RE: Task Force on Faculty Funding Accessibility & Purchasing

Background

In the Spring Semester 2022, the Senate Committee on Administration and Finance (A&F) began to receive emails from faculty sharing concerns and barriers faculty were experiencing accessing funds. Some of the funds were existing grants, some were funds pre-approved from Dean's or other funds. At May 2002 Faculty Senate retreat, the Senate exec. charged the A&F standing committee to review and provide recommendations to address the pertinent issues.

Upon due deliberations within the committee, multiple concerns were identified – ease of chrome river process; scenarios where the faculty were unable to spend funds in a timely manner and often faced with circumstances jeopardizing their grants. Faculty concerns included a significant increase in time required to navigate new controls or procedures that were being implemented, that created unusual burden on faculty resources of time. As part of the committee inquiry, it was learned from the CFO that the state has stringent guidelines for spending, a recent audit of our spending has potentially increased the scrutiny of requests.

The Faculty Senate standing committee on Administration & Finance recommended a task force be formed for this review.

Motion

The Task Force on Faculty Funding Accessibility & Purchasing is charged to review the current process of accessing grants or other funds but not limited to, the following

1. Potential issues/problems pertaining to grant accessibility, purchasing and/or reimbursements, and a more comprehensive understanding the totality of the issues among faculty, potentially through a faculty-wide survey

2. A better and more efficient means of accessing funds and procedure for acquiring efficient administrative support

3. Review policies and procedures relevant to faculty grant accessibility and provide updated recommendations, as necessary

4. Providing training/support for grantees or other faculty and staff seeking to access funds.

This review should be supplemented by examining the current procedures and supports.

Faculty Senate proposes to create a faculty-led task force addressing these topics and assist the Senate in providing recommendations to ease faculty's access to their grant funds. Such a task force will include membership from each school, from Information Technology, additional offices such as OSRP or the CFO's team, and/or any additional faculty and professional staff with interest/experience. The Task Force is charged with producing a report to the Faculty Senate no later than the May 2023 meeting.

The Senate authorizes the Senate Executive Committee to constitute the membership of the proposed task force following expressed interest of faculty-staff institution-wide.

On Behalf of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee