



Council of Principal
Investigators

Texas A&M University
1112 TAMU
College Station, Texas 77843-1112
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March 19, 2008 CPI Schedule:

(11:30 - 1:15) Council of Principal Investigators Monthly Meeting:
Memorial Student Center, Room 206

Attendees: CPI members and Guests

Distribution materials:

March 19, 2008 agenda & resources

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CPI Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, March 19, 2008
11:30 – 1:15

(11:45 – 11:50) Call to Order/Opening Remarks: (Moderated by A. Love)

- Welcome
- Approval of February 13, 2008 minutes
- Introduction:
 - David Riddle, Director of Licensing and Intellectual Property, Office of Technology Commercialization
 - Peter Schuerman, Senior Licensing Manager, Office of Technology Commercialization

(11:50 – 12:45) *Special Guest Presentation:* Texas A&M University System Intellectual Property Policy
David Riddle, Director of Licensing and Intellectual Property, Office of Technology Commercialization;
Peter Schuerman, Senior Licensing Manager, Office of Technology Commercialization

(12:45 – 1:10) Facilitated Discussion: (Moderated by A. Love)

(1:10 – 1:15) Other business: (Moderated by A. Love)

- April 9, 2008 CPI meeting in MSC room 206 (discussion topic: Academic Mast Plan)

(1:15) Adjournment:

Attachments: (Materials are available for download at <http://cpi.tamu.edu/>)

- March 19, 2008 Agenda
- February 13, 2008 minutes draft

cc: (distributed meeting resources)

- Dr. Elsa Murano, President (Texas A&M)
- Dr. Jerry R. Strawser, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost (Texas A&M)
- College Deans, Administrative and Department Heads (Texas A&M, AgriLife Research, TEES, HSC, TTI)
- Dr. H. Joseph Newton, Chair of the Research Environment Council (Texas A&M)
- Dr. Angie Hill Price, Speaker of the Faculty Senate (Texas A&M)
- Dr. Howard Kaplan, Chair of the Distinguished Professors (Texas A&M)

**Council of Principal Investigators
February 13, 2008
Minutes**

Members present	Members not present	Guests present	Guests not present
Amato, Nancy; Bell-Pedersen, Deb; Bednarz, Sarah; Bloomfield, Susan; Boyle, David; Campbell, Lisa; Choobineh, Joobin; Chowdhary, Bhanu; Derr, James; Eisele, William; Fitzpatrick, Paul (Chair Elect); Gatson, Sarah; Grau, Jim; House, Donald; Hsieh, Tony; Kapler, Geoffrey; Love, Alan (Chair); Maggert, Keith; Moreira, Rosana; Pillai, Suresh; Russell, David (Past Chair); Russell, Don; Scholthof, Herman; Scholtz, Marty; Shippen, Dorothy; Turnbull, Katherine; Weimer, Michael	Guinasso, Norman; Stelly, Dave	Barker, Julie; Bednarz, Robert; Bender, Les; Calvin, Jim; Cantrell, Carol; Chapman, Piers; Droleskey, Suzanne; Dugas, William; Foxworth, Greg; Gilliland, Diane; Hall, Timothy; Hilding-Kronforst, Shari; Joyce, Jim; Kaplan, Howard; Kettleborough, C.F.; Maldonado, Theresa; Murano, Elsa; Newton, Joseph; Pattera, Leo; Peddicord, Lee; Riddle, David; Rojo del Busto, Katherine Rojo del Busto, Mario; Watson, Karan; Webb, Bob; Whitney, Bruce	Carlson, David; Hill-Price, Angie; Miller, Charlene; O'Quinn, Mike; Pettitt, Becky; Pollock, Jill; Raines, Angie; Summers, Max

(11:50-12:00) Call to Order/Opening Remarks: A. Love

- CPI Chair introduced new Biological Safety Officer (Pending CDC approval)/Responsible Official Dr. Bruce Whitney; Sarah Bednarz serving as CPI representative on Provost Search Committee; January 13, 2008 minutes to be approved electronically.
- Chair introduced President Murano and noted monthly scheduled meetings between her and the CPI Executive Committee.
- January 9, 2008 minutes to be approved electronically.
- Chair noted President's CPI address will focus on research administration. Chair referenced CPI memorandum that was vetted through the President's office and sent to the Chancellor. (memo included at appendix A to this minutes document)

(12:00-12:50) Special Guest Presentation: Elsa A. Murano, President of Texas A&M University

In briefing the CPI on a number of important issues presently before the University, President Murano discussed the following points and entertained questions during the open forum session:

- The President noted her role as a former Principal Investigator, noting that this background as a researcher has enabled her to understand the life and work of a principal investigator, thus making research a top priority for her administration and for the University.
- She discussed the search firm that has been hired to help facilitate the hiring of the Provost and Vice President for Research, noting that CPI is involved in the search for the new Provost and Vice President for Research, with CPI representatives on each of the aforementioned committees. She also said that the search committees' goals are to bring individuals into the University that will increase the University's research portfolio and move the University's research enterprise to international prominence.
- As the former Vice Chancellor for Agriculture, she noted her previous experience on the issue of research administration. As President of Texas A&M University, she discussed her current engagement on the issue of proposed changes to research administration, most recently discussing the matter with the CPI Executive

Committee.

