

Faculty Senate Research Committee Update

Faculty Senate Meeting: 05/05/2020

Committee Chair: Thenral Mangadu, MD, MPH, PhD

Committee Members: Jason Boyle, PhD., Nakul Karle, PhD Candidate., Felicia Manciu, PhD., Rodrigo Romero PhD., Suman Sirimulla, PhD., Guillermina Soils, PhD, Godwin Udo, PhD., Charlotte Vines, PhD. Nigel Ward, PhD

Item 1:

URI Awards: We have notified ORSP our finalists for the URI awards and the recipients have been informed of their awards. A total of 12 awards were made, and comments were provided to those who requested them.

Item 2:

Feedback summary from the Faculty Senate Research Committee in relation to the current UTEP research space and other resources use policy in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

1. Allowing no-cost extensions of internal research funding/awards that were awarded in 2020 and/or end in 2020.
2. Examine the potential/ feasibility to have internal “remote research” micro grants to support purchase of remote research related equipment (document cameras, computer upgrades, a few months of cable data service, etc.) if other current research funds do not allow or are budgeted for.
3. Given the emphasis on teaching related deliverables in policy statements released in the past few weeks, it would be best for the faculty senate to communicate that we need to ensure that research is not treated as secondary/optional/low-priority when it comes time to restart the University.

Item 3:

Feedback on Dodson Grant Review Process during the COVID pandemic:

It appears that the Graduate School decided to reject all Dodson grant applications that focus on human subjects research, presumably due to concerns about the feasibility of such work during the pandemic. It is the opinion of the research committee that this should have been communicated more clearly. Looking forward, as human subjects research is critically important for many fields of research at UTEP, and since human-subjects researchers are generally capable of adapting research plans to achieve goals in novel ways, even during a pandemic, we urge that funding for such work be preserved.