

Research & Creative Activity

Annual Report: 2022-2023

Members: Erik Lehnhoff (Chair), Abdessatar Abdelkefi, Faruk Arslan, Amanda Ashley, Mary Fahrenbruck, Willis Fedio, Immo Hansen, Shofiqur Rahman, Thomas Manz, Jessica Schulz

Function/Purpose: The purpose of this committee is to address issues broadly related to research and creative activity at NMSU. The committee is aligned with NMSU LEADS 2025 Goal 2, Elevate Research & Creative Activity. The committee maintains an open line of communication with administrators (primarily the Vice President for Research [VPR]) to stay informed on issues affecting the research and creative activity enterprise and faculty involved in said enterprise. Concerns about policy are discussed and solutions are proposed by the committee. The Chair meets monthly with the VPR and attends University Research Council (URC) meetings to serve as a liaison between the VPR, URC, and the committee.

Primary Tasks and Accomplishments

Indirect Costs: The committee was tasked with evaluating how Indirect Costs (IDCs) are distributed to faculty Project Investigators (PI's) across campus, and to determine if Policy or Procedures needed to be revised. The committee met in October and November to discuss the issue, and information was gathered from each College. It was determined that while IDCs were distributed differently in different Colleges, faculty were generally happy with IDC distributions and no other work was needed on the topic. See final report from November below.

Revise ARP 11.01 Part 1: The VPR requested that the committee evaluate and revise the ARP (11.01 Part 1) which deals with Centers and Institutes at NMSU. This issue came up after the VPR had a retreat with Academic Deans for Research, and it was noted that the ARP was insufficient to deal with many issues regarding Centers and Institutes, including Creating, Funding, Evaluating and Sunsetting. The committee had numerous meeting with the VPR and other guests, discussed the issues, gathered additional information, and drafted a Proposition (07-22/23) to revise ARP 11.01 Part 1. The proposition was submitted to the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee in April 2023 and on April 27 Chair Fasenko suggested that the ARP be submitted to the NMSU Policy Hub.

Monthly Committee Reports

September

The Research and Creative Activity Committee met with 7 members present. Vice Chair Bronstein and VPR Cifuentes attended as guests.

VPR Cifuentes gave updates on two topics. First, the Research, Creativity and Strategic Initiative (RCSI) leadership team, and deans from the colleges of Business and of Health, Education and Social Transformation, and associate deans for research (ADRs) from the colleges of ACES, A&S and Engineering will participate in a RCSI strategic retreat on October 16-17. The theme will be Imagining NMSU's research enterprise in 2025. VPR Cifuentes asked for input for the meeting and several committee members provided feedback via email and response to a survey.

Second, it was noted that there will be a cluster hire in STEM education, with the plan of creating a Center for Education Research. A chemistry education research specialist has already been hired in Arts & Sciences. New hires are expected in Math Education Research, Computer Science Education Research, and three in the School of Teacher Preparation, Administration, and Leadership. A question about how these hires will help with the push for R1 status was raised.

Finally, the VPR asked for representation from the RCA committee on the University Research Council (URC) and the Goal 2 Team. As of now, nobody from the committee can commit to either of these opportunities. Erik Lehnhoff will attend the URC meeting on Friday, September 23.

After VPR Cifuentes left the meeting, the committee discussed how IDCs are distributed at NMSU from University to College to Department to PI. The does not seem to be a uniform formula for distribution, so members of the committee were tasked with gathering information about how IDCs are handled in their colleges.

The committee also had a broader discussion on what the planned move to R1 means for NMSU faculty. There was concern that some people will get “left behind” with an R1 designation. There was further concern about the sustainability of R1. This conversation will continue at future meetings.

October

The Research and Creative Activity Committee met with 6 members present. Chair Fasenko attended part of the meeting as a guests.

The committee continued the previous month’s discussion on how IDCs are distributed at NMSU from University to College to Department to PI. We noted that all colleges have different formulas for IDC distribution, and most departments also used different formulas. It was decided that we would send an email to department heads within our respective colleges to get more information on how IDCs are distributed at the department level. Erik Lehnhoff drafted an email which was then circulated among the committee to create a final version.

No other business was conducted.

November

The committee met on November 15, 2022 with eight members present. There were two guests: Dr. Michelle Shuster and Dr. Luis Cifuentes (VPR).

Dr. Shuster discussed the formation of a Center of Excellence for STEM education research. This process is ongoing, but the center will eventually be a resource for numerous resources on STEM education, including potentially providing a collaborator who can serve as the external evaluator on grants. A cluster hire of five new faculty is in process, with one faculty in Math, one in Computer Science and three in TPAL. Also, though a MOU with Sandia National Labs, there will be someone in Electrical Engineering who specializes in quantum computing. Contact Dr. Shuster for more info:

mshuster@nmsu.edu

Dr. Cifuentes reported on the recent Research, Creativity & Strategic Initiatives retreat that included Associate Deans of A&S, Engineering, ACES, HEST and Business. One idea noted was the development of a Faculty Research Concierge Program. This would focus on helping new faculty with the grant process.

