The University Committee on Research and Creative Activity was created upon recommendation of the Faculty Senate in 1978. The committee’s name was changed in 2007 to the “University Committee on Research and Creative Activity” to reflect its support for creative endeavors.

I. Goals and Objectives

The goal of UCRCA is to expand the capacity for research and creative activity at UNO. It does this in several ways:

A. Funding: The UCRCA makes funding recommendations to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity in as fair and transparent a way as possible, supporting all areas and disciplines of research and creative activity by pre- and post-tenure faculty and graduate and undergraduate students at UNO.

B. Advising: The UCRCA advises the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity on research and creative activity issues/needs to be addressed on campus and that will expand the capacity for research and creative activity at UNO.

C. Connecting: The UCRCA collaborates with other entities on campus to help connect faculty and students to potential research and creative activity support in order to leverage existing resources to increase capacity for research and creative activity at UNO.

D. Mentoring: UCRCA members provide mentoring and feedback on proposals to increase the capacity of researchers and artists at UNO.

II. Membership

The Committee consists of eleven members, including ten members of the faculty and one graduate student. Eight faculty committee members are selected as follows: one each from the Colleges of Business; Public Affairs and Community Service; Education; Information Science & Technology; and Communications, Fine Arts and Media; and one from each of the three divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences. The remaining two committee members are from the faculty at large and should be selected from a department not already represented on the committee. All faculty members are recommended by the Faculty Senate and appointed by the Chancellor. Members serve three-year terms. The graduate student member shall be selected by the Chancellor for a one-year term (renewable for one year). Committee members should be actively involved in research and/or creative activity.

The Chair is selected by members of the Committee each year.
III. Administrative Responsibilities

A. The Applicant:

1. Obtains appropriate guidelines and application forms from the UCRCA website. For questions on the preparation of proposals or on Committee policy, applicants should contact the Chair of UCRCA or the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research.
2. Submits proposals in a single pdf following the appropriate guidelines and using the most current application forms available on the UCRCA website.
3. Follows University policies regarding financial and administrative accountability. Faculty members (as applicants or advisors) are to understand that their signature on the letter of agreement to accept funding constitutes a contract between themselves and the University.
4. If funded, works with the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research to ensure all appropriate forms and procedures are completed to receive funding and expends funds during the fiscal year in which funding is awarded. Within one (1) year of notification of approval, each recipient must submit to the Director of Sponsored Programs and Research a Final Report of work accomplished during the grant period. If desired, submit one copy of any manuscript, publication or other relevant documentation resulting from funded research. The Committee would appreciate updates from the applicant concerning the project. The Final Report is available on the UCRCA website.
5. If not recommended for funding, applicants are welcome to resubmit a revised application by the next deadline, addressing comments from the committee provided by the chair of the Committee.

B. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity:

1. Serves as the administrative officer to whom the Committee reports its recommendations.
2. Informs the Committee about administrative requirements that affect proposals and related matters.
3. Makes the final determination of who is funded based on the Committee’s recommendations.
4. Informs applicants, appropriate chair and dean, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Chancellor of funding decisions.
5. Acts promptly on the recommendations of the Committee and reports decisions to the Committee.

C. The Committee Chair:

1. Provides leadership to the committee including convening, setting agendas for, and facilitating meetings.
2. Shares the Committee’s proposal recommendations and feedback with applicants.
3. Reviews significant changes in proposals or budgets after the Committee has reviewed and funded a proposal, or assigns a designee to do so.
4. Provides guidance to or answers questions from potential applicants.
5. Where possible, communicates and collaborates with other entities on campus in areas related to the objectives of the committee.
D. Committee Members:

1. Develop criteria to assess funding applications.
2. Work with Sponsored Programs and Research to develop and maintain funding application materials and establish deadlines for proposal submissions.
3. Review applications based on the criteria set out by the Committee.
4. Meet monthly or on a regularly-scheduled basis during the academic year to discuss funding proposals and agree on funding recommendations made to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity.
5. Advise the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity on research and creative activity issues/needs to be addressed on campus.

