

Minutes
Executive Subcommittee of the
Medical Education and Research Committee (MERC)
May 5, 2008 at 5:00pm – Room 4141 HSLC

Members Present: Bill Busse, Norm Drinkwater, Susan Goelzer, Jeff Grossman, Pat Remington, George Wilding

Members Absent: Paul DeLuca, Cindy Haq

Staff: Tracy Cabot, Ken Mount, Tonya Mathison, Eileen Smith

Grossman called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

1. Approval of April 7, 2008 minutes

Remington moved approval of the April 7, 2008 minutes. Busse seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Announcements

Smith announced that the joint OAC/MERC meeting originally scheduled on May 21 will be rescheduled in mid-June. This will ensure ample time for the UW Survey Center and Program staff to analyze the results of the interviews, the public survey, and the community forums. The results, which are meant to help inform the development of the next five year plan, will be presented for discussion at the joint meeting. In addition, OAC will present its advice and comment on MERC expenditures in accordance with the requirements of the Insurance Commissioner's Order.

Following a technical review by Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) staff, two expert reviewers were assigned to each of the 19 Collaborative Health Sciences Program (CHSP) full grant applications. Two of the 21 applicants who were invited to submit full applications withdrew. Reviewers – who will work independently – were selected based on the expertise required by the content and objectives of the proposals. Smith added that several applicants who were not invited to submit full applications were disappointed that MERC did not intend to provide written feedback.

DeLuca plans to meet with Jeff Walker to discuss MERC's feedback regarding Walker's recent progress report presentation on the Human Proteomics Program.

Dean Golden has decided to provide \$97,344 in supplemental funding from the Dean's Strategic Fund for *Making Wisconsin the Healthiest State* for the period September 1, 2008 to February 28, 2009. The supplemental funding along with an extension request from the initial award will be used to encourage use of the results across the state. This will allow Program staff to: 1) engage various stakeholders across the state in a community engagement process, 2) provide consultation and technical assistance to the State Health Plan 2020 planning process, 3) plan and provide leadership for a January 2009 conference, 4) provide ongoing consultation to the WPP five year planning process, and 5) produce a final report including all project deliverables as well as the reactions and conclusions from the community engagement process.

The Executive Subcommittee supported Dean Golden's decision to provide supplemental funding for *Making Wisconsin the Healthiest State*. Remington noted that the project has received national attention and that a proposal to implement the project nationally will be submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

3. Discuss changes to the 2008 New Investigator Program Request for Proposals

After an extensive discussion of MERC's recommendations for the New Investigator Program (NIP) Request for Proposals (RfP), the Executive Subcommittee discussed separating the review criteria into two groups:

- Primary review criteria: All applicants are required to address the primary review criteria, which will be used to judge the quality of the science.
- Secondary review criteria: If appropriate, applicants may address the secondary review criteria to enhance their proposals. This section includes supplemental considerations that advance MERC's mission.

Primary review criteria will include:

1. The project advances the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles of the Wisconsin Partnership Program (See Attachment H).
2. The project is innovative and has outstanding merit.
3. The project appears feasible with a potential for acquisition or application of useful data.
6. The project has the potential to advance the career development of the applicant.
9. The project describes the process by which successful execution of this research or education intervention could be translated into improved health of the people of Wisconsin.

Secondary review criteria will include:

- 4/5. Where applicable, the project has a leveraging effect and is likely to lead to extramural grant support.
7. If appropriate, the project enhances interdisciplinary research or education and fosters collaborations between basic, clinical and population health scientists.
8. Where applicable, the project engages communities.

The NIP will be discussed at the May MERC meeting. It is anticipated that the 2008 RfP will be released on June 2. WPP staff worked with the SMPH web team to develop web-based application forms. Drinkwater and Remington will test-run the web-based forms.

4. Follow-up on previously submitted progress reports

Marc Drezner will present a revised progress report on "Institute for Clinical and Translational Research" (ICTR) at the May MERC meeting. Drezner will provide information about specific projects covered by MERC funding, including a detailed budget, and information on the Community Academic Partnership core and ICTR's biostatistics efforts. The approved budget along with the November 2006 minutes describing approval of ICTR will be distributed. Busse and Remington will lead MERC's discussion following Drezner's presentation.

Jim Cleary will present a revised progress report on “Reducing Cancer Disparities through Comprehensive Cancer Control” at the May MERC meeting. Cleary will provide a brief overview of the entire program followed by a detailed description of the specific goals and objectives covered by MERC funding, including the accomplishments to date. A revised written report will be distributed to MERC. Busse and Haq will lead MERC’s discussion following Cleary’s presentation.

10. Strategic Planning for Five-Year Plan 2009-2014

In May, MERC will discuss the revised overview of the three Strategic Plan Subcommittee reports – Education, Research, and Community Engagement. The overview includes MERC’s discussion of the three reports. It will be used to initiate the drafting of MERC’s section of the 2009-2014 Five-Year Plan.

11. Discuss reapplication process for infrastructure grants

As part of the strategic planning for the Five-Year Plan 2009-2014, MERC is considering a draft reapplication process for infrastructure grants. The Subcommittee recommended the following changes to the process:

- Remove all references to the Dean’s Strategic Fund.
- Purpose: Remove all of the assumptions.
- Review:
 - Indicate that renewals will be limited to a maximum of three years.
 - MERC role should be similar to a “council” at the National Institutes of Health. In addition, the MERC Executive Subcommittee should advise the MERC.
 - Expert reviewers should be external and should meet in person to discuss the application. A MERC member would provide the history and context of the reapplication.
 - Remove “They may be joined by up to two assigned MERC members.”

The Subcommittee was not supportive of developing a subcommittee focused on the reapplication process. This will be discussed at the May MERC meeting.

Grossman adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm.

Recorder, Tonya Mathison