Communication from the Committee on Research
Judith Moskowitz, PhD, MPH, Chair

January 31, 2012

Robert Newcomer, PhD, Chair
UCSF Academic Senate
500 Parnassus Avenue, MUE 230

Re: Contributing a Portion of Committee on Research (COR) Funded Grants to Primary Investigator Salary Support

Dear Dr. Newcomer,

The Committee on Research (COR) has discussed revising its grant guidelines to allow primary investigators to request and use a portion of grant funds received from the Academic Senate toward their own salary support.

Background
At present the Systemwide COR guidelines for Budget Justification-Personnel Category within Individual Investigator grants are:

“The grant does not fund the salary of the principal investigator, co-investigator(s), consultants, postdocs, or individuals who would be considered inappropriate under the Federal Office of Management and Budget, Circular A-21 (OMB A21) (e.g., administrative staff).”

Argument
Committee members determined that any COR grant funded by state funds (19900) or Opportunity Funds (09544) should be governed by OMB A-21. As UCSF Committee on Research has mostly used its ten private endowments to fund research grants over the past few years (Attachment 1), we propose that when Academic Senate funds are allocated from private endowments, they should not be subject to OMB A-21 guidelines.

With the current economic climate and the recent lowering of the NIH Salary Cap, salary support for primary investigators has become even more important. Key factors discussed by committee members include:

1. Implementation of the new NIH Salary Cap will mean that some mid-level and senior faculty on long-term grants through NIH or other agencies will lose salary effective summer 2012, if such faculty are responsible for their own salary;
2. As UCSF receives few state funds, faculty do not have the assurance of salary support that faculty at many other UC campuses do have;
3. Another UCSF funding agency, Research Evaluation and Allocation Committee (REAC) has determined that as it solely uses private endowments to fund School of Medicine research grants, it is not bound by OMB A21 guidelines. By determining so, it began in Fall 2011 to fund primary investigators’ salaries, as requested, within research grants it funds.
a. Contributing a portion of funds to salary support will bring COR in line with other UCSF funding agencies, e.g. CTSI-SOS, and REAC.

Committee on Research members propose:

1. Contributing a portion of funded grants toward primary investigators’ salaries, if so requested by grant applicants.
2. Salary support would only pertain to future grants to be funded from private endowment funds, and would not be retroactive to funds already in progress.

Committee members request the UCSF Academic Senate support these requested changes to grant guidelines to go into effect during the Fall 2012 Research Allocation Program (RAP) Funding Cycle.

Sincerely,

Committee of Research

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Srikantan Nagarajan, PhD, Vice Chair, Professor in Residence (Radiology) (M)
Dorie Apollonio, PhD (Clinical Pharmacy) (P)
Laura Dunn, MD (Psychiatry)
Diana Foster, PhD (Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences)
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Gary Humfleet, PhD (Psychiatry) (M)
Laura Julian, PhD (Rheumatology) (M)
Celia Kaplan, DPH (General Internal Medicine)
Susan Kools, RN, PhD, FAAN (Family Health Care Nursing) (N)
Kirby Lee, PharmD (Clinical Pharmacy)
Wu Li, PhD (Orofacial Sciences)
Mahesh Mankani, MD (Surgery)
Ralph Marcucio, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)
Janet Myers, PhD, MPH (Medicine/CAPS) (M)
Vineeta Singh, MD (Neurology) (M)
Michael West, MD, PhD (Surgery)
Duan Xu, PhD (Radiology)