

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD
ACADEMIC SENATE
Composition of the Research Council of the University

RES 1213014

FAC

RESOLVED:

that the Academic Senate recommend to the President that the composition of the Research Council of the University (RCU) be amended to incorporate the following changes (deletions in ~~red strikethrough~~, additions in *blue italics*).

~~University Research Council~~ *Research Council of the University*:
Policies/Guidelines

A ~~University Research Council (URC)~~ *Research Council of the University* (RCU) shall have the broad responsibility for awarding ~~this~~ assigned time to faculty on a competitive basis in response to proposals requesting ~~such~~ support for basic or applied research, creative or scholarly activity, or professional development ~~which that~~ *enriches* the academic and learning environment of the University. In addition, the ~~URC~~ *RCU* shall have a major advisory role in decisions concerning the use of other “general” research or professional development funds (e.g., CSU budget faculty research money; indirect costs funds used to support research; private discretionary research contributions; etc.), *and* shall endeavor to increase the visibility of research on the campus, ~~and shall seek to create an environment in which the faculty justifiably believes that research awards are equitably made and contribute to the CSB mission.~~

The ~~URC~~ *RCU* shall have the following membership:

Dean, Graduate Studies and Research (chair)

~~Academic Vice President~~ *Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs* (non-voting)

~~Dean, School of Arts and Sciences~~

~~Dean, School of Business and Public Administration~~

~~Dean, School of Education~~

~~Five~~ *Four*, tenured or tenure-track faculty, one each elected from and by *the faculty of* the School of ~~Education~~ *Arts and Humanities*, School of Business and Public Administration, ~~the Behavioral Science departments~~ *School of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering*, ~~the Humanities departments~~ and the ~~Science and Mathematics departments~~ *School of Social Sciences and Education*

A pool of potential alternates for the four tenured or tenure-track faculty members, selected from recipients of RCU awards from the past two award cycles, to serve in the place of the elected tenured or tenure-track faculty elected by the members of their respective schools.

One upper division or postbaccalaureate student, selected by the Associated Students

The faculty ~~and student~~ members shall serve staggered two-year terms, with three ~~persons~~ *individuals* ~~initially assigned by lot to one year terms and three to two year terms~~ *elected during even numbered academic years (e.g., AY 2012-12) and two individuals elected*

during odd numbered academic years (e.g., AY 2013-14). The student member will serve a one-year term. A member may serve consecutive terms. URC RCU members may be applicants for an award during his or her term of office. URC RCU applicants will exclude must recuse themselves from all deliberations over and ranking of concerning their proposals. In such cases, the remaining committee members will select an appropriate replacement from the pool of alternates defined above, preferably from the same school as the recused member.

The URC RCU shall establish by majority vote and shall publish its own written procedures, consistent with this policy statement, governing the time(s) and format for applications for assigned time and other "general" research or professional development funds as defined above and as well as the criteria to be used in evaluating them. The URC RCU shall determine whether one or several rounds of competition best serves the interests of the University. Any tenured or tenure-track faculty member may apply for assigned time and/or other "general" research or professional development funds, and all applicants shall have a reasonable opportunity to compete. Although no specific distribution of assigned time awards across schools or departments is established by this policy, the URC RCU shall make its decisions with evident fairness and appreciation of the differing forms of research and scholarly activities characteristic of the disciplines from which the various proposals originate. ~~The URC shall fulfill its responsibilities to act in a manner which advances the goals of the entire University.~~

Each application for assigned time and/or other "general" research or professional development funds shall first be reviewed by the appropriate School Dean as to programmatic considerations, and the Dean's written comments shall be communicated to the applicant and to the URC RCU. The URC RCU shall make its decisions by majority vote. It is expected that all of the available assigned time and/or other "general" research or professional development funds will be awarded each academic year. The URC RCU will forward its recommendations for distribution of assigned time to the office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, ~~in consultation with the URC, and this office~~ shall periodically publicize the names of persons those individuals who have received awards and the nature of their projects.

DISTRIBUTION: This resolution shall be distributed to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs, Department Chairs, and General Faculty.

RATIONALE: 2012-2013 REFERRAL #00014 requests the composition of the Research Council of the University (RCU) be revised such that: a) There be discontinuation of participation from school deans; b) An increase in the number of elected faculty from each school, from one to two; and c) The appointment of one additional alternate from each school.

a) The members of the Faculty Affairs Committee believe a faculty direction of discretionary research funds is appropriate. Under the extant formulation, University Administrators comprise a plurality, accounting for six (6) of the 11 committee members. To be sure, one of these (Provost and Vice President for Academic Programs) is a non-

voting member, but when one considers that there is also one upper division or postbaccalaureate student, selected by the Associated Students, who does have a vote, tenured and tenure-track members represent a minority of voting-eligible members (4 of 10: 40%). We find this unsatisfactory, for we see no ostensible reason why the various School Deans should be included in decisions regarding which faculty-initiated research and scholarly activities ought to receive institutional support in the form of assigned time and/or other “general” research or professional development funds. Therefore, the members of the Faculty Affairs Committee strongly support item “a.”

b) By contrast, the members of the Faculty Affairs Committee feel the suggestion of increasing the number of elected faculty from each school, from one member to two, to replace the Deans is not a good idea. Members of the FAC are aware of the on-going difficulties of getting already over-stretched faculty to serve on committees. We believe that increasing the number of faculty on the RCU would only serve to make staffing the committee more difficult. Therefore, an effort to improve the likelihood of filling the RCU with appropriate members and in the spirit of increasing the overall efficiency of this committee, we strongly recommend that faculty representation remain as one duly elected member from each of the four schools (Arts & Humanities, Business and Public Administration, Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering, and Social Science and Education).

c) The members of the Faculty Affairs Committee also have concerns over the proposed procedure for appointing one additional alternative—presumably faculty—from each school. The use of such alternates, especially in cases where RCU committee members must recuse themselves because they have a proposal before the committee, may open the door for bias, as they may put forth a name of a friend as their alternate. Instead, the committee believes these alternates ought to be drawn from the pool of past recipients of RCU awards, perhaps those individuals who received grants or course releases (assigned time) over the course of the previous two years.

The committee believes these changes offer the benefits of: 1) leaving the decision-making over faculty research awards more firmly in the hands of the faculty by rendering faculty representation a plurality of voting members of the RCU (4 of 6= 67%); 2) increasing the efficiency of the committee by reducing the overall number of members from 11 members (or potentially 15 members—encompassing 12 tenured or tenure-track faculty, with two elected representative faculty members from each of the four schools and potentially four alternatives, one from each school) to seven; and 3) ensuring the overall research expertise of the committee by including as those potential alternates past recipients RCU assigned time and/or other “general” research or professional development funds.

Approved by the Academic Senate on January 17, 2013
Sent to the President for approval on January 25, 2013
Approved by the President on April 4, 2013