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## COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH

21-22 CR 09

Thursday, February 10, 2022

**TO:** The Academic Senate

**FROM:** The Committee on Research (CR)

**SUBJECT:** 21-22 CR 09: [Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants](#)

**PURPOSE:** For action by the the Academic Senate

**REQUEST:** That the Academic Senate approve the attached [Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants](#), effective upon signature of the President.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The current "[Policy on Faculty Support Grants](#)" (for reference, see full text of [07-08 CR 4 revised](#), and [07-08 CEB 6 revised](#)) was identified by the 20-21 Committee on Research (CR) as in need of revision, with special attention to alignment of policy to current practice, removal of references to the quarter system, and increasing flexibility of language for future grant cycles. A task force was formed, but no substantive progress was made. Based on the background research conducted by the 20-21 CR task force, conversations with the members of the CR, and conversations with Associate Provost Linda Dobb, the Chair of CR identified the following priorities for revision of the Policy on Faculty Support Grants by the 21-22 CR (see [20-21 CR Annual Report §4.c.](#)):

- A. incorporate conflict of interest procedures;
- B. provide updated information on reporting requirements, and penalties for failure to comply;
- C. increase the policy flexibility;
- D. implement an appeals process;
- E. expand the ability of the CR to set year-to-year guidelines and procedures for submissions and reviews of submissions (e.g., allowing external reviewers);
- F. incorporate by reference the CR policies and procedures, especially as it relates policy interpretation and conflicts of interest;
- G. remove all outdated information and references; and
- H. substantively revise the review criteria, and if possible, remove criteria from the policy (instead having the review criteria be incorporated into the calls for proposals with only broad guidance listed in the policy).

At the September 2, 2021 meeting of the CR, the committee formed a task force to work on making these revisions to the policy. In addition, Associate Provost Dobb joined CR during said meeting and provided a list

of 10 items in the current Policy on Faculty Support grants that needed to be addressed “before another grant goes out the door” (see [CR 2021-09-02 minutes amended](#)). These were summarized in the minutes as follows:

1. The methods and purpose do not match what we have on our web-site right now.
2. Add an appeal process at the end. If people have grievances, there should be a way of appealing the process.
3. Add language to define how involved members of the committee should be, and state that if they are applying then they should not be reviewing.
4. Streamline the process
5. State that once you send out a call, cannot change rubric for scoring purposes.
6. Add language about equity, and involvement of students in the rubric, and add language to target equity gap.
7. Add language about travel restrictions. If travel must be approved, which it looks like it will need to be approved for the upcoming future, then you may not want to encourage FSGs to be used for travel.
8. Update to include discussion of Infoready, remove mention of series of signatures required because that is outdated.
9. Remove language about cost extension. There is a hard-deadline of June 30th.
10. State whether lecturers are eligible to receive internal grants (FSGs). Money that comes from the Chancellor’s Office is available to lecturers, but internal funding has been designated for tenure-track and tenured faculty. This is your decision to make if you want to open the eligible pool for internal funding (FSGs) to include lecturers.

After reviewing the policies and procedures of several other universities in the Cal State system, [ASA 2019-17](#), and the Unit 3 CBA (specifically [Art. 25](#) §6), and following multiple deliberations by the task force and by CR as a whole, a fundamental revision of the policy was put forth, retitled as the Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants.

As with the previous policy, there are two types of RSCA grant, which we are now referred to as the Early Career RSCA Grant (previously referred to as New Faculty Support Grants) and the RSCA Support Grant (previously referred to as Faculty Support Grants). The first of these is entirely internally funded, to avoid conflict with the Unit 3 CBA, and is focused on providing additional resources for probationary faculty unit employees in the first or second year of their contract. The second of these is funded both internally and by the Chancellor’s Office California State University Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity Award Program, and as required by the Unit 3 CBA (Art. 25 §6) is open to all Unit 3 faculty unit employees. Examples of faculty unit employees eligible to receive a RSCA Support Grant may include instructional faculty, librarians, lecturers, coaches (i.e., coaching faculty unit employee), and student services professionals (i.e., counselor faculty unit employees). As of the most recent Unit 3 CBA, this also includes participants in FERP, so long as they retain their status as a faculty unit employee.

The new Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants is especially focused on prevention, interdiction, and mitigation of conflicts of interest. Although there is no evidence that conflicts of interest have impacted the validity of previous grant recommendations made by the CR, we are acutely aware of the importance of protecting the integrity of the grant process from both real and perceived conflicts of interest. As such, protections have been

put in place at all stages of the RSCA Grant process, from the drafting of Calls for Proposals (CFPs) to the final recommendations for funding made by the CR.

The new policy has also been drafted with a focus on removing procedures from the policy, to the extent possible, and with the exceptions of (a) procedures required for the prevention, interdiction, and mitigation of conflicts of interest, and (b) general procedures for the drafting of CFPs. Instead, most procedural elements will be specified in the CFP for each grant cycle. The hope is that this will allow maximum flexibility for ensuring that RSCA Grants are responsive to changes in university priorities and external policies, and that this will allow minor tweaking to the processes as necessary, to ensure as streamlined a process as possible.

The draft Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants was reviewed by Associate Provost Linda Dobb, Associate Vice President of Research and Sponsored Programs Chandra Khan, and Academic Senate Chair Sarah Nielsen. After integrating their suggested revisions, the draft policy was presented to the CR at their meeting on February 3, 2022. During said meeting, additional revisions were made, and the committee decided to leave the policy open for additional amendments through January 15, 2022, with voting on the policy and any amendments to immediately follow.

On January 16, 2022, the CR voted by email (Y[6]-N[0]-A[1]) to request that the Academic Senate approve the attached [Policy on Faculty RSCA Grants](#), effective upon signature of the President.