- Regarding the CPI memorandum on research administration (attached as appendix to minutes) that was sent to the Chancellor on Friday, February 8, 2008, after it was vetted through the CPI Executive Committee and the entire CPI, the President felt the letter clearly outlined the issues and she discussed the letter with the Chancellor after it was sent out.
- The President felt that the memo centered around four main issues: (1) PIs want the best service possible; (2) PIs want as much IDC returned as possible; (3) in line with shared governance, PIs want engagement on matters regarding research administration; (4) PIs are concerned that research that is not immediately commercially valuable will be overlooked.
- President Murano said the Chancellor could better articulate the need for changes to the current research administration structure and clarify why these changes are necessary.
- Regarding funding, the President noted there are certain funding sources that the University has not explored or tapped into for support. She said there are federal initiative processes where ideas and research concepts could be submitted by a researcher quickly; collaborators found if necessary; and a rapid decision process regarding the approval or disapproval of a project or proposal.
- The President discussed the need for sustainable support of resources from the legislature each year, which would help elevate scholarship.
- The President said that continually talking with people and keeping open lines of communication will help the University. She noted a retreat with the deans as an example of promoting open communication.
- The last subject the President discussed was partnerships. She felt that while competition is healthy, too much between System Members Units can be detrimental. She said that all of the Member Units and State Agencies like TEES, TTI, HSC and AgriLife Research are tied to the University and benefit one another through partnerships. She noted that these relationships need to continue to grow and that all of these groups should work to be supportive of one another. She said that this is an area that separates Texas A&M University from the University of Texas, that Texas A&M has successful partnerships with State agencies.
- At the conclusion of her address, the President opened up the floor for questions or comments.
- An attendee discussed REU's (Research Experiences for Undergraduates from NSF). The number of these awards to Texas A&M has increased and the enthusiasm of the President was noted and appreciated.
- Regarding faculty growth, an attendee suggested a mechanism to be used as a catalyst to capture the ideas and initiatives of the current and incoming faculty members to come up with new research. It was suggested that perhaps a conference or a forum could be formed to bring faculty together to brainstorm about new research ideas.
- The President agreed that such a mechanism would be beneficial. She noted that workshops were easy to conduct while she was in Agriculture because there was funding available and the current issue now is that there isn't any funding available to facilitate this type of forum or conference. She said that she has been in discussions with Jim Calvin, Interim Vice President for Research, about developing a road map to see where they want to go and then go get the funding necessary to make those initiatives happen.
- When asked about the new responsibilities for Mike O'Quinn, previously the Vice President for Governmental Affairs, the President discussed his new role and responsibilities as the Vice President for Institutional and Federal Affairs and the addition of Courtney K. Trolinger as the new Vice President for Governmental Affairs. Ms. Trolinger will be responsible for taking the initiatives developed by Mr. O'Quinn before the legislature. She noted the need to have an employee full time in Austin, TX, continuing to develop relationships with the legislature. Mr. O'Quinn will continue developing initiatives based on his engagement with federal agencies and liaison with Ms. Trolinger, who will package and sell the initiatives to the legislature.
- The President was asked about her vision of how Interdisciplinary Programs (IDPs) would be funded and administered. She noted that IDPs are an issue and had previously proposed a funding formula to former Interim President Ed Davis. She discussed the inconsistency in the support of these programs, noting some receive more support than others, and there is no one in charge to hold accountable for issues such as these. She felt that consistent funding should be provided and solicited proposals of how to best fund and administer these programs.
- An attendee noted that graduate students at Texas A&M University are critical for research, yet the number of Ph.D.'s that Texas A&M puts out is relatively low and is not scheduled to increase even under Vision 2020.
- The President agreed that graduate student are more than just students, they are researchers and that Texas

A&M must have these students supported as they are an integral part of the research enterprise at Texas A&M. She said that the Texas A&M Foundation is currently trying to get funding to provide more fellowships and support a greater number of graduate students.

- It was suggested that all of the groups involved with the Interdisciplinary Programs need to make their activities and intentions transparent and resources should be provided to reward these programs for their achievements. It was also suggested that these types of rewards may need to be discussed and developed outside of conventional methods.
- The President discussed undergraduate education and the need to communicate objectives, goals and strategies for enhancing the undergraduate experience. She felt that it is necessary to engage new faculty on these issues, to see how the University is performing in these areas.
- Lastly, the President mentioned the “Murano Report”. While serving as Dean, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences she chaired a blue-ribbon task force to study ways for enhancing the undergraduate experience at the University, producing what has ultimately become known as "The Murano Report." She asked for the CPI to assess the report and provide feedback, specifically on the section regarding inquiry-based learning. She noted that the faculty senate and student senate are participating in this assessment as well.
- The President thanked the CPI for the invitation to address the council. The Chair thanked the President for her time, asked if there was any new business and adjourned the meeting

(12:55) Adjournment