October 7, 2008

TO: Alan Herlihy, Fisheries & Wildlife
    Chair, Research Council
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FROM: Maggie Niess, Chair
    Faculty Recognition and Awards Committee
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CC: Provost Sabah Randhawa
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Faculty Recognition and Awards Committee
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RE: Promising Scholar and OSU Impact Awards

Provost Randhawa requested that the Faculty Recognition and Awards Committee (FRAC) review and provide recommendations concerning the Research Council’s two new award proposals: The Promising Scholar Award and the OSU Impact Award. This correspondence provides you with our recommendations and in some cases questions for your consideration with respect to the two awards.

1. **Promising Scholar Award**
   a. FRAC was concerned with the PhD stipulation in your recommendation. Many extension agents are only required to have a Masters degree so the PhD requirement immediately excludes positions that do not need a PhD.
   b. FRAC added an additional example of a potential creative activity.
   c. FRAC was concerned about the use of Department Chair and College Dean as there are units such as Institutes and Centers where promising scholars may surface. These units may or may not be associated with a single college or department.
   d. FRAC was concerned about assuring objectivity in the selection process and is proposing some stipulations on both the internal and external letters of support.

2. **OSU Impact Award**
   a. FRAC was concerned that the attention to the Department Chair and College Dean would exclude potential nominees from all major units on campus (such as Institutes and Centers).
b. FRAC was concerned that the limit of one nominee per major unit (e.g., college) does not recognize the diversity in sizes and impacts of the various major units at OSU. For this reason the committee amended the number of potential nominees per major unit to allow that major units with four or more subunits (e.g. departments) the potential of forwarding up to two nominees.

c. Since the nominees will be major unit nominations, FRAC did not want to place restrictions on the nominator (as with other awards that we monitor). Disallowing a letter of support from the nominator for those other awards has been done because an additional letter from the nominator adds little value to the application.

However, for this award, we feel that a letter of support from the major unit head (dean, director) is critical, even if the nominator happens to also be the unit head. In all likelihood, the nominators are apt to be support persons for the unit heads and this issue does not arise. But, for those units where the nominator completes both the nomination form and the letter of support, we want it clear that the unit head think it is important to also have a letter of support.

3. **Honoraria.**

Our view of the amounts provided for the honoraria for both of these awards is that the proposed honoraria are inconsistent with the amount offered for other university awards. While we applaud the increased amounts, these honoraria suggest that research is more highly valued than teaching and service at OSU. We recommend that the university work to minimize the differences in the honoraria for awards so that the awards do not display a bias toward a particular recognition, thus devaluing other types of awards. However, we understand that many of the university awards are tied to foundation support and changing the amounts for the honoraria is not something that can be easily accomplished. For these reasons we recommend that the Research Council reconsider the amount of the honoraria to be within the ranges currently offered by other awards.

You will note that we have made our recommendations in the format that we use for all our award responsibilities. The Committee is requesting that you review our suggestions and provide us with your responses and recommendations for improvement. As Chair of FRAC, I am willing to come to a meeting for further discussion of our recommendations if that would be useful.

Our timeline proposes the distribution of solicitations for the other awards within our charge the week of October 20. We do understand that the negotiations on these two awards may result in them being announced at a later time. We do not think such a delay will hamper our ability to complete an appropriate evaluation during this academic year. We plan to announce these award opportunities as soon as the negotiations are completed. We are excited about these awards as they recognize important faculty contributions to OSU.