

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL
Minutes of 11 February 2016
Faculty Dining Room 119, Bernhard Center

Members present: Osama Abudayyeh, Onur Arugaslan, Bob Bensley (for Jessaca Spybrook), Steve Bertman, Sharon Carlson, Paul Ciccantell, Chris Coryn, Martha Councell-Vargas, Robin Criter, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Kate Hibbard-Gibbons, Paula Kohler (for Daniel Litynski), David Rudge, Susan Stapleton, Susan Steuer, Patti Van Walbeck, Andre Venter
Members absent: Gary Atkins, Lori Brown, Kaitlyn Cichocki-Goss, Cat Crotchett

Council Chair Paul Ciccantell called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Procedural Items

Acceptance of the Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes of 14 January 2016

Rudge moved, supported by Venter, to approve the minutes of the 14 January meeting as amended. Motion carried.

New Business

Chair Ciccantell introduced new council member Onur Arugaslan, from Finance and Commercial Law.

Udaya Wagle, from the School of Public Affairs and Administration, has resigned from the council in light of new duties.

Continued/Old Business

Steve Bertman reported we have 39 Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award proposals, as opposed to 22 last time. The College of Arts and Sciences has 16 and the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences has almost as many. Health and Human Services has 4, increased from 1 previously. The screening committee will meet tomorrow and recommendations should proceed in April. This may mean reevaluating funding allocations between funds.

*Progress Report on RPC Charge #7 Joint Appointments and Credit –
David Rudge*

Buddy Gray and Denise Keele met to discuss this issue. Both said they had not had problems in terms of assigning credit and so the problems may be confined to a specific unit. Rudge will be meeting with Sherine Obare, associate dean, College of Arts and Sciences, to discuss this issue. The question is which department will manage it and run it, but also for intellectual credit and how this is recorded in PeopleSoft software. Kohler and Abudayyeh noted that this will be argued at each level, department and college. Some of this has a relationship to whether the department wants to administer the grant. Rudge is concerned for the place of faculty in the middle. Kohler notes that the Office of the Vice President for Research wants to be able to represent this more clearly in reports as well.

*Discussion of Discovery Activities, Funding, and Climate Survey Analysis –
Paula Kohler*

Rudge feels there are patterns which do not come out clearly in the analysis. He believes that the discrepancies within the survey may fall along disciplinary lines (science, social science, humanities, fine arts). Bertman agrees that the level of analysis and interpretation provided by the company were not adequate. Kohler says that many new faculty do not have experience with research beyond their dissertations and have no experience grant writing. OVPR has advocated for hiring at a higher level (associate) so that they have that experience. Rudge says if we are hiring people right out of graduate school, we need to train them to design fundable research and get external funding, if we have a goal of doubling outside funding. This varies a great deal by discipline. Coryn notes that there can be little reward for doing research and seeking grants. Rudge argues that the pursuit of funding is proposed as the end, rather than the means to discovery of new knowledge. There is a difference in what people need to do their research in terms of space, equipment and people. Some external funding supports student work and support initiatives. Developing relationships with research officers can help. Kohler recommends an audit of how Facilities & Administrative funds are used – whether to enable research or for other purposes – to see that it is helping faculty with research. Can we arrange buyouts for funded proposals? How do we create a research program rather than a grant proposal? This has been approached in the Discovery series, according to Kohler. Anyone can attend New Faculty Orientation, where this process begins.

Discussion / Information Items

None.

Reports

Council Chair – Paul Ciccantell

The internationalization joint working group with IEC is being formed.

Vice President for Research – Daniel Litynski

Kohler noted that a research obstacle is research recognition. She felt that the talks were very good but poorly attended. She realized timing was a problem. Some materials may be available on ScholarWorks. Kohler reviewed the Spring Convocation activities and other events on February 4-5. She would appreciate ideas and marketing assistance. Interviews and vignettes will be provided. Kohler would have liked to see these filmed but the details could not be worked out. The fall convocation was discussed.

Dean of the Graduate College – Susan Stapleton

Stapleton discussed the three-minute thesis competition. They hoped for 15 and got 21 applications. They are working on DocScholars, two-year assistantships for promising scholars in doctoral programs. The first cohort is doing very well.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Bensley, seconded by Carlson, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on March 17 in Room 204 (MLK).

Susan Steuer
Secretary