The purpose of this report is to alert the faculty to potential changes in the Summer Research Grand and Faculty Research Assignment programs and to give the faculty an opportunity to comment before any changes are final.

The budget for Summer Research Grants and Faculty Research Assignments is derived from grant overhead recoveries and from endowment funds. Each year the Committee learns from the Provost how many grants are available for each program. Because of changes in the amount of grant overhead, there is some variation in the funding, but the funds have usually increased. This year, because of the uncertainty which surrounded every budget at the College, the Provost originally authorized the Committee to grant 25 Faculty Research Assignments and 50 Summer Research Grants. As the budget picture cleared, it became possible to grant 7 additional Summer Research Grants. This is a decrease in the number of Faculty Research Assignments (the average number awarded in the previous 8 years was 26, and in the last three years 26, 30, and 29 Faculty Research Assignments were awarded.) This decrease can be explained, in part, by the fact that the amount the Provost gives a dean for each Faculty Research Assignment is now $15,000. In previous years, this amount had been $14,000. The number of Summer Research Grants is, with the exception of last year, an increase (the average number awarded in the previous 8 years was 49, and in the last three years 49, 54, and 62 Summer Research Grants were awarded.)

The Provost has decided to change procedures. Next year the Faculty Research Committee will be given a budget of $694,200 for both the Faculty Research Assignment and Summer Research Grand programs. This number is based on this year’s expenditures for the two programs: 25 Faculty Research Assignments at $15,000 each and 57 Summer Research Grants at $5,600 each. It will then be the Committee’s task to divide this budget between the two programs. This is a major change. In the past the Committee was not able to decide to fund one more Faculty Research Assignment at the expense of a number of Summer Research Grants or to give more Summer Research Grants if the pool of applicants for Semester Research Assignments was thin. We think that having the ability to make such judgements is worthwhile, but our job will be more difficult. We will need to change our procedures, and perhaps the timing of the application deadlines, to be able to make this new decision. We welcome any comment from faculty. Which program is more valuable on the margin? Should we try to run the programs in such a way that every deserving Faculty Research Assignment applicant with 6 years since the last grant receives a grant? The Committee will be meeting in the next two weeks to discuss these matters.

In a related matter, there has been some concern expressed about the stipend for the Summer Research Grant, $5,600. This number is derived by taking one-ninth of the all faculty salary average. The Faculty Affairs Committee urged us to reduce the stipend. The Provost has made a similar suggestion. We have heard from several faculty members who agree. The Committee is receptive to these suggestions, and we will be making our decision on this matter soon. Again, we welcome comments. For your guidance, 1/10 of the all faculty salary average is $5,040, 1/11 is $4,582, and 1/12 is $4,200. Also, the NEH summer stipend is $4,000. Everyone should understand that a decision to reduce the stipend for Summer Research Grants
will not be a method by which the support for the research program is diminished. Under the funding guidelines described in the previous paragraph, any reduction in the stipend will result in the award of additional grants.

There are two additional issues on the Committee’s schedule. First, as it now stands, eligibility for the Summer Research Grants is restricted to:

All members of the faculty, as defined by the by-laws of the several faculties of the College, who are not emeriti and who hold a contract for full-time employment from the College with a commitment for renewal beyond one year..." (Policy and Principles for Faculty Summer Research Grants page 1)

The Faculty Affairs Committee and the Provost have requested that we alter this to include only tenure-eligible faculty. Second, we have been asked to review our practices regarding the treatment given to new faculty members. The Policies and Principles define a new faculty member as "...a person in the first three years of completely independent teaching and research activity in their post-terminal degree period, and who has no extensive prior experience in nonacademic but closely related fields,..." (page 2) The Faculty Affairs Committee has asked us to review our procedures for giving "special consideration" to these faculty members. Again we welcome any comment on either of these matters.

April 5, 1994

FACULTY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Peter Alces
Robert Archibald (Chair)
John Boshen
Judith Ewell
George Greenia
James Harris
Marlene Jack
Henry Krakauer
David Kranbuehl
John Lavach
Robert Scholnick
Glenn Shean
Eugene Tracy