

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of January 15, 2015

**Members present:** Osama Abudayyeh, Michele Anderson, Steve Bertman, Lori Brown, Cat Crotchett, Paul Ciccantell, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Michael Lindquist, Dan Litynski, Muhammad Razi, David Rudge, Jessaca Spybrook, Patti Van Walbeck, Andre Venter, Susan Steuer. **Member absent:** Susan Stapleton.  
**Also present:** Sue Brodasky, Office of Information Technology.

Council Chair Paul Ciccantell called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

**Procedural Items**

*Acceptance of the Agenda*

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

*Approval of Minutes of November 13, 2014*

A motion was made by Bertman, seconded by Rudge, to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2014 meeting, with amendments. Motion carried.

*Approval of Minutes of December 4, 2014*

A motion was made by Bertman, seconded by Rudge, to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2014 meeting, with an amendment. Motion carried.

**New Business**

None

**Continued/Old Business**

*Planning for Research and Creative Activities Day: Report on Committee Meeting*

Brown reported on the subcommittee meeting. The event will be held on April 24. Discussion followed regarding the target audience for the event (graduate students, potential students, community stakeholders and employers, undergraduates, faculty) and its purpose to encourage and celebrate research. Additional attendance is an important goal. The potential of the event to provide instructive feedback was discussed. Undergraduates will not be included this year, though the committee felt strongly that some opportunity to recognize undergraduate achievements would be desirable. The Graduate Studies Council is partnering with RPC for the graduate event, and the Undergraduate Studies Council may be asked to work on coordinating recognition of undergraduate

research. RPC primarily recruits students and, invites and facilitates faculty scholar presentations, assists with the judging process, identifies winners, and facilitates set up and take down. Physical organization of the event by discipline was discussed, to allow use for instruction and recruitment. This year, faculty scholars will present in the main room to focus attention on their presentations. There was discussion of raffle or prizes. Weekend timing was discussed.

A survey of existing events in the colleges would be helpful and perhaps marketing could be done on a larger scale in the future, incorporating events run by various colleges to increase awareness across campus.

*Research and Creative Activities Day: Discussion of Judging Criteria*

A working committee over the summer developed new criteria.

Judging criteria was particularly problematic in performances. Neither judges nor participants saw criteria before the event last year. The judging criteria for performance is much clearer than before and could be adjusted based upon evaluations for 2016. Performances may be moved off the stage for question and answer with the judges for the comfort of the performers. Providing the criteria to the students and faculty well before the event would help both groups prepare. Providing criteria before the event was recommended for posters and performances.

Judges would like to judge in areas with which they were familiar. One judge specializes in the subject area, but the others do not. Perhaps the pool of judges should meet as a group beforehand to determine judging criteria.

Graduate Student Association ambassadors will work with various colleges and departments to recruit. Ambassadors will also help set up and take down (15-20 individuals anticipated). GSA would also like to have an event evaluation by the students so that issues can be addressed. Evaluation by judges was also discussed.

The discussion of the judging criteria continued. The wording "live presentation" in the poster judging was considered misleading, though it was agreed that the oral interaction between the judges and students was important. Judges may be asked to rank the materials they saw. Comments would serve an educational service for the student if they were provided without numbers. The implications for judge recruitment due to additional work in providing feedback were discussed. Students might approach the judges for feedback after the event. Involvement by faculty members from the student's department and suggestion boxes were suggested, prompting a distinction between communication feedback (typos, ability to explain) and research design feedback. An additional page on the judging form for anonymous comments could be added.

The judging scale was debated. A scale of 100 rather than 50 was proposed and discussed. Because each judge sees only a small fraction of the posters, there is a question of the application of the scale by different individual judges. Removal

of the word mediocre was recommended. The description of 3 (average) was considered misleading, with the suggestion of using "good" to differentiate from very good, the next higher ranking. These issues will be passed back to the subcommittee. Using the NSF scale or university grading scale to clarify language was also suggested.

Summary: RPC advocates the option of feedback for students, probably through an additional field or page on the judging form; undergraduate involvement or a separate event to be investigated for next year; coordination with college research events is suggested. Evaluation of the event is also recommended. Recommendations for changes to judging forms will be sent to the committee for consideration.

Rudge moved that we accept the form as presented with minor changes with friendly amendments, seconded by Abudayyeh. Feedback, minor word changes, performance changes.

Sue Steuer volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee, in particular to help work with ScholarWorks.

### **Reports**

*Council Chair – Paul Ciccantell*

No report

*Dean of the Graduate College – Susan Stapleton*

No report

*Vice President for Research – Daniel Litynski*

Faculty survey deadline has been extended to Valentine's Day.

Discovery Experts has been tweaked so that grant information is being sent to faculty who opt into the system. There may be some issues with updating grant opportunities. 13,700