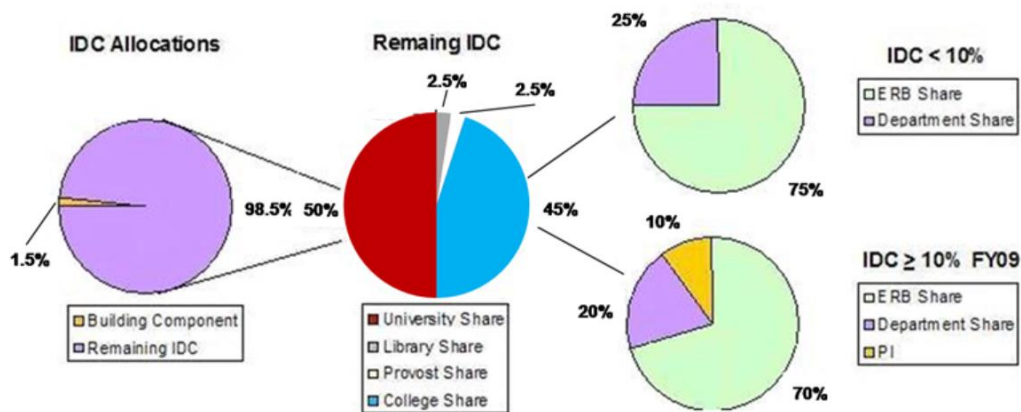
At the retreat, a Mid-Level Faculty Program was also discussed. This would be to help make the process of promotion to Professor more transparent and could provide bridge funding and course release programs. Additionally, a process will be initiated soon to systematically define NMSU institutional research strengths, getting input from Departments, Deans and ADRs.

Dr. Cifuentes also discussed an issue with Research Centers and Institutes. These typically sunset after some period of time when interest wanes, research interests change, and funding diminishes. Yet, there is no well-defined procedure for evaluating Centers and Institutes. Dr. Cifuentes asked if the RCA committee would look into and revise ARP 11.01 Part 1 (11.01) which addresses Research Institutes.

After guests departed, the committee continued to discuss the issue of indirect costs (IDC) distributions on campus. It was acknowledged that different colleges and departments within those colleges have different IDC formulas, and that there may be good reasons for this. The biggest issues was that the process is not transparent in some cases. Overall though, many faculty seem content with the IDC distributions in their departments. It was decided to pass the IDC information we have gathered along to Chair Fasenko and then table the issue until there is a renewed need to address it. Below is the information we have regarding IDCs, broken down by college.

Business 70% to the Bureau of Business Research and Services; 20% to the principal investigator; 10% to the academic department of the principal investigator. All departments follow exact same model.

HEST



A&S In Arts & Sciences 1/3 of what the College receives is delivered to the PI’s home department. This equals 14.775% of the total IDC/F&A generated within the College. Apparently there may be departmental differences

ACES Departments receive 50% of what was returned to the College. Each Department decides on further distributions.

HRTM: Department keeps 25% and gives rest to PI

EPPWS: Currently 100% made available to PI

Engineering

NMSU Admin 55.00%

College OER	30.15%
College Dept	8.10%
<u>College PI</u>	<u>6.75%</u>
	100.00%

All departments follow same model.

December

The committee met on December 6, 2022 with 4 members present. Dr. Tanner Schaub attended as a guest.

With Dr. Schaub we discussed the need and process for evaluating Research Centers and Institutions. The next step is for Dr. Schaub to send a list of current NMSU centers and number of employees at each. Then the committee will likely begin discussions of ARP 11.01 Part 1 ([11.01](#)) and how it may be modified.

January

The committee met on December 6, 2022 with 3 members present. VPR Cifuentes and FS Chair Fasenko attended as guests.

VPR Cifuentes gave a presentation about why ARP 11.01 (<https://arp.nmsu.edu/11-01/>) needs to be updated for Research Centers and Institutes at NMSU. This initiative came from a retreat that the VPR had in the fall with Associate Deans for Research, where it was noted that there is very little policy regarding Centers / Institutes at NMSU, and what policy we do have is so vague that it would be easy to misuse. There are basically four things he would like policy to cover for Centers / Institutes: 1. Creation. 2. Funding. 3. Evaluation / oversight. 4. Sunsetting.

After VPR Cifuentes left the meeting, we discussed how to proceed. Gaylene Fasenko advised that if we take on the task of revising ARP 11.01, we take it in small bits to make the task seem more manageable.

No other business was conducted.

February

The committee met on February 7, 2023 with 8 members present. VPR Cifuentes and Jianjun Zhu from the University Research Council attended as guests.

VPR Cifuentes gave a presentation about the Technology Enhancement Fund, which is a bill sponsored by NM Senator Bill Soules. This would provide \$20M which could be used as matching funds for proposals, particularly for infrastructure. More information will be available soon on the RCIS website (<https://research.nmsu.edu/>).

After the VPR Cifuentes left the meeting, the committee discussed Research Institutes and Centers. The issues were four things the VPR would like policy to cover for Centers / Institutes: 1. Creation. 2. Funding. 3. Evaluation / oversight. 4. Sunsetting.

We decided to gather information on how some of our peer institutions managed Centers / Institutes and started a Teams folder in the RCA Teams SharePoint site with information.

March

The committee met on March 21, 2023 with 7 members present. VPR Cifuentes and Tanner Schaub attended as guests. Carolina Mijares from the NM Water Resources Research Institute also attended and gave a presentation on the Center.

After the presentation and several questions from the committee, the guests left the meeting. The committee then continued to discuss amending ARP 11.01, and discussed specific components which needed to be in the ARP. Faruk Arslan agree to provide a draft as a starting point for amending ARP 11.01 and other committee members will edit the draft.

April

The committee met on April 18, 2023 with 6 members present. VPR Cifuentes attended as a guest, and he gave a short presentation on emerging Federal guidelines on national security issues associated with research. This stems from the National Security Presidential Memorandum 33, and is based on concerns of intellectual property theft by some foreign countries. This requires all federal research funding agencies to strengthen and standardize disclosure requirements for universities. The National Science Foundation is going to be producing some guidelines to help with university compliance.

After the presentation the committee discussed how to move forward with the ARP 11.01 Part 1 revision, which has been forwarded to the University Research Council. Erik Lehnhoff will attend the URC meeting on 4/19, discuss potential revisions to the draft document, and then revise the document into a proposition to submit to the FSLC.