

RPES Advisory Committee Conference Call

FY 15 – Q4, August 25, 2015

Membership:

- Chair – Steve Naranjo, PWA
- Ann Callahan
- Steve Huber
- Jungmin Lee
- Mike Grisham
- Brian Wienhold
- Claire Baffaut
- Kyoung Ro
- Christi Swaggerty
- Jim Harnly
- Amy Hegarty, RPES
- Dana Lamberti, RPES

Agenda:

- Call to order and welcome Steve
- Status report of old business Amy
- New business Steve/Amy
- Next meeting and adjournment Steve

Old Business:

- Supergrade Panels were held March 10 and November 19 (2014) – five still in queue waiting for ST slot. Next Supergrade Panel is scheduled for November 2015. After this, should we hold off on evaluating anymore?
 - Scientists would at least like to know they “made it,” committee wants to keep evaluating them, our obligation to provide the scientists a measure; give those being evaluated some notice that there is a queue.
- Year of the RL – webinars and cohort group discussions – Amy and Brian update the committee regarding possible involvement and implications for the RPES Program
 - Role of the RL Team’s efforts have concentrated most recently on compensation, evaluation in performance plans aligned with what is actually being done. There was some discussion in New Orleans meeting, we agreed to table that discussion until the GS-15 team can meet and make a recommendation. No other impact on RPES.
- Provide status of Action Items from the May meeting
 - Dana add committee charter to new SY memo in FY 16
 - Addition to panel review notice and panel reports – counsel employee
 - Web site updates – many completed, some pending
 - Discussion with Dr. Liu to streamline ad hoc panels, pending AD discussion

- Status of subcommittee for GS-15 review process
 - Ann, Chair – no progress yet, busy summer, will get started
- P&P and Manual drafts, ready to start formalizing
 - Anyone that has additional comments or edits, please submit to Amy
- Status of setting up an external website – pending
- Met with MWA; still need to visit with ADs on their SY initiatives
- Provide status of meeting with Joon Park regarding HR Specialists’ service on RPES panels, including the Town Hall Meeting that Amy and Dana held August 15.

New Business:

- Deborah took a new assignment with the Department (with the Senior Executive staff), so the RPES Team is operating with one vacancy (out of three FTE). Temporary detail is being recruited, and a restructuring of the work is being prepared.
 - Need to take Deborah off the website
- FY 16 Panel Schedule has been issued.
 - New Annual Case Writeup Session was held July 30 (and another August 27)
 - Joan Lunney presented a session in June for NEA
 - New Panelist Orientation was held June 23-24 for 15 new panelists held in Beltsville; will be again in November, to include 15 new HR Specialists
 - New Panel Chair training will be held in spring 2016.
- Consider establishing an Agency-wide mentorship program for SYs
 - This was discussed in our May meeting but was also asked during our visit to Ames
 - PWA has a mentoring program that is both research guidance and case writeup as well.
 - NPA had one (general), not sure now that it is PA (don’t think SPA had one).
 - NEA had one in the past (general), but haven’t heard anything lately.
 - SEA offers new scientist orientation but no knowledge of mentoring program
 - This should be added into our inquiry to the Area Directors as to what they offer as support to SYs.
 - ODEO may be able to provide some assistance in developing a mentoring program (culture of ARS).
- Concern was raised: travel restrictions that may affect international impact
 - Work-related travel no longer separate from conference travel
 - Some units’ senior scientists defer travel funds to junior scientists, other units divide evenly among all SYs
 - One Center manages the travel cap at the Center level to allow for more flexibility
 - Can depend on how well the unit is funded in general; you do the best you can with the resources you have; not “fair” across the board.
 - It is an Agency cap, some locations do not monitor, knowing that there is some float from the general fund. Can travel on soft funds.
 - Invitations can still show impact even if cannot attend. Still show that on the writeup, establish the validity and importance of the invitation. This helps the indepth reviewer and the IDR should ferret out the quality of these invitations.

Tabled for future meeting:

- Results of brainstorming activity - How to move RPES panel operations into the future; review comments made on chart for Actionable Items

Next Conference Call:
FY 16 Q1 – December 1, 2015, 11:00 AM ET