

Official Memorandum of Action – MOA-08/03

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL
Name of Council/Committee

6 December 2007 and 14 February 2008
Date of Meetings

RECOMMENDATIONS of the
Research Policies Council

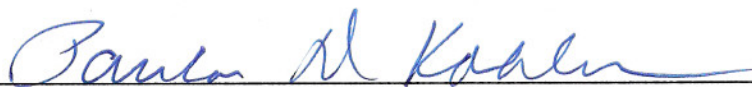
Upon Approval
Implementation Date

The purpose of the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF) is to encourage and support faculty in significant research, rigorous scientific inquiry, original artistic activity, and inventive technology.

Aligned with this purpose, portion FRACASF into three programs, which results in the following:

- Replace the current *Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Work (PPP&E)* program with the *Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA)*
- Rename the *Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)* to the *Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA)*
- Make no changes to the *Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)*

The attached sheets provide specific details and outline the proposed changes.



Paula Kohler, Chair, Research Policies Council

14 February 2008

Date

☒ Approve

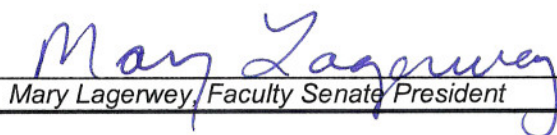
☐ Disapprove

☐ Return to council/committee

Route to council(s): (1)

(2)

Comments: MOA-08/03 was approved at the Faculty Senate meeting on 13 March 2008.



Mary Lagerwey, Faculty Senate President

13 March 2008

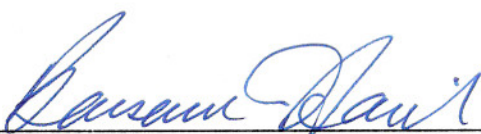
Date

☒ Approve

☐ Disapprove

☐ Other action

Comments:



Bassam Harik, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

4/11/08

Date

☒ Approve

☐ Disapprove

☐ Other action

Comments:



John M. Dunn, President

4/14/08

Date

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Research Policies Council (RPC)

Proposed Memorandum of Action:

Recommendations for Changes to the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)

RPC Approved – December 6, 2007 and February 14, 2008

Background

The Faculty Senate charged the Research Policies Council with the following:

Work with the OVPR to reexamine and recommend policies related to the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF). This may include examining the intent and funding levels of FRACASF, as well as specific policies regarding travel funds for faculty, including intent, level of support, and flexibility. The recommendations will be presented in the form of a MOA.

In consultation with the Senate Executive Board, RPC established the following approach for addressing the charge:

Establish a Select Committee for Recommending FRACASF Policy. The committee should include members from the 2006-07 committee that studied FRACASF history, as well as the FRACASF Chair for 2007-08 (Dr. Applegate). The immediate charge to the Select Committee will be to articulate and recommend an explicit purpose of FRACASF, for review and approval at the November 2007 Council meeting, from which eligibility, application, usage, review, and other relevant policies for research, creative activity, and travel funding can be derived for implementation in 2008-09. The explicit purpose should serve to increase WMU's status as a research university.

Recommendations

Based on the work of the select committee and extensive discussion during council meetings, the RPC recommends that the *purpose of the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF) is to encourage and support faculty in significant research, rigorous scientific inquiry, original artistic activity, and inventive technology.*

Aligned with this purpose, RPC recommends that the fund be portioned into three programs, which result in the following: (a) replace the current *Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Work (PPP&E)* program with the *Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA)*, (b) rename the *Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)* to the *Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA)*, and (c) make no changes to the *Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)*.

- A. Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA):** The purpose of this award is to advance the research mission of the university. It will support creative activities and research that will enhance the scholarly reputation of WMU and the PI. RPC will gather input from faculty

between March 15 and April 15, 2008 before establishing initial submission procedures, award levels, and other program details for implementation during the 2008-09 academic year.

B. Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA): The purpose of this award will be to increase external funding at WMU. Awards will continue to be made annually. Recipients will be required to apply for external funding within 18 months of receiving a FRACAA award.

C. Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF): No changes are proposed.

