

Report on CRCA Meeting with Provost Martin 11/5/04

On behalf of the CRCA, Susan Haller and Fay Akindes met with Provost Martin on 11/5/04 to discuss the “Provost’s Fund for Faculty Research and Creative Activity” (PFFRCA).

The CRCA had forwarded two questions and a recommendation to the Provost before the meeting.

The first question was: *Except for funding conference travel, the PFFRCA seems to serve the same purpose as CRCA funding. Because we fund conference travel (which is relatively easy to apply for), that is the type of proposal we see overwhelmingly, but we have always favored funding research startup projects. If you wish to set aside a pot of money just for research projects, why is the CRCA not involved in the selection process? That is, why is the Provost in consultation with the deans and the Associate Provost making these decisions? We wonder if your office has reservations about how the CRCA is operating or about its funding philosophy.*

The Provost indicated that she wanted these funds associated directly with her office to communicate to the faculty the importance to her of faculty research and creative activity. The Provost added that she did not want to add these funds to CRCA’s budget this year because the same funds might not be available next year. She did not want to increase CRCA’s budget one year and then cut it the next.

Since announcing this competition, she told us that she added two CRCA members to her review committee for the PFFRCA awards after consulting University Committee on Monday, October 20.

Haller told the Provost that Haller, as Chair of CRCA, had contacted Gary Wood, Chair of the University Committee, on Wednesday, Oct 15 by phone when the award was announced. Wood told Haller that the CRCA should consult with the Provost on this matter. Instead the Provost consulted the University Committee and the CRCA was not informed of this. Haller indicated that the CRCA was not entirely satisfied with the agreement that she reached with the University Committee.

The Provost indicated that as far as she was concerned she had acted correctly in going directly to the University Committee, and if there was a fault in the process, it was with faculty governance.

In response to the statement that CRCA wondered about whether the Provost approved of the committee’s funding philosophy, she indicated that she thought it was fine, that conference travel was important for faculty. She also reminded Haller and Akindes that CRCA can reconsider its funding policy if it wants to.

The second question was: *The PFFRCA submission guidelines do not state the approximate size of awards nor do they state about how many will be made. This adds to the difficulty of applying for an award, and it may foster ill will if many faculty apply and few are funded. What process will you use to make decisions on number of awards and their size?*

The Provost indicated that she did not want to place a limit on award size or number of awards because she wanted to see what kinds of requests she received. This is a means for her to find out what research and creative activity the faculty do, and what their needs are.

The Provost responded to the CRCA’s recommendation that: *the Provost add one additional faculty member who is qualified to review proposals in the Arts and Humanities.*

The Provost indicated that she was not interested in faculty representation by discipline. Rather, she wanted the faculty point of view represented on the review committee. Toward this end, the Provost was satisfied with the current faculty representation. She added that Dean Cress was well qualified to evaluate proposals in the area of the Arts and Humanities. The Provost also mentioned that she was concerned about expediting the selection process since the funds need to be spent by June 30, 2004.