Department of Medicine  
Research Council Meeting  
January 9, 2012

Present: Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, John Fahy, Carl Grunfeld, Jackie Maher, Mike McCune, Bob Nussbaum, Bill Seaman (Chair), Dean Sheppard, Suzanne Sutton

Research Development Office (RDO)

We invited Susanne Hildebrand-Zanki, Associate Vice Chancellor of Research to present on the Campus' new initiative to facilitate the application of large, multi-site, multi-center, interdisciplinary proposals. We invited her to present on this topic as a result of the priorities identified at the DOM Strategic Planning Retreat held on September 14, 2011. The roundtables at the Retreat identified as their top priority the need for support for increasing the success of applications for grant funding. Means to improve success in grant applications included an administrative "strike force" to identify grant opportunities and to assist in the preparation of applications, particularly for large, collaborative, cross-disciplinary grants, including equipment grants.

It is logistically difficult for PIs to quickly identify all the resources required to compete efficiently and successfully for such proposals. The RDO was created as a recommendation of the Decade of Human Biology Task Force. The Campus recognized that the current infrastructure is not amenable to enabling the faculty to apply for large grants. Jeff Bluestone has allocated 3 years of funding to the RDO. Continued funding would depend on how often services will be used by the Campus community. Criteria of who will be served will be based on who is interested in the service.

Susanne has been working to identify a director of the RDO for the past 7 months. The candidate she is looking for has a PhD in the life sciences but is interested in operations, not laboratory research. The RDO is expected to house the Limited Submission Opportunities and RAP (both are currently in C&G) in the future. In total, the office will have 4.5 FTEs (2.5 FTEs newly hired including the Director and 1 FTE each existing for LSO and RAP). They would also like to centralize certain information such as the "Resources" concerning facilities, equipment, etc. and training grant tables. This information is labor-intensive to gather and maintain and would save PI time during the application process. It was suggested that the Other Support pages for VAMC faculty would also be very helpful and necessary. Grant writers would be provided on an ad hoc basis.

There was discussion as to whether a dedicated Director is required for such an organization. There is the benefit of having a full-time person dedicated to orchestrating such proposals instead of trying to find individuals to fill-in who already have full-time jobs. The CTSI
application was done this way, by capitalizing on existing staff already on Campus. This model would now be easier because of Research Management Services and knowing the special skills of certain staff. However, with a higher volume of proposals, it would not be possible to use this model on an ongoing basis. A central office would afford the institutional knowledge that is currently lacking. Building relationships with PIs and centrally managing communication is also greatly facilitated by a dedicated person.

There was some discussion as to whether a PhD-level person is necessary. The Program Management Office has highly trained individuals who can efficiently and effectively orchestrate proposals, and it was suggested individuals of that phenotype might be good candidates to lead the RDO.

**Action Items**

Each member is to think of potential candidates for the Director position and forward any names to Susanne at susanne.hildebrand-zanki@ucsf.edu.

**Future Meetings**

Monday, February 13, 2011 at 8-9 am in S-161 (Videoconferencing enabled via MOVI)
Tuesday, March 13, 2011 at 8-9 am in S-161 (Videoconferencing enabled via MOVI)
Monday, April 9, 2011 at 8-9 am in TBD
Tuesday, June 12, 2011 at 8-9 am in TBD
Monday, September 10, 2011 at 8-9 am in TBD
Tuesday, November 13, 2011 at 8-9 am in TBD