Research Committee

Minutes of 7th June 2002

Present: Michael Gibney (Dean of Research), Sheila Greene, John Dillon, Doris Alexander, David Dickson, Elizabeth Drew, Deirdre Savage

In attendance: Maria Treanor

Apologies: Jim Sexton, Margaret O'Mahony, Dermot Kelleher, Clive Williams, Michael Coey

Not present: Hilary Tovey, John Saeed

1. Apologies

Apologies noted.

2. Minutes of meeting 3rd May 2002

Minutes approved and signed by Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 High Performance Computing Review
J Sexton proposes to base the review process on the standard departmental review process as documented on the Senior Lecturer's web site. This will have to be modified to suit the Centre's activities and mission. The HPC Development Committee will have to meet to define the necessary modifications. J Sexton suggests that this meeting take place in June 2002, and that a formal written proposal from the HPC Development Committee be forwarded to the next Research Committee meeting for approval. The HPC Development Committee will then report directly to the Research Committee.

3.2 Research Information Database
State agencies North and South are in favour of this database, and Intertrade Ireland is interested in setting up an all-Ireland portal. Trinity's research database would have to be oracle-based but could incorporate InfoEd. A preliminary research database is currently being developed by Information Systems Services. M Gibney will bring a paper to the next meeting in which the different commercial research database systems available are compared. He will also contact end users and see what they would like to see on the database. D Alexander and M Gibney will attend the next

demonstration, and may be able to provide a demonstration for the Research Committee. A fullscale research database system will take approximately €127,000 per year to run and ensure that it is updated regularly.

3.3 Research Centres
A draft report has been prepared based on the review of the Children's Centre. There is no precedent for this kind of review. The Committee should read the report and, if there is no response, M Gibney will submit it to the Senior Lecturer.

The biggest issue that Centres face is governance. The Research Committee is to prepare a paper for Board / Council on Research Centres with recommendations and suggestions for improving their integration into College life, and how to deal with governance. A document on Centres prepared by the Deans is available and deals with problems and associated Centres. This lists problems not solutions. The emphasis on solutions that the Deans' Committee will try to address would be on teaching, and the Research Committee should in its turn look at solutions for the research issues defined. After the Deans' Committee meet, the Senior Lecturer may circulate the document to all members of the Research Committee.

Current Centres may be asked to fit under one of the following: research interest group, research unit (no central administration or space), research centre or Trinity centre. A working group will meet to consider the research centres and Trinity centres, and M Gibney will prepare a document for next term.

3.4 Outreach
Due to time pressure to complete the SFI Centre bid for the Deep Computing Institute, J Sexton was not been able to get in touch with Berkeley Fellows as requested. He will do this later this month, and report back at the next meeting.

3.5 New Members
M Gibney will follow-up.

4. Sabbatical Leave

Staff on sabbatical leave may apply for tax back if they go out of the country. Smaller departments may look for support to enable their staff to take leave. Not all staff are able to move to other institutions for a year but must still pay for substitute teaching. Some departments are disadvantaged as promotion is affected by time off. Leave is generally for research but may also be for teaching e.g. revamping courses, developing programmes, researching into teaching methods. The Research Committee will ask the Deans' Committee to take this down to Faculty level and ask someone to document the difficulties involved.

5. Selection Criteria for Berkeley Fellows

The Research Committee will need to review the procedure for selection of assessors for the Berkeley Fellows e.g. if they have collaborated with the Fellows before or acted as their research supervisors. The announcement will be made much earlier this

year with an earlier deadline, and M Gibney will notify everyone on the academic email list to be prepared for the early call. It was agreed that an academic should have been in the College for three years before applying for a Berkeley Fellowship.

For Start-up Grant applications, a distinction will have to be made between proposals rather than the track record of the applicants. Reviewers will be given a series of boxes and asked to tick the most appropriate answer. There will be a cap on, for example, travel but applicants will be able to exceed the cap if they can justify the amount requested. The applicants will be asked to decide what cost categories cuts should first be applied to if they occurred. The Research Committee will check the list of those gazetted at Council in order to gauge how much to allocate for the Start-up budget.

M Gibney has written to C Begley, Director of the School of Nursing regarding the line item in her budget to cover research. It is felt that this line item should cover the Start-up and Maintenance grants for staff in Nursing over the next four years while they are coming into College. They may decide to transfer a portion of their budget to the Research Committee and come into the schemes immediately.

6. Any Other Business

It was agreed that D Savage should join the working party on contract staff. Majella Regan, Staff Office will also be involved.

M Gibney will send a note to Board next week to set up a working party on how SFI fits into College. Ground rules need to be established e.g. who Principal Investigators report to, how they fit into departments, and their teaching load.

There should be protocols in announcing the results of the Berkeley Fellowships so that all applicants know at the same time. M Gibney will contact Staff Office regarding the sum of money received by Departments for Berkeley Fellowship replacement teaching, and find out whether it is being used for a nine or twelve-month substitute.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College Green at 2 p.m. on Friday 5th July 2002.

Signed: _____   Date: _____