

Faculty Research and Publication Board (FRPB) Final Report to the Faculty Senate 2018

Background and Membership

The Faculty Research and Publications Board (FRPB) is a representative faculty board that functions to encourage faculty research, publication, scholarly activities, and artistic productions, and to fulfill the duties assigned to it by the Board of Trustees of the University of Northern Colorado as set forth in the Board Policy Manual. FRPB voting membership currently consists of one faculty representative from each college; three additional faculty representatives elected at large; one faculty representative from the University libraries; one faculty representative selected by the Faculty Senate; and one graduate student representative selected by the President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA). Four non-voting advisory members are also named to the board, including the AVP for research or designee, the FRPB administrator, Academic Dean appointed by CAO, and the OSP Director or designee. Currently the AVP-R and OSP Director is a joint appointment for a single individual.

The board is charged with establishing criteria and reviewing applications for some of the internal funding programs available on our campus (see details below). Representatives are also tasked with assisting colleagues in their various colleges, schools or departments in proposal development or revisions. In addition, this board solicits nominations, reviews dossiers and votes for the A.M. & Jo Winchester Distinguished Scholar Award, which is presented to the recipient at a banquet held each spring. The board takes the peer review process quite seriously and works diligently to publicize and apply consistent criteria to a diverse pool of proposals. The board makes an effort to treat proposals equally from all disciplines across campus, so as not to favor disciplines with consistent histories of external funding. The FRPB is also careful to inform faculty of the board's reasoning in cases where proposals are rejected. Over the past several years both the number and quality of proposals have dramatically improved. The workload has increased as well. FRPB service has become known as a way to develop skills in proposal development, gain a better understanding of the complex funding environment at UNC, and become familiar with the research of faculty colleagues across the campus.

The FRPB chair during AY 2017-18 was Kristina Phillips (elected to the CEBS seat). The Vice-Chair was Kim Murza (elected to the NHS seat). Voting members were: Diane Bolden-Taylor (PVA); Kenneth Chan (HSS – at large); Abe Harraf (MCB); Nicholas Dix/Alex Walter-Higgins (Graduate Student Reps; split between semesters); Britney Kyle (HSS – at large); Jennifer Leffler (Libraries); Tracey Gershwin Mueller (EBS – at large); Kim Murza (NHS); Kristina Phillips (CEBS); Jess Salo (HSS); and Hasan Zaghlawan (CEBS; Senate Rep). Non-voting Advisory members were: Robert Houser (AVP for Research and Sponsored Programs); Ellen Gregg (Representative Dean); and Sherry May / Trisha Brinton (FRPB Administrators). FRPB program funds continue to be administered by Sherry May and Trisha Brinton (Office of Research).

This year, Sherry May continued to be an invaluable resource during meetings, providing

insight into the mechanics of receiving proposals and administering funds. In addition, Sherry has been able to provide continuity to a board that sees regular turnover. The board greatly appreciates the time and attention to detail that Sherry brings to meetings and to the review process in general. During the summer 2018, Sherry will be leaving the Office of Research following her retirement and will be replaced by Trisha Brinton.

Funding Activity

The board met ten times over the academic year to discuss and recommend policies related to internal funding, review grants and make awards. We reviewed 251 proposals (up from 207 in FY 16/17) and awarded 173 grants.

Details of the awards are included in the tables below. Lists of successful grantees can be seen at the Office of Sponsored Programs SharePoint site.

Awards Distributed by Funding Round 2017-18

Program	# proposals	# awards	\$ requested	\$ awarded
Fall PAT (Provost Award for Travel)	53	39	85,729	62,767
Fall NPP (New Project Program)	6	3	28,930	13,931
Fall RDFD (Research, Dissemination and Faculty Development)	8	6	63,528	47,907
Winter PAT	66	44	144,057	84,551
Spring NPP	12	9	54,052	39,315
SSI	28	15	161,223	117,307
Spring RDFD	18	8	139,247	70,779
Spring PAT	60	49	125,818	90,515
TOTALS	251	173	802,584	527,072

Annual Totals for Each Program for 2017-2018

Fund	# proposals	# awards	\$ requested	\$ awarded
NPP	18	12	\$82,982	\$53,246
PAT	179	132	\$355,604	\$237,833
RDFD	26	14	\$202,775	\$118,686
SSI	28	15	\$161,223	\$117,307

Both the PAT (Provost Award for Travel) and the RDFD (Research, Dissemination and Faculty Development) awards remained highly competitive, and the quality of proposals continued to improve. The FRPB decided to divide the total of \$310,000 in the following manner: \$186,000 to the PAT program and \$124,000 to the RDFD program. In the end, and with the addition of funds reclaimed from last year (see discussion below), we distributed just over \$237,000 to PAT and just over \$118,000 to RDFD proposals. By contrast, we did not have as many applications this year for the NPP program, which meant that we awarded about \$10,754 under the allotment given by the university (\$64,000 this year, in a fund that is separate from that awarded for SSI and RDFD/PAT).

This was the second year that the FRPB took on the task of awarding the SSI awards (see discussion below). We had slightly fewer applications this year compared to last. The majority of applicants requested summer salary support (in part, perhaps, because this is the only program that allows applicants to request funds for summer salary). In total, we funded just over \$117,000 to 15 applicants.

