



Council of Principal
Investigators

Texas A&M University
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Agenda

Wednesday, September 14, 2005
11:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., Rm. 230-231 MSC

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- I. Call to order Dr. Jim Sacchetti, Past-Chair
 - II. Review of August 10, 2005 Minutes
 (Attachment)
 - III. Vice Chair Update – Dr. Jim Sacchetti, Past-Chair
 - IV. Special Address – Dr. Bob McTeer
 Chancellor, The Texas A&M University System
 - V. Updates:
 Compliance - Ms. Angelia Raines
 International Programs Office – Dr. Suzanne Droleskey
 International Services – Mr. Mario Rojo del Busto
 VPR – Dr. Fuller Bazer
 - VI. Adjourn

Attachments: August 10 minutes, FY 2005-2006 Membership list

Chair Tom Blasingame, Engineering- 845-2292 ■ Vice-Chair David Russell, Science ■ Past-Chair Jim Sacchetti, COALS ■ Architecture Donald House ■ Business Joobin Choobineh ■ COALS Jeff Chen, Alan Love, Rosana Moreira, Suresh Pillai, Dorothy Shippen, David Stelly ■ Dave Burnett, Don Russell, Engineering ■ Geosciences Sarah Bednarz, Lisa Campbell, Mahlon Kennicutt ■ Health Science Center ■ Geoffrey Kapler, Marty Scholtz ■ Liberal Arts Howard Kaplan, James Grau ■ Science Deb Bell-Pedersen, Keith Maggert, Michael Weimer ■ TEES David Boyle ■ TTI William Eisele, Katherine Turnbull ■ Veterinary Medicine Bhanu Chowdhary, James Derr

**COUNCIL OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
AUGUST 10, 2005
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS NOT PRESENT	GUESTS PRESENT	INVITED GUESTS PRESENT
Blasingame, Tom (Vice-Chair) Burnett, Dave Campbell, Lisa Derr, James Eisele, William House, Donald Kapler, Geoffrey Love, Alan Russell, David Russell, Don Sacchettini, Jim (Chair) Weimer, Michael	Anderson, Evan Andrews, Malcolm Chen, Jeff Delp, Michael Ficht, Tom Gibson, Richard Gould, Jean Hall, Timothy (Past-Chair) Kaplan, Howard Kennicutt, Mahlon Meagher, Mary Sevick-Muraca, Eva Pillai, Suresh Scholtz, Marty Shippen, Dorothy Turnbull, Katherine	Buckley, Mike Cantrell, Carol Kettleborough, C.F. Raines, Angelia Smock, Mark Walker, Jamie Webb, Bob	New Members Present: Bednarz, Sarah Bell-Pedersen, Deb Choobineh, Jobin Maggert, Keith Moreira, Rosana

CALL TO ORDER	The meeting of the Council of Principal Investigators was called to order at 11:45 a.m.
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AGENDA ITEM	COMMENTS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTIONS/FOLLOW-UP
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	CPI Chair Sacchettini asked members to review the minutes from the July meeting and approve them via e-mail.	
VICE-CHAIR ELECTIONS	Dr. Sacchettini reminded the CPI members that the election for the Vice-Chair is currently in process. Members will have until Friday, August 19 to vote via e-mail.	
NEW MEMBERS PRESENT	Dr. Sacchettini welcomed six of the eight new members to the CPI and asked each of those present to make a brief introduction. The new members who were present are: Sarah Bednarz – Geosciences Deb Bell-Pedersen – Science Jobin Choobineh – Business Keith Maggert – Science Rosana Moreira – Agriculture and Life Sciences	

<p>UPDATE ON MEMBERS UPDATE ON THE 2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION – MR. MICHAEL O’QUINN, VICE PRESIDENT FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS</p>	<p>Mr. Michael O’Quinn addressed the group with a broad overview of the 2005 legislative session. He stated that as soon as the special session information is available on the state of Texas Web site, an e-mail notification will be sent with the URL address.</p> <p>Mr. O’Quinn relayed to the group that most of the Texas universities received a general revenue increase via the higher education formula, including Texas A&M University. Compared to the last sessions 4 percent decrease, the university received a 5 percent increase over the base of \$21 million, which will be used in the next installment of the faculty reinvestment process.</p> <p>He also informed the Council that Senator Steve Ogden was able to secure the university other funding, and that the university fared well considering the weighted semester credit hours. Mr. O’Quinn stated that the university needs to better position themselves for the next session by possibly increasing semester credit hours in some programs.</p> <p>He also iterated that the ARP program was once funded at \$9 million dollars for an entire biennium and there is a plan to start funding this program again, sometime in the future.</p> <p>In all, the university overcame a \$20 million per biennium reduction, secured \$21.3 million additional per biennium and worked to close the gap between the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M.</p>	
<p>RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY – DR. RICHARD EWING</p>	<p>Dr. Richard Ewing gave a quick overview of the current research administration through the Research Foundation for Texas A&M University. The foundation has existed for over 60 years and was begun because, at that time, there was no federal funding available.</p> <p>He stated that 18 months ago, Dr. Gates requested a report on how the current resources were being utilized and whether centralizing several entities would decrease the duplication of efforts.</p> <p>The Office of the Vice President for Research has been analyzing these things, as well as other costs that would be associated</p>	

with research administration. Dr. Ewing revealed that the national average for research administration is 15 percent and that this is what most universities charge. The Research Foundation has recently reduced their costs from 33 percent to 29 percent but Texas A&M has asked them to reduce to 25 percent. He stated that they have discovered through the reinvestment process that many entities not related to education are being moved off of campus. This could potentially include the Research Foundation, which has existed up to this point with no charges for rent. If they were moved off of campus, it could create a need for them to raise their rates.