E. Sponsored Programs and Research:

1. Works with the Committee to develop and maintain funding application materials and establish deadlines for proposal submissions.
2. Provides forms and information to applicants who wish to apply to the UCRCA.
3. Counsels applicants regarding the preparation of proposals.
4. Receives, registers, and circulates funding proposals to the members of the Committee. SPR will return to applicants proposals with missing signed cover sheets. SPR will not forward to the committee for review proposals received after the deadline.
5. Develops letters of agreement to be signed by the funding recipient and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity. This letter will specify the terms of the agreement, the project budget, the beginning and ending dates for expenditure of funds, and a deadline for submission of the Final Report as established by the Committee.
6. Informs faculty members that their signature on the letter of agreement to accept funding constitutes a contract between themselves and the University.
7. Ensures projects have met regulatory requirements before funding is released.
8. Informs the Business Office of the amount for which a project is to be funded.
9. Monitors the expenditure of Committee funds.
10. Meets with appropriate people to resolve any budgetary or regulatory problems and to advise the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity and/or the Committee as appropriate.
11. Assists the Committee when problems with the budget or regulatory issues arise.
12. Keeps records and reports on applicants and awards made.
13. Announces in an appropriate manner successful completion of projects funded through Committee recommendation.
14. Provides support services to assist the Committee, including setting up meetings, producing minutes, and communicating funding opportunities and deadlines for submission.

IV. Policies and Procedures

A. Funding Areas

The Committee shall consider proposals by faculty and students for research and creative activity within the categories listed below:
1. Faculty Summer Fellowship
2. Faculty Assigned Time
3. Faculty Travel
4. Faculty Grant-in-Aid
5. Faculty Minigrant
6. Graduate Research
7. Undergraduate Travel

For faculty, requests may incorporate some mix of (1) Summer Fellowships (2) Assigned Time, (3) Travel, and (4) Grant-in-Aid OR (5) Minigrant. Amounts for awards may vary from year to year depending on funding.

The Committee places special emphasis on recommending for funding faculty projects that lead to external funding or some other significant benefit for the researcher or artist and/or the university; which help the applicant get to the “next level” in their research or creative activity.

B. General Policies

1. Royalties/patents/copyrights are governed by the By-Laws and Policies of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.
2. Members of the Committee may not submit proposals.
3. Committee members shall act to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Committee members may not discuss or vote on proposals submitted by departmental and/or program colleagues or others for whom there may appear to be a conflict of interest. This list includes but is not limited to: members of the same department/program, spouses, significant others, academic collaborators, and business partners. If Committee members review a proposal before submission, they must also recuse themselves from voting or commenting on the proposal when it is reviewed.
4. The Chair or her/his designee will provide feedback to applicants if the proposal is not recommended for funding. All comments by Committee members will remain anonymous.
5. The Committee will not recommend for funding retroactive expenses for research projects or creative activity, faculty research that is part of degree requirements; (e.g., dissertation), or student activities not directly related to their program of study at UNO. Funds for overhead are also not allowed.
6. After a proposal has been funded, applicants must submit significant changes in proposals or budgets to the Office of Research and Creative Activity for approval.
7. All research projects utilizing human subjects must conform to the policies and procedures of the UNMC/UNO Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. All personnel engaged in human subjects research must undergo training in the protection of human subjects. The IRB will not approve an application until all key personnel are trained and certified. This includes both non-exempt and exempt human subjects. The Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) is a web-based training course available through the SPR web page.
8. All research projects utilizing animal subjects must conform to the policies and procedures of the UNMC/UNO Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.
9. All research projects utilizing biohazards must conform to the policies and procedures of the
UNMC/UNO Institutional Biosafety Committee.

10. Faculty recipients of UCRCA funding will be required to reimburse the University for UCRCA funds received if s/he leaves the employment of the University in the academic year after receiving funding, unless waived by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity.

11. All funded proposals shall in the case of publication or other means of dissemination acknowledge the support of the UCRCA and give credit to the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

12. All deadlines are final. Late submissions will be sent back to the applicant or held over until the next funding cycle.