As board members we do our best to stay abreast of all developments related to funding for scholarly activity on our campus so that we can explain the complex funding environment to faculty in our respective colleges who contact us regarding proposal development. Overall, as discussed below, the FRPB has been concerned about recent changes in funding available on our campus. The board has worked especially hard throughout the past year to communicate proactively with faculty about the need to adhere very strictly to the published guidelines for each program we administer and to make a compelling case for the value of their activity not only to their own scholarship but to the wider university community; we also frequently refer faculty to other programs as appropriate.

Improvements were made to the website regarding information about competition deadlines, proposal guidelines, and the purpose of each competition. Throughout the year we eliminated approximately 27 applications from consideration by the whole board because they did not fill out the applications properly or were applying to the wrong program; this was slightly up from last year. Unfortunately, there are still applicants who do not follow instructions in the application procedures. While we have made an effort to improve the clarity of the review process through online guidelines, FRPB leadership expects unforeseen interpretations by proposal submitters to provide opportunities to further improve these posted guidelines in the future.

SSI Applications

For the second year the FRPB took on the responsibility of evaluating Summer Support Initiative applications. While the Research Advisory Council previously evaluated these applications, Robert Houser suggested that the FRPB was actually better suited to the task: we are an elected board representing all colleges and we already have a procedure in place for the evaluation of research applications. As a result of some confusion with the application, the FRPB made some modifications to the application and guidelines.

Winchester Award Activity

The FRPB is also responsible for requesting nominations and selecting the recipient of the Winchester Award. This year we had only three nominations for the Winchester Award: Deanna Meinke (Audiology & Speech Language Sciences), John Ryan (Hispanic Studies), and James Hall (Music). Ultimately the FRPB decided to award the prize to Deanna Meinke, who delivered her acceptance remarks at the annual Winchester luncheon. To encourage applications, the FRPB will continue to contact college deans and department chairs early to encourage them to nominate their faculty, particularly those faculty who were honored the year before with college scholar awards.

Recuperation of Unspent Monies

Following the loss of the ASATS funding in 2015-16, the FRPB was approved to recuperate

funds each year that were awarded but remained unspent from the prior year. This year we spent approximately \$35,765 above the annual allotment from the university. These funds were applied to the RDFD and PAT awards, for which we receive the most requests.

Reduction in 2018-2019 FRPB funds

During the Spring 2018 semester, the FRPB was notified that university budget constraints would be impacting the Office of Research budget in 2018-2019. A joint session was held between the FRPB and Research Advisory Council on April 6, 2018 to discuss possible cuts to research on campus and joint recommendations were put forward to Vice-President Michelle Quinn and Interim Provost Nancy Sileo to limit cuts to the FRPB. Unfortunately, this request was denied. At the last meeting of the semester, the FRPB made a recommendation for award allocations based on the cuts outlined by AVPR Robert Houser. These recommendations were accepted and include the changes below for 2018-2019. A letter was sent to all UNC faculty through individual colleges, notifying them of the 2018-2019 changes to FRPB programs. Specifically, the NPP, RDFD, and PAT programs will be cut by approximately \$150,000.

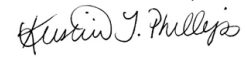
- The NPP was reduced from \$60,000 to \$20,000. The maximum award amount was reduced to \$4,000, and only one competition will be held next year, in the Fall.
- The PAT was reduced from \$186,000 to \$126,000. The maximum annual sum of all PAT awards per faculty member was reduced to \$3,000, and the number of competitions (three) will remain unchanged.
- The RDFD was reduced from \$124,000 to \$84,000. The maximum award was reduced to \$8,000, and the number of competitions (two) will remain unchanged.

The FRPB remains very concerned about the loss of this funding. In addition, two years ago, university faculty also lost ASATS travel funding of \$800/year. Overall, these reductions impact faculty in multiple ways. For one, it makes it very difficult for faculty to travel to conferences—especially because \$1200 in college-allotted funds is rarely enough to cover the cost of an entire trip. As additional professional activity is encouraged and expected, a greater number of resources should be available for dissemination of research products. Many active disciplines do not have significant amounts of external funding available and reductions in funding for research projects (e.g., NPP, RDFD) will make it more difficult to fund pilot work to support external grant applications. We suspect that these reductions will particularly impact junior faculty, who may not have developed sufficient contacts and/or a history of external funding to support travel themselves. The FRPB believes that younger faculty and the disciplines with fewer options for external funding will be affected most by this decision.

In sum, the FRPB, on behalf of all UNC faculty, would like to acknowledge the work of the Provost's Office in making funds available for internal faculty awards. Though we are very concerned about recent cuts, these funds do allow faculty to develop proposal-writing skills, take the risk of developing new projects, travel to professional conferences, and engage in research and other scholarly activities that benefits UNC. We are also grateful for the excellent support provided by Sherry May, Jessica Dollard, Trisha Brinton, and Robert Houser from the Office of Research, who make it possible for the board to function and who coordinate this very needed and useful program.

At the final meeting, the board affirmed that Kim Murza, current Vice-Chair, will move into the position of Chair of the FRPB next year. Jennifer Leffler was unanimously elected to the Vice-Chair position.

Respectfully submitted,



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