During the 2019-2020 academic year, the Faculty Research and Development Committee consisted of the following faculty:

- Juliette Bourdier; Assistant Professor; French, Francophone, and Italian Studies
- Marcello Forconi; Associate Professor; Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Heath Hoffmann; Professor; Sociology and Anthropology
- Phyllis Jestice; Professor; History
- Mukesh Kumar; Assistant Professor; Mathematics
- Michael Larsen (Chair); Associate Professor; Physics and Astronomy
- Jessica Madariaga; Assistant Professor; Economics
- Tom Ross; Professor; Psychology
- Kelley White; Assistant Professor; Teacher Education
- Ex-officio: Deanna Caveny; Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs

**Committee Activities**

1. September 11th, 2019 (4:30-5:45 PM) – In Person Meeting
   - Last year’s committee chair (Brooke Van Horn) called meeting to elect new chair. (Mike Larsen elected unanimously).
   - Established dates for 2019-2020 grant proposal deadlines.
   - Discussed potential modifications to grant guidelines document.

2. September 13th, 2019 - September 18th, 2019 – Email Discussion and Vote
   - Following up from the 9/11 meeting, the committee discussed and approved revisions to the guidelines to more clearly articulate the need for proposers to use non-technical language, clarifying the consequences for neglecting to submit a final report, and to require proposers to summarize results from previous funding as part of their application narrative.

3. October 24th, 2019 (3:15 - 4 PM) – In Person Meeting
   - Since only 2/9 voting committee members were returning from the 2018-2019 committee, a brief meeting was held to help walk the new committee members through the process of evaluating proposals for this audience.
4. November 6th, 2019 (8:30-10 AM) – In Person Meeting
   • Committee discussed issues that were brought up with round 1 proposals, including policies for
     (i) grandfathering-in investigators who either did not submit final reports in the past or had final
     reports that could not be located, (ii) consistent application of the $5000 maximum per project
     policy, and (iii) rewording/restructuring of the $5000 maximum within a 2 calendar year rule.
   • Committee discussed and voted on funding round 1 proposals.

5. February 14th, 2020 (8-10 AM) – In Person Meeting
   • Committee discussed and approved modified language to clarify the 24-month rule.
   • Committee discussed and voted on funding round 2 proposals.
   • Committee appointed Jessica Madariaga to act as point-person for research award deliberations
     and administration (Mike Larsen was asked to be on Teacher-Scholar award committee as a recent
     recipient).

6. March 19th, 2020 - March 24th, 2020 – Email Discussion and Vote
   • Chair approached committee through email to discuss ways to support previous awardees given
     the suspension of international travel and limited access to campus as a result of the COVID-19
     pandemic.
   • Committee voted to extend round 3 2019-2020 FR&D proposal deadline to 4/17/20.
   • Committee voted on and approved measures (developed in consultation with the provost’s office)
     to allow 2019-2020 round 1 and round 2 awardees to adjust time-tables and budgets to allow
     already funded work to continue as appropriate. These measures will allow some round 2 2019-
     2020 awardees to spend their allocated funds as late as early- summer 2021.

7. May 4th, 2020 (1-2 PM) – Zoom Teleconference
   • Committee met and discussed and voted on candidates for the campus-wide Distinguished Re-
     search Award. After deliberation over 10 excellent candidates, the committee voted to recommend
     this year’s award go to Isaure de Buron (Biology).

8. May 11th, 2020 (3-5 PM) – Zoom Teleconference
   • Committee discussed and voted on funding round 3 proposals. [Note that as of the date of
     submission of this final report, award letters have not gone out to the round 3 applicants because
     funding situation for the next fiscal year remains uncertain due to COVID-19]

**Significant Changes to Committee Policies**

This year’s committee was very open to discussing some tweaks to the guidelines. Changes that were voted
on and adopted included:
Adding a new required section to the proposals that require proposers to articulate the outcomes from previous FR&D awards; this helps the committee (1) find out what was done in the case that a final report might have been lost and (2) gives a longer-term perspective on follow-through on outcomes from proposed work. (The final report is designed to give this sort of perspective, but must be submitted only 6 weeks after the project funding period is completed, which typically isn’t enough to really gauge the impact on resulting scholarship). We believe this new required section will help the committee better determine the likelihood for project success (one of our stated criteria for evaluating proposals). Having access to that information this year has already proved useful in several cases.

Modifying the guidelines to further emphasize that the narrative should be written in language accessible to a general academic audience, and free of discipline-dependent jargon. (This already was present in the guidelines in a number of places, but remains a consistent challenge for proposal writers.)

Changing the description of the funding limit from “no more than $5,000 in two consecutive calendar years” to “no more than $5,000 in any contiguous 24-month period”. The “calendar year” rule was being interpreted by different investigators differently (e.g. there was confusion even on the committee if an investigator who received funding in late 2018 would be eligible for a full or only partial award in early 2020). In addition to clarifying the language, examples were included in the guidelines to try and make this as clear as possible. (Discussion with the previous chair – and seeing that this issue came up several times this year – suggested that this was an important issue to clarify).

