

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL

Minutes of 10 December 2015

Room 204 (Martin Luther King), Bernhard Center

Members present: Osama Abudayyeh, Gary Atkins, Bob Bensley (for Jessaca Spybrook), Steve Bertman, Lori Brown, Sharon Carlson, Paul Ciccantell, Kaitlyn Cichocki-Goss, Chris Coryn, Robin Criter, Martha Councill-Vargas, Paula Kohler (for Daniel Litynski), Duke Leingpibul (for Muhammad Razi), David Rudge, Paul Solomon (for Cat Crotchett), Bade Shrestha (for Muralidhar Ghantasala), Susan Stapleton, Susan Steuer, Andre Venter, Udaya Wagle

Absent: Patti Van Walbeck

Council Chair Paul Ciccantell called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

Procedural Items

Acceptance of the Agenda

A motion was made by Rudge, seconded by Wagle, to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of 12 November 2015

Rudge moved, supported by Wagle, to approve the minutes of the 12 November meeting as amended. Motion carried.

Discussion / Information Items

None.

New Business

None.

Continued/Old Business

Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award

Rudge presented the committee's proposal to alleviate a perceived discrepancy in availability of University-sponsored research funds. The committee prepared a chart comparing science and humanities research examples. Councill-Vargas presented a revised version of the FRACAA guideline 6. which was developed with the assistance of the Office of the Vice President for Research. The changes are designed to make this more inclusive and some additional changes would need to be made to accommodate awards to individuals through the OVPR Proposal Approval Form (PAF) system. Materials for FRACAA winners would go through this system to assure that the submission was clear to OVPR and grants and contracts would help administer the new system. This provides a clear path to report this to the Board of Trustees and makes the grant "count."

Existing language: Awardees are required to submit an external funding proposal for an amount at least equal to their FRACAA grant within 18 months of the end of their award period. An external funding proposal is defined as one submitted via the OVPR proposal management center with an approved Proposal Approval Form.

Final revised language: Awardees are required to submit a proposal(s) to a funding source(s) outside the University to support their scholarly activity, processed through the University's approval (i.e., PAF) and award management systems for an amount at least equal to their FRACAA within 18 months of the end of their award period.

Councill-Vargas presented the committee's revised language. Venter suggested revised language which was adopted as a friendly amendment. Discussion of the policy and procedures ensued. A motion was made by Councill-Vargas and seconded by Rudge to develop a Memorandum Of Action to adopt this revised language. Rudge called the question. The motion was approved unanimously.

Internationalization Memorandum of Action: Formal Recommendation from RPC?

Ciccantell reported the concerns about MOA-15/09 to James Butterfield, chair of the International Education Council. Butterfield replied that the operationalization of this was to be addressed in the next stage. IEC is working on issues of visiting scholars. Butterfield asks if RPC would like to be involved in a joint working group with IEC on research aspects. Ciccantell thinks this is a good idea, but it is the decision of the council whether to proceed. Rudge asked how this applies to graduate students, and Kohler and Stapleton replied that is addressed by the Graduate College. Graduate students receive little attention in the MOA as written. Kohler noted that these issues crop up all the time as we try to bring people in and work with international students. Discussion ensued. Ciccantell asked for volunteers. Rudge proposed that we recruit from outside the council. Duke Leingpibul was recommended. Bertman recommended that we not identify individuals but express an interest in participating. Abudayyeh recommends that we study this more carefully.

Kohler moved that Ciccantell craft a message to the Faculty Senate which notes the importance of formal strategic actions regarding international education but feels that the current MOA does not address research as it should. The motion was seconded by Rudge. Motion passed unanimously.

Establish Committees and Work Plans for RPC Charges

Monitor the implementation of the University Policy on Data Collection through Surveys – Chris Coryn and Whitney DeCamp have agreed to serve. Abudayyeh asked if Jody Brylinsky, associate provost for institutional effectiveness, was invited to speak to the concerns. Coryn will recommend this. Kohler noted that procedures are being addressed regarding whom the policies apply to and Dave Reinhold, associate provost for assessment and undergraduate studies, will oversee.