An outline of the proposed changes follows:

Current FRACASF	Proposed Changes
Purpose Not clearly specified	To encourage and support faculty in significant research, rigorous scientific inquiry, original artistic activity, and inventive technology.
Names of and # Programs Supported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ 1 program for publication expenses — <i>Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Work (PPP&E)</i> ▸ 1 program that supports research and creative activity projects — <i>Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund</i> ▸ 1 program that provides travel funds to present research or creative work — <i>Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ 2 programs that support research and creative activity projects, which can include publication expenses — (1) <i>Support for Faculty Scholars Award</i> and (2) <i>Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award</i> ▸ 1 program that provides travel funds to disseminate research or creative activities — <i>Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)</i>
Description of Programs Supported <i>Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Work (PPP&E)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Purpose not clearly articulated ▸ Provides funds for publication charges ▸ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All those holding board-appointed faculty rank who are members of the bargaining unit at the time the PPP&E proposal is submitted 	<i>Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Purpose is to advance the research mission of the university ▸ Supports research and creative activities that will enhance the scholarly reputation of WMU and the PI ▸ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All those holding board-appointed faculty rank who are members of the bargaining unit at the time the SFS proposals are due ▸ Review criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed activity is well conceived and organized. ▪ A clear rationale for the proposed activity is presented.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed activity explores novel hypotheses or research questions, or advances an art form or mode of exhibition. ▪ The proposed activity is original or innovative. ▪ The proposed project should enhance the scholarship of WMU and the principal investigator.
<p>Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Purpose not clearly articulated ▶ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All those holding board-appointed faculty rank who are members of the bargaining unit at the time the FRACASF proposals are due, who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted a satisfactory final report for most recent FRACASF award ▶ Faculty eligible to apply every three years ▶ Current review criteria include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Merit of the proposed activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well conceived and organized • Clear rationale for proposed activity • Explores novel hypotheses, research questions, or advances an art form or mode of exhibition ▪ Context of project within discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a meaningful contribution within its own field • Address an important issue or problem for society • Serve as a basis for external funding ▪ Project procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods/procedures clearly stated and appropriate for proposed activity • Sufficient access to resources, equipment, and facilities necessary to complete the proposed activity ▪ Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs are clearly itemized and justified 	<p>Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Purpose is to increase external funding at WMU ▶ Projects required to submit external funding proposals within 18 months ▶ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All those holding board-appointed faculty rank who are members of the bargaining unit at the time the FRACASF proposals are due, who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted a satisfactory final report for most recent FRACAA award • Submitted an external funding proposal within 18 months of conclusion of most recent FRACAA award ▶ Faculty eligible to apply every three years ▶ Criteria for review based on merit of proposal. Proposed criteria include (changes in <i>italics</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Merit of the proposed activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well conceived and organized • Clear rationale for proposed activity • Explores novel hypotheses, research questions, or advances an art form or mode of exhibition • <i>Project will result in proposal for external funding</i> ▪ Context of project within discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a meaningful contribution within its own field • Address an important issue or problem for society ▪ Project procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods/procedures clearly stated and appropriate for proposed activity • Sufficient access to resources,

	<p>equipment, and facilities necessary to complete the proposed activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget • Costs are clearly itemized and justified
<p><i>Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Supports travel for dissemination of research and creative activities ▸ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All those holding board-appointed faculty rank who are members of the bargaining unit at the time the FRACASF proposals are due ▸ Award maximum set by RPC annually (currently \$750) ▸ Faculty eligible for up to two awards annually 	<p><i>Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF)</i></p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>

Rationale

The purpose of the current *Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)* has not been clearly documented, although it has generally been interpreted to have a purpose of increasing external funding at the university, as well as providing funding for faculty in the organizational phases of establishing their research and creative activity projects, and/or entering into new areas of research or creative activity. There has also been some confusion because both the overall *fund* and the specific *program* that supports faculty projects have been named FRACASF.

As currently structured, all proposals for research and creative activity projects supported through the FRACASF program “compete” in one primary category, although these proposals range significantly in their intent, scope, and potential for securing external funding. This range across funding levels and types of scholarly activities makes both the review and administration of the fund and the FRACASF program extremely challenging. An historical evaluation of FRACASF proposal and award patterns, as well as discussions with submitters and reviewers, indicate that the current categories of funding do not meet the range of needs of the WMU faculty. Further, only about 28 awards are currently made each year, thus the number of faculty who receive support through the FRACASF program is limited. In addition, while many of the FRACASF proposals request \$10,000, recipients often spend less than this amount, resulting in unused funds that could have supported additional projects.

Therefore, as described previously, RPC proposes to rename the FRACASF *program* and to replace the PPP&E program with the SFS Award to allow a broader range of activities that better meet faculty needs; thus creating two “project type” programs available to faculty – the SFSA and the FRACAA. As a result, more faculty will be funded, the review of the FRACAA awards will be improved, and where applicable, the reviews will be more useful in providing explicit guidance for securing external funding. In addition, through the Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA), faculty will still be able to apply for funds associated with publishing their research or creative works, as with the PPP&E awards.