

Research and Creative Activities Committee
Annual Report, 2013-2014

The Research and Creative Activities Committee (RCA) was established by the University Senate in the Fall, 2008. According to the Senate motion, the RCA is advisory to the Vice President for Knowledge Enterprise Development on

“policies and programs to promote, enhance, and govern research and creative activities. It serves as a review body for policies in the research manual and issues brought to it by the Vice President. The Committee may undertake studies of issues that pertain to its mission.”

The RCA has two subcommittees, one for Misconduct in Research and the other for Classified Research.

The RCA worked on two major projects during the academic year, both as requests from the Associate Vice President. One project dealt with data retention and archiving, and the other involved policies regarding laboratory safety.

In February, 2013, the Office of Science and Technology Policy issued a memorandum on ‘Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research.’ More specifically;

The Administration is committed to ensuring that, to the greatest extent and with the fewest constraints possible and consistent with law and the objectives set out below, the direct results of federally funded scientific research are made available to and useful for the public, industry, and the scientific community. Such results include peer-reviewed publications and digital data.

Each agency was directed to develop a strategy and plan that is to be consistent with the stated objectives. Similar language is being included in authorization bills currently moving through Congress.

Universities and colleges across the country are studying ways to meet the objectives. At ASU, OKED and other units are considering an expansion of computer capabilities to implement the goals, possibly serving as a central archive for other institutions.

The RCA formed a Task Force to study “the types and scope of the data to be archived, when archiving should occur, how long the data should be retained, possible variations with respect to the discipline for satisfying the requirements, and any other pertinent issues.” A detailed report outlining the issues was presented to the Senate. It included a recommendation that a Working Group be formed to proceed with developing and implementing a plan in accordance with the report.

The second major issue pertained to laboratory safety. As a result of an accident at UCLA in which a student lost her life and a professor was criminally charged, an ad hoc committee of the ES&H office studied whether some changes were needed to ASU's policies and practices. A report was submitted to the Senate President with a request for Senate endorsement. The Senate President referred the report to the RCA for comment.

The RCA initially had concerns about the scope and recommendations of the report. A subgroup of the RCA was formed to meet with the principal sponsors of the report. It was agreed that two motions could be presented to the Senate:

1. A recommendation that the UAC would work with the Provost office to form a university laboratory safety committee primarily composed of and chaired by faculty. This motion was adopted.
2. Adoption of a new ACD policy outlining broadly the responsibilities that lab supervisors have. Due to the shortness of time for full consideration, this motion was postponed until the Fall.

There were no cases of misconduct in research during the past year.

OKED reported to the Classified Research Subcommittee that a grant from the Office of Naval Research involving classified information had been accepted by the University. The work regards a Study of Lawfare Analysis in which law can be used as an agent of war. All of the classified activities will be conducted at ONR in Washington, DC, and no students are involved. The Subcommittee has approved the grant. The University serves as an agent for the financial management of this project.