Rodney called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. He opened the meeting by noting that the fall semester had been devoted to soliciting ideas from the campus and that the purpose of this meeting was to follow up on one of those ideas, undergraduate research, through discussion of two related pre-proposals. He noted that the committee’s charge was to forward proposals to the Leadership team and that these proposals may include some or all elements from the pre-proposals.

Rodney then introduced presenters David Hall and Lara Pacifici and the invited guests.

David Hall began by describing the overall goals of his proposal:

- To substantially expand research opportunities for undergraduates
- To capitalize on what separates us from other institutions
- To make an impact on the community, students, and the campus

David presented a Powerpoint highlighting the major parts of his proposal, noting that it was not possible for every student to do substantive research, but that it was possible that every student could leave UGA with an appreciation of research and its role at UGA. David emphasized that UGA has the opportunity to have the largest undergraduate research symposium in the United States. (A copy of David’s handout is attached.)

Lara Pacifici began her presentation by noting that there were a number of ongoing major research programs at UGA (CURO, LSAMP, etc.) She noted, however, that in order to serve as a standard, doing research at UGA should be the norm. This would require a much higher level of student participation. The two keys to this are increased accessibility and resources.

Lara described some of the key elements of her proposal:

- Partnering with first year programs so that those students would be aware of the program.
• A strong web presence (Lara used the Eureka web site as a model) to facilitate connecting students to research projects. Elements of the system might include: 1. Tips to navigate the process (for students), 2. Tips on mentoring (for faculty), and 3. Online Digest of student research projects.

Regarding evaluation, she suggested a broad study with help from IR and that it was important to consider all “learning domains” and the impact on the “whole” student, not just cognitive development. She also noted that her proposal was not dependent on all pieces; it could be flexible/scalable. Looking at increases in student participation and numbers of research projects completed could be used as methods of evaluation. She also suggested looking at cognitive, affective, and psychomotor changes, as well as how experiences are affected as an undergraduate. She stated that her pre-proposal is flexible and scalable in that individual parts may be taken away or added like a buffet without hindering the entire pre-proposal.

Discussion from the committee and guests followed. Highlights include:

Betty Jean Craige noted that the proposals were “terrific” and included many pieces that were not at all expensive and might be accomplished even if the proposals were not selected for the SLI. She also suggested that the thrusts of the proposals were to “do well” what we are already doing. She recommended that we find a focus to make it “unique” to UGA—an international focus, perhaps, capitalizing on resources in Costa Rica and elsewhere.

Fran Teague said she was concerned that the focus on early intervention would serve to exclude transfer students in yet another way. She also noted the value of decentralized, department-level research symposia as opposed to having only a central one.

There was a discussion on how money could be used to encourage participation. Providing supplies and stipends might be possible. It was noted that funds would have to be awarded competitively.

Cleveland Piggott offered his perspective as a student, having talked about this focus topic with many professors and students. His main point was that access to research possibilities at UGA was far too limited. He said that CURO included fewer than 100 faculty and only 4 faculty in Humanities/Business. UGA needs a central, searchable web site of projects; better support (especially targeting first-year students with an investment in training/ and better advising—especially student-to-student advising, which can help students learn to navigate the tasks of research and coursework.

Cleveland mentioned the EUREKA web page at the University of Kentucky as a good framework. He stated that REUs and LSAMPs are exclusive.

Hugh Ruppersburg said that he liked these ideas but had some concerns: 1. What about research that is not lab-based, such as the humanities, social sciences, and arts, 2. How do you enlist faculty for these projects?, 3. What are the benefits of research done in a library without faculty, 4. What are the incentives for this type of research, 5. Does it need to target juniors and seniors who are more established in their disciplines? He added that more “developmental thinking” is needed to make research work in these areas. A number of participants echoed this concern.
Lara Pacific said that her interaction with undergraduates indicates that solitary research has the same effects as collaborative or in-lab research. She said a bigger issue is access to research.

Rodney asked if freshmen or sophomores are even equipped to do research in the humanities. Knowledge is constructed in individual fields.

Karen Webber noted that her research indicated that the growth of undergraduate research is concentrated in the sciences. The reason for this seems to be that, in addition to altruistic, mission-based benefits, faculty have been concretely rewarded for participating. She agreed that getting “exposure” was a major faculty concern and that a cost effective means of doing this should be explored.

Jere Morehead offered some historical perspective on CURO, which he noted had begun on a shoestring budget and continues to operate largely on “year-end funds and bits and pieces.” He said that resources allocated here could pay great dividends.

Harry Dailey noted that the microbiology major requires directed research as part of its program. This work teaches students “to think” more deeply than courses that tend to relay facts. But he also noted that working with undergraduates in this way is resource heavy. Faculty in the department perform this service not because they profit or because the student hours are counted but because they value the mentorship program. He further noted that these student hours need to be counted toward instructional duties.

Marcus Fechheimer agreed that campus-wide, accessible research programs should not be department-based, because students do not think in terms of working in only one discipline. He noted the value of a campus-wide symposium in making students develop the ability to describe their work to many audiences. It is important that as research is further integrated into the curriculum that it has an intentional focus, that it uses primary research, and takes advantage of available research lectures as a resource.

Other issues discussed included:

- Significant time commitment for students doing research
- Need for faculty to track, count, and get credit for the hours spent
- Importance of paying attention to the experience for students
- Need for faculty development in supervising
- Peer mentors can do some of this work
- Importance of assessment, as this could be done poorly or well
- Need to plug students into the right program/project
- Importance of faculty guiding research training (as opposed to library or other staff)
The meeting ended shortly after 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Aycock

Adam Wyatt