July 13, 2011

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

Robert Newcomer, PhD  
Vice Chair, UCSF Academic Senate

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

Dear Chair Fuentes-Afflick and Vice Chair Newcomer:

Thank you for the Senate’s active participation in UCSF’s Operational Excellence (OE) initiatives and for the thoughtful summary of the Senate’s recommendations in your letter of June 15, 2011. We also appreciate your reaching out to the Faculty Councils, and we look forward to receiving their input as well.

In responding, we believe it would be first useful to update you on the status of the pre-award implementation planning. In addition to the twelve departments volunteering for phase 1A implementation on August 15, six additional departments including the Department of Medicine have requested early pre-award implementation and will go live as phase 1B on December 5, 2011. This important development means that phase 1 will incorporate 34% of all proposals and 33% of all faculty principal investigators on campus and will include units currently underserved as well as units that are widely recognized as high-performing. This will be a rigorous test of the proposed model across a wide spectrum of campus units.

We have thoroughly vetted the recommendation to move forward with two complementary models but have concluded that the best path forward will be to focus the implementation team’s resources on the expanded phase 1 implementation with a commitment to rigorously evaluate and report performance, including a detailed impact of post-award functions, and adjust as necessary.

We completely agree with the Senate that the evaluation process is critical to determining the effectiveness of the model and to informing iterative improvements over time. The implementation team, with the help of several faculty members including Claire Brindis, has given a great deal of thought to data collection and evaluation. The attached template (multiple tabs) is being used to collect baseline data from all units involved in phase 1. The units are asked to complete the tool and then the implementation team meets with the
unit administrator and chair or designee to go over the data and get a complete and accurate baseline assessment. In addition to this tool, we have offered an online survey to all faculty to get their baseline assessment of pre-award service and have developed a detailed service level agreement to document service expectations (available on the OE website) against which the teams performance can be held accountable.

We are eager to continue to work with the Senate and existing members of the OE Faculty Oversight Committee to refine and improve the evaluation design and data analysis. We have extended invitations to Dr. Cheung and others to assist with this work.

We are grateful for the constructive input from the Academic Senate and look forward to continue to work closely together.

Sincerely,

Susan Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH
Chancellor

Jeff Bluestone, PhD
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

John Plotts
Senior Vice Chancellor

Sam Hawgood, MBBS
Dean, School of Medicine