

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL
Minutes of 18 February 2010

Members present: Brooks Applegate, Carla Chase (for Mary Ann Stark), Chris Coryn, Eileen Evans (for Provost Tim Greene), Greg Laing, Lin Foulk, Daniel Litynski, Tianshu Liu, Jan Van Der Kley (for Vice President Lowell Rinker), Carrie Leatherman, Lewis Pyenson, Alan Wuosmaa, Steven Ziebarth

Guest: Walter Worthy, Research and Sponsored Programs

Chair Steven Ziebarth called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes of 21 January 2010

A motion was made by Van Der Kley and seconded by Evans to approve the minutes of 21 January 2010. Motion passed.

Approval of Agenda of 18 February 2010

A motion was made by Wuosmaa and seconded by Liu to approve the agenda of 18 February 2010. Motion passed.

Reports of Officers

Graduate College—Lewis Pyenson

This is the third year in a row that 100 students have been awarded doctoral degrees. An overwhelming majority of the degrees are research doctorates. Pyenson expressed that many of the dissertations of these students are not published and this might be a way for WMU to increase its publications. Electronic processing of graduate students is facilitating the work of the staff in the Graduate College. The Graduate College is assisting co-PIs in history/political science/chemistry in their applications to fund doctoral students over the next five years.

Office of the Vice President for Research—Daniel Litynski

Four **Technology Development Awards** are currently in the review process. A committee has been meeting which is looking at the National Science Foundation requirement for training in the ethical conduct of research. The committee is in the process of creating the final procedures and will hire a student for ten hours a week to help work on the details. Five **Earmark** proposals have been presented to the provost and president. The next step is to present these proposals to state legislators, who will decide which projects are of interest to them.

Approximately 150-190 participants took part in the OVPR **Research and Dessert** event. The office received a lot of positive feedback and another event will be planned in late September.

Worthy presented statistics regarding recent internal funding awards:

Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award

FY 06-07: 61 applications, 28 funded; \$250,000

FY 07-08: 62 applications, 33 funded; \$250,000

FY 08-09: 39 applications, 22 funded; \$192,379

FY 09-10: 38 applications, still under review (award date May 2010)

Faculty Research Travel Fund

FY 06-07: \$700 max. per trip, 272 trips (all requests funded); \$188,669

FY 07-08: \$700/\$750 max. per trip, 240 trips (all requests funded); \$165,940

FY 08-09: \$850 max. per trip; 257 trips (all requests funded); \$215,326

FY 09-10: \$850 max. per trip; 137 trips so far (all requests funded); \$111,326

Support for Faculty Scholars Award

FY 08-09 (Sept.): 20 applications, 12 funded; \$21,120

FY 08-09 (Jan.): 20 applications, 12 funded; \$20,869

FY 09-10 (Sept.): 9 applications, 9 funded; \$17,699

FY 09-10 (Jan.): 11 applications; still under review

FY 09-10: 20 submitted /12 funded

Research Development Award

FY 07-08: 9 applications, 9 funded; \$22,500

FY 08-09: 8 applications, 8 funded; \$20,000

FY 09-10: 9 applications, 8 funded; \$20,000

Final Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Work (PPP&E)

FY 06-07: 26 applications, 26 funded; \$10,765

FY 07-08: 34 applications, 34 funded; \$16,250

FY 08-09: program suspended

FY 09-10 (July-Feb.): 7 applications, 7 funded; \$1,950

More analysis will be done to ascertain why there is a general decrease in the requests for internal funding. Litynski distributed the current WMU Conflict of Interest Policy along with a comparison of this policy with peer institutions. He also distributed the Intellectual Property Policy.

Council Chair—Steven Ziebarth

Ziebarth thanked the faculty who reviewed the SFSA proposals. Eleven proposals were submitted and five were funded.

Continued Business

Conflict of Interest Policy

Wuosmaa, Ziebarth and Foulk volunteered to serve on a sub-committee to review WMU's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Celebration of Research Day

The committee will meet next Friday. Nominations are starting to be received. The event will take place at the Fetzer Center on 9 April. Worthy will send a list of presenters to members of RPC.

Evans is still accepting applications for Emerging Scholar Award reviewers. Qualifications include active researchers who are not currently serving on RPC and who have not served on the review committee in the past three years. Usually six to twelve researchers are nominated to review the applications. RPC members are asked to submit nominations for reviewers at the March meeting.

New Business

Discussion of Intellectual Property Issues Between WMU and Industry—Parviz Merati, Chair, Department of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering

Merati expressed concerns that WMU's process to acquire major research grants with industry is too restrictive and cumbersome and WMU has lost opportunities to secure industry funding because of this process. Merati said that in order for faculty to double its research output, as the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan has presented, some roadblocks need to be removed to allow the PIs to accomplish this task. The Engineering College at WMU has greatly increased the amount of external funding that it has brought into the University over the last ten years. Industry is easier to work with than the government because PIs can create relationships and establish trust with industry leaders more easily than with the government. Merati is requesting more communication between the PI and the WMU legal offices. The PI needs to be kept in the loop and be kept in the conversation. Merati says PIs need a quicker, more nimble system that will enable a quick response from the University in filling out and submitting these applications or much potential revenue will be lost. Some PIs are having problems with WMU's Intellectual Property Policy and it might need to be reconsidered. Merati would like the PI to have the final say in this application process and for the system to allow for a quicker turnaround for applications (for example, sometimes proposals need to be signed off within a week). He said industry often does not want to negotiate or reword anything in the proposed contract and these contracts are often presented as "take it or leave it."

Litynski said his office is responsible for protecting both the University and the PI and enforcing the Intellectual Property Policy. However, OVPR is looking at how the office can better streamline its administrative process to be more efficient so it can respond to PIs and external funding opportunities more quickly.

Van Der Kley agrees that this process needs to be looked at, but there are people at the University who are clearly responsible for signing off on intellectual property issues and the PI can not have the last word.

Litynski said his office will move forward to streamline the procedures. Members of RPC agreed that the Intellectual Property Policy, which underwent major revisions in 2007, is probably still current.

Adjournment

Ziebarth made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Evans. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lin Foulk, College of Fine Arts Representative for RPC