The committee also voted to give the committee chair the authority and freedom to give critical feedback to proposers in their award and rejection letters, based on a good-faith summary of compiled committee comments recorded during the ranking process and subsequent discussion.

The committee also discussed other persistent issues (e.g. whether the $5,000 per project limit makes sense, and what does “project” mean in different disciplines). With 6/9 of this year’s committee continuing on in the 2020-2021 committee, we hope to make progress on some of these other issues.

COVID-19 Complications

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on nearly all campus activities, and this committee is no exception. In addition to the obvious changes (conducting more business via email and having our in-person meetings through teleconference), we also realized that many of the colleagues we had previously voted to support in Spring and Summer of 2020 could no longer conduct the scholarly activities at the time and/or in the way they originally proposed. In consultation with the provost’s office, we worked to come up with the following plan:

1. Awardees funded to complete work or travel in Spring 2020 were contacted to determine the degree to which their plans were interrupted by travel prohibitions and/or limited access to campus. When necessary, these awardees have had their award-period extended and have been allowed to modify their allocation of awarded budgets as necessary due to the disruption.
2. Awardees funded to complete work or travel in Summer 2020 were allowed to choose to (i) attempt to complete their work as originally planned, (ii) reallocate funds (e.g. for travel) to other expenditures that could support the associated research within the same timeline, (iii) extend their award period up to the end of the 2020-2021 academic year to conduct their research as planned or appropriately modified, or (iv) return their award if the work is no longer tenable or scholarly meaningful.

We believe that all 19 Round 1/Round 2 awardees will be accommodated by this plan. Most summer awardees opted for choice (iii) above, which means next year’s committee will have to keep track of the finances associated with these awardees and carefully keep track of their budget allocations. (To aid in this process, Mike Larsen has already been elected to continue as chair of the 2020-2021 committee).

Additionally, we have been instructed to wait to send out award letters for round 3 applicants until the impacts of COVID-19 on our 2020-2021 operating budget are more well known. Therefore, even though the committee has deliberated and made recommendations for round 3 funding, the proposed awards are still considered contingent on available funding.

**2019-2020 Funding Summary and Results**

Requests were down significantly this year compared to last year – especially in rounds 1 and 3 (see summary at end of this report); we suspect round 3 requests were down at least in part to COVID-19 complications, and we wouldn’t be at all surprised to see an uptick in requests for the 2020-2021 academic year due to people trying to restart their research programs after the pandemic interruption. Thus we hope that the provost’s office can continue to fund this program at commensurate levels to previous years.

**Round 1**

In the first round – for work to be done in Spring 2020 – we received 8 proposals with requests totaling $31,074. Based on our available budget, we were only able to support 6 of these requests (5 in full, one in part) for a total awarded amount of $20,000.

**Round 2**

In the second round – for work to be done in Summer 2020 – we received 18 applications with requests totaling $68,190. Given budgetary limitations, we were again unable to fund all of the proposals. This round, we funded 13 of the proposals for a total awarded amount of $50,190.
Round 3

In the third round – for work to be done in Fall 2020 – we received fewer applications than normal. (We believe that the closure of campus and inherent uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted our colleagues ability to put together proposals, despite the fact that we extended the deadline). We received a total of 5 applications with requests totaling $19,548. One was determined to be ineligible but the rest were of excellent quality, so we recommended the remaining 4 proposals for full funding, which would be a total awarded amount of $14,548. (These award letters still haven’t gone out because we are waiting on an update on our budgetary situation, which is more uncertain than normal due to COVID-19.)

Updated Quantitative Summary

In the 2018-2019 final report of this committee, the chair included some quantitative information that broke down requests and awards based on school and rank. For reference, including this information each year may be of benefit to future committees as well as other stakeholders, so we re-state some of those results here and update with this year’s numbers.

NOTE THAT ALL 2019-2020 numbers assume round 3 funds will eventually be disbursed following the committee’s recommendation. If this is not ultimately possible, updated information regarding the actual disbursed funds will be included in the 2020-2021 final report.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Awards</th>
<th>% Awarded Budget</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Awards</th>
<th>% Awarded Budget</th>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>13.8%*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23*</td>
<td>–</td>
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</table>

Table 1: Award breakdown by school. * indicates that these are still provisional numbers depending on FY '20-'21 fund availability.
Table 2: Award breakdown by rank. * indicates that these are still provisional numbers depending on FY ’20-’21 fund availability.

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<td>5</td>
<td>5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Professor</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Adj/Inst/Lib)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23*</td>
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</table>

Table 3: Breakdown of requests and awards by round. * indicates that these are still provisional numbers depending on FY ’20-’21 fund availability.

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