be determined based on the survey results.

* 1. ***Research Administration System (RAS):*** Tufts has chosen Kuali Coeus as its new Research Administration System to enable Tufts researchers and administrators to create funding proposals, route them electronically for approval, and submit them directly to the funding agency. However, there have been several issues and the question was raised as to whether there was any faculty input during the evaluation process to compare available research administration software. A general consensus was that many of these decisions seem to be geared toward reducing administrative burden at the expense of the research (e.g. grant submission deadlines that are 2 weeks before the actual agency deadlines hinders the scientific writing process). While this decision pre-dated the formation of the faculty senate, it highlights the need for faculty to be involved early in the decision making process on matters pertaining to research and scholarship.

***Shared resources:*** Brent indicated that the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR) in conjunction with UIT is planning to launch a website which lists faculty research interests, equipment and available expertise with the intent to engage faculty with similar interests to connect and share resources. While this is a much needed initiative to further cross-school collaboration, only some members were aware of this initiative and the extent of faculty involvement was unclear.

*Recommendation:* Partner with the OVPR to provide faculty input on research infrastructure issues that are critical to the success of the research and scholarship priorities of the University.

*Action item:* Nirupa will draft (and circulate for comments) a letter to Simin Meydani (Vice Provost for Research) requesting a meeting between her and the committee members to engage in dialogue on the above mentioned matters and potentially others that pertain to research and scholarship.

* 1. ***Mid-career faculty grants:*** Nirupa conveyed concern from some of her colleagues who felt that the research environment invests heavily in junior faculty and that many mid-career faculty do not have many internal funding opportunities. The need was expressed for pilot funding to enable further career growth and progression for this level of faculty.

***Interdisciplinary Research:*** Several committee members commented that the research agenda of Tufts is focused primarily on interdisciplinary research. This is evidenced in the available internal funding opportunities (Tufts Innovates, Tufts Collaborates, CTSI interdisciplinary research pilot fund). While this is a step in the right direction, there may be other models (refer the articles forwarded by Brent on 11/8/17) that foster an interdisciplinary ethos. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that most of the extramural funded research is obtained by individual researchers/groups. There is no mechanism for internal pilot funds for individual researchers.

*Recommendation:* Partner with the Office of Research (ORA) to provide faculty input on issues that promote and support research and scholarship throughout the University including activities that enhance both interdisciplinary and also unidisciplinary work.

*Action item:* Same as above.