

Memorandum

To: Gavin Townsend, Faculty Senate President
From: John Lynch, Chair, Faculty Research Committee
Reason: Committee Report

The main activity of the Faculty Research Committee continued to be the stimulation of research at UT Chattanooga through the distribution of grants based upon competitive research proposals. We continued to recommend the awarding of grants to faculty through the Faculty Research program, which has a maximum of \$3,000 per grant; and the Summer Fellowship program, which award grants of either \$2,500 or \$5,000 depending on the request. We also continued the Provost Student Research Award program, which provides maximum funding of \$1,000 per student.

Activities of the Faculty Research Committee are dependent on the funding available for the three grant programs and the demands placed on them by faculty and student applicants.

For 2007 – 2008 the funds provided by these programs were as follows:

Faculty Research Grants: **\$36,875**
Summer Fellowships: **\$31,700** – \$5,700(18% overhead) = **\$26,000**
Provost Student Research Awards: **\$21,800.**

Funding Requests:

Faculty Research Proposals: **23 proposals**, requests totaling: **\$63,615**
Summer Fellowships: **15 proposals**, requests totaling: **\$62,500**
Provost Student Research Awards: **44 proposals**, requests totaling: **\$45,800.**

Obviously, in view of the mismatch between the funds available for these programs and the demands placed on them by faculty requests, the Faculty Research Committee was only able to recommend funding for approximately half of the requests received. This mismatch was especially bad for the Summer Fellowship program, where only 6 of 15 proposals, 40%, could be recommended for funding. In short, it wasn't lack of merit but lack of funds that kept support from being recommended for most of the requests received by the committee.

Please note:

The committee feels strongly that the level of funding falls far short of the needs justified by the number of high quality proposals received. This feeling was especially strong with regard to the many excellent proposals for Summer Fellowships and for Faculty Research.

The committee hopes that additional funds can be found in the future to support these important programs which are properly viewed as being broad-based ground-up funding activities that provide vital seed and start-up funds that are not available elsewhere.

Furthermore, looking to the future, the committee feels that both the amount of funds provided for the Faculty Research Grants and the Summer Research Fellowships must keep up with the growth of the university, the number of faculty, and the increased emphasis on research. This has not happened over the last several decades; funds have remained stagnant, or dipped, during this period. Obviously, these grants cannot do a good job as starter grants and seed money if they are limited to the small numbers that can be funded currently. Additionally, contingent on the provision of better funding, the committee would like to see the maximum amounts increased for Faculty Research Grants, e.g. to \$5,000, and Summer Fellowships, e.g. to \$7,000.