Conduct yearly review of the state of the research ethics policies and procedures in collaboration with the Vice President for Research. Initiate changes or additions

where appropriate. (Taken from WMU Self Study Report.) – These were approved two meetings ago. The Faculty Senate is waiting for Kohler to provide rationale for these to go forward.

Conduct a review of the FRACAA program with the goal of increasing its utilization by faculty, including investigating strategies to increase the number of quality proposals submitted across all disciplines. – Ciccantell has discussed this with Bertman. Bertman notes a desire for a survey of the faculty to find out their understanding of the grants and the barriers to application and a quantitative assessment to see if it is achieving the goals for which the programs were founded. Are the number and quality of proposals for external funding increasing? Rudge will volunteer. Requests results of the survey OVPR conducted last year to inform this committee. Kohler agreed. She would like to have time during RPC to discuss this after everyone has looked at the report and discuss how this fits in with general faculty development. Criter and Coryn volunteered as well. Discussion of the timeline and issues ensued.

Develop consistent external submission language related to FRACAA awards and recommend changes as deemed necessary to ensure the FRACAA funding program is consistent with the purpose of the program and is available to faculty from all disciplines. – was addressed today.

Continue review of Support for Faculty Scholar Award proposals and revise the guidelines and review process to encourage faculty from all disciplines to submit quality proposals. – Bensley is interested in the review process and would like to look at a more meaningful process. Kohler suggests that this review begin with the guidelines. Venter noted that recommendations from last year were not adopted and does not wish to revisit the issue because he feels fresh eyes are needed. Rudge proposed training to write effective proposals. Kohler recommended that a mentorship program could be developed. Rudge notes that the FRACAA group is addressing many of the same issues. Lori Brown volunteered to help with the workshop. There was also a suggestion that past recipients serve as mentors. OVPR could facilitate peer-to-peer support. Councell-Vargas also volunteered. Steuer was pressed into service.

Develop a policy for providing official formal credit to those with dual appointments or who serve as coPIs on externally funded research projects when PIs are housed in other university units. – Rudge notes that he would like to recruit individuals with joint appointments. He will take responsibility for this. Steve Kohler, director of Environmental and Sustainability Studies Program, was recommended by Abudayyeh.

Develop a procedure for the regular review of University policies related to research by the RPC and a schedule for conducting these regular reviews on a five-year rotating basis. – Sharon Carlson has agreed to serve.

Investigate the obstacles to research and creative activities from the perspective of the faculty and consider diversity and inclusion issues as they relate to the role of RPC. – some issues relate to FRACAA, but others do not. We may need to recruit from outside of the council. Kohler would like to have representatives gather

information. Ciccantell notes that we need to get some initial ideas about the issue and then move to a more systematic approach. Discussion ensued. OVPR may need more resources to help facilitate research, particularly in providing additional services. Ciccantell, Bensley, Wagle and Venter will serve on this subcommittee.

Reports

Council Chair – Paul Ciccantell

No report

Vice President for Research – Daniel Litynski

Kohler circulated information on research fund use for the year. OVPR projects running over in the Faculty Research Travel Fund, and in the Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Works (PPP&E). Technology development awards allow people to develop products. Kohler detailed some projects which have received this award.

Feb. 5, Global Engagement event which will subsume Research and Dessert along with other workshops and events. The schedule includes: 9 to 11 a.m. workshops; 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Emerging Scholar presentations and then outstanding scholar presentation; recognition luncheon; speed networking; Spring Convocation.

FRACAA is due January 22; Support for Faculty Scholars Award is due January 31.

Dean of the Graduate College – Susan Stapleton

Michigan state fall Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) conference included graduate and undergraduate students. Undergraduates submitted posters.

Awards for the Gwen Frostic fellowship have been completed – three awards.

Epigium responsible conduct and research ethics course was required this year, but the Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) protested. It will be a requirement this fall. This is a best practice in graduate education and required for research grants and by employers, but is not tied to appointments. Graduate directors are encouraged to require this of students for their own benefit.

The NEH Next Generation Humanities PhD Grant Program has been announced and a group is working on ideas.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Abudayyeh, seconded by Rudge, to adjourn. Motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on January 14, 2016 in this same location.

Susan Steuer, Secretary