

Research Planning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 27, 2020
2:30 p.m.
Zoom Video Conference
Minutes

Members Present:

David Ford, Ph.D., chairperson
Enrico Di Cera, M.D.
Rich DiPaolo, Ph.D.
Noah Hillman, M.D.
Daniel Hoft, M.D., Ph.D.
Denise Johnson, ex officio
Oleg Kisselev, Ph.D., ex officio
Christine Jacobs, M.D.
John Long, D.V.M., ex officio
Ken Olliff, D.Min., MBA, ex officio
Ratna Ray, Ph.D.
Daniela Salvemini, Ph.D.
Jeff Teckman, M.D.
John Walker, Ph.D.
William Wold, Ph.D.

Members Not Present:

Ravi Nayak, M.D.

Guests:

Matthew Christian
Vikki Kociela, RN
Brent Tetri, M.D.

The Minutes of the April 22, 2020 meeting were approved as submitted.

1. Liver Center Update

Brent Tetri, M.D., professor, Department of Internal Medicine, and director of the Saint Louis University Liver Center, provided an update on the Saint Louis University Liver Center and a succession plan for his position. The Center was founded by Dr. Bruce Bacon and Dr. Adrian Di Biscgelie in 2001. It is a virtual center with a multidisciplinary team of specialists that work to diagnose, treat, cure and educate the public about liver diseases. The Center is committed to liver research, with physicians and scientists from multiple academic disciplines working together to acquire new knowledge of liver function, causes of liver diseases and treatments. Liver Center investigators have secured \$22M in extramural funding. In 2003, a group of Saint Louis University patients and community members formed the Friends of the Saint Louis University Liver Center with the mission to raise funds to support research for the treatment and cure of liver diseases, and to promote understanding and awareness of liver disease. The Friends of the Liver Center has raised nearly \$5M in support of the Liver Center. Dr. Tetri's plan is to retire in five years. Lou Ann Biermann, the

Center's administrator, is retiring at the end of 2021. The challenge in replacing Dr. Tetri may be difficult due to the low number of clinical investigators. A copy of his presentation is on file in the Office of Planning and Operations.

2. Clinician Scientist Subcommittee

Oleg Kisselev, Ph.D., assistant dean for clinical research, and Jeff Teckman, M.D., updated the Committee on efforts to grow the clinical department research portfolio. Issues that require a high level of investigator support were discussed. It was suggested that a subcommittee of the RPC be appointed to start looking at these issues and to build on the work of the clinical trials task force. The RPC was asked for support in forming this group.

The RPC agreed that this committee should be formed and that the objectives and charge be formalized.

3. Research Institute Fellows

Matthew Christian, Office of the Vice President for Research, updated the RPC on the Fellows of the Research Institute. The goal of the Fellows of the Research Institute is to offer the same recognition to outstanding existing faculty that we do for highly qualified new hires. Pathways into the Institute were discussed. The Research Councils set the standards. Matthew suggested the RPC adopt its automatic standards by end of June 2020 and that the first group be named in July based on FY18-20 funding numbers.

4. RPC Research Growth Fund Program

David Ford, Ph.D., discussed the proposal that the RPC request an award from Research Institute of \$300,000 to catalyze research in the School of Medicine. This pilot program will run for one year and will be evaluated by the RPC and Research Growth Committee for continuation to future years. Three funding opportunities were discussed:

1. Support for senior faculty/junior faculty research programs
2. Basic science/clinical science collaborations
3. Cores that provide the necessary research environment for multiple investigators to succeed

Dr. Ford will send an email next week outlining the above funding opportunities, the proposed mechanisms for awards and reporting requirements.

5. Vice Dean, School of Medicine Research

Dr. Di Cera reported that research labs are re-opening at approximately 50 percent capacity. As of this meeting, there was one issue with compliance, but it was addressed.

5. OVPR Updates

Ken Olliff announced that the Research Institute is going through a more formal evaluation of Big Ideas.

6. New Business

Dr. Ford announced that he distributed the link to the new RPC website. He asked that suggestions and comments be sent to him. Dr. Daniel Hoft and Dr. Rich DiPaolo have agreed to serve another term on the RPC.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Johnson
Director, Planning and Operations