He also stated that they would like to speak to PIs with large grants (not through TEES and TAES) to get their thoughts and concerns on this possible venture, before any final decisions are made. He added that the Health Science Center has voted to move their grants internal to take advantage of the lack of fringe benefits.

Dr. Ewing then announced that the former 501C3 regulations are not all still in effect. There are many things that can be done through a university managed grant that could not be done before. It is not state laws that are cumbersome, but local fiscal offices that have the most issues. He said that they are working to get a guarantee that these restrictions will not be in affect for any grants that would be administered through Texas A&M. Dr. Ewing then added that they will not go through with this plan if they do not get this guarantee in writing.

Part of the consideration for this change is from the recommendations from a consulting group that studied the research administration process and reported that there is a potential for large savings in salaries as well as most other fees. Dr. Ewing said that the cost savings could be anywhere from \$2.5 to \$3 million.

He went on to say that some of the things they are most concerned with are pre and post award handling, communications and the transition period. They are anxious to hear the concerns of PI's, as they want to understand and document all perceived problems.

	<p>Dr. Ewing stated that they believe the university can provide the same or better service as the Research Foundation at a substantial cost savings.</p> <p>Several concerns were brought up by council members. One suggestion was that the real draw for new faculty is the Research Foundation, and that this might curtail qualified researchers from coming to Texas A&M. Dr. Ewing answered that this is not intended to dismantle any other services; it is a plan to add services, not cut them.</p> <p>A question was raised about the affect these changes would have on the Technology Licensing Office (TLO) opportunities. Dr. Ewing said that this is outside TLO as they provide a system service and will continue to do so. He then stated that they will be working closely together to bring in people, from the Research Foundation, already familiar with many of the processes of research administration. Intellectual property rights will remain unaffected. Dr. Ewing relayed that Dr. Kem Bennett has offered the use of the TEES software and a council member stated that it is a very affective software program and much better than what is used elsewhere.</p> <p>Council members also raised concerns about transition problems, service, and whether faculty feedback would be taken into consideration regarding this endeavor. Dr. Ewing stated that they are requesting the faculty to look at the benefits and that no decisions have been made final at this time. He also assured the council that every effort is being made to address PI concerns and asked them to meet with fellow faculty members to discuss and share their concerns with their respective colleges.</p>	
<p>INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS UPDATE – MR. MARIO ROJO DEL BUSTO</p>	<p>Mr. Mario Rojo del Busto addressed the group and asked the council to contact him if they had any graduate students or faculty foreign nationals who were experiencing delays with visa paperwork.</p> <p>He also stated that any externship to be admitted at Texas A&M has to be done under the "J" visa program; no students can be enrolled under the "B" visa program, which is for tourists only.</p> <p>Mr. Rojo del Busto informed the Council that, as of June 15,</p>	

	<p>visas for Chinese foreign nationals have been extended to a full year, instead of just six months. It is possible that the same thing will be done for the H1B.</p>	
<p>VPR UPDATE-DR. RICHARD EWING</p>	<p>Dr. Richard Ewing gave a brief update of the Life Sciences Building and told the Council that meetings with Architecture and Engineering (A&E) firms are currently taking place.</p> <p>He also stated that government enhancement funds have been awarded through Lexicon, Texas A&M, and the A&M System Health Science Center to form the Texas Institute of Genomic Medicine (TIGM). The IBT has been awarded \$4 million for exothermic transgenic facilities as well.</p> <p>A new fund, the Emerging Technologies Fund, has been passed through the state legislature. This fund was originally proposed at \$300 million but was passed at \$100 million. A rider was attached to the bill that states if there is sufficient money in the rainy day fund, then it will be raised to \$200 million. According to the State Comptroller, there are sufficient funds available to do this. Of that \$200 million, \$100 million will be aimed at regional centers of excellence that will partner with industry to help leverage funding from public and private sources. A model for this is Symatec, a consortium of semiconductor industry participants (15-20) centered in Austin. They work very closely with UT and have been very successful. In the last several years they have had almost a 5 to 1 return on investments. Symatec will be working closely with the Governor's staff to develop these other models. This project will be very good for Texas A&M University. In addition to \$100 million going to centers, there will be \$50 million available for (Steinbrenner Fund) obtaining "super stars" from outside of Texas and bringing them in groups or pairs to Texas A&M. Dr. Ewing encouraged the council to look into their reinvestment issues. \$50 million is there and can be used for matching funds to bring in these "super stars."</p>	
<p>ADJOURNMENT</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.</p>	