June 15, 2011

Susan Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH
Chancellor

Jeff Bluestone, PhD
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

John Plotts
Senior Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

Sam Hawgood, MBBS
Dean, School of Medicine and Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs

Re: Operational Excellence Proposed Changes to the UCSF Pre-Award Grant Administration Process

Dear Chancellor Desmond-Hellmann, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Bluestone, Vice Chancellor Plotts and Dean and Vice Chancellor Hawgood:

Thank you for joining us for the June 9, 2011 Academic Senate Division Meeting. We appreciated the opportunity to discuss the Academic Senate recommendations for the proposed changes to UCSF’s pre-award grant administration process.

The slides from that meeting, the Consensus and Recommendations below and an opportunity for faculty to respond are posted on the Academic Senate website. Video recordings of the meeting will be posted shortly.

The Academic Senate Consensus

1. Faculty support improving the management of grant pre- and post-award processes at UCSF
   - Faculty experience a wide variation in service quality and costs
   - Improve service and reduce costs to meet or exceed standards currently set by high-performing units

2. Faculty support substantially shrinking Contracts and Grants by moving signature authority closer to grant preparation
   - Improve training
   - Streamline operations
   - Reduce costs

Academic Senate Recommendations

1. Move forward with two complementary models
   a. Implement Operational Excellence clusters as proposed
   b. Delegate signature authority to current high-performing units
2. Improve the evaluation structure
   a. Throughout the implementation process, compare and evaluate the two models
   b. Evaluation should include assessment of the effects on the post-award process
   c. Extend the first evaluation phase to allow sufficient time for refining procedures and
      practices in both models.

3. Remain open to possibility using both models concurrently as a long term solution.

Next Steps
We look forward to continuing to work with you in a timely and constructive manner to integrate the
Academic Senate recommendations into the current Operational Excellence (OE) plans for pre-award
grant administration.

1. Move forward with two complementary models

A number of departments and Organized Research Units (ORUs) have expressed reservations about the
proposed Operational Excellence pre-award cluster model. We believe that the proposed OE clusters and
established high-performance comparison groups can be implemented concurrently. We urge you to
formally and explicitly ask department chairs and ORU directors about their willingness to participate in a
pre-award comparison group, and to invite them to join a discussion on how to structure comparison
group participation and evaluation during the implementation process. We can help identify faculty to
assist in designing the comparison group model.

Informal discussions with department chairs and ORU directors regarding their preference for serving as
a comparison group have yielded the following recommendation. As proposed for the OE clusters,
signature authority (with appropriate training and oversight) could be integrated into existing pre-award
activities. This could contribute to the plan to shrink Contracts and Grants while keeping the costs and
disruption to departments as low as possible.

2. Evaluation

Substantial changes are needed to develop and clearly articulate the Operational Excellence evaluation
design. This work needs to be completed before the initial implementation to establish a meaningful
baseline data set. We recommend the following:

   a. Expand data collection to include information about post-award operations, processes and
      changes.
   b. Expand the study sample to include faculty and units actively engaged in the first phase of
      implementation as well as those in the subsequent phases.

While this work logically falls within the scope of the OE planning group, the Academic Senate would like
to remain engaged by helping to recruit faculty for the improvement and implementation of the evaluation
design and data analysis.

We offer these suggestions as constructive input to the Operational Excellence process of improving
grant administration. We hope you will find them helpful. Furthermore, we look forward to your
suggestions about how the Academic Senate can continue to work effectively with you as we seek to
build a better future for UCSF.

Sincerely,

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH
Chair, UCSF Academic Senate

Robert Newcomer, PhD
Vice Chair, UCSF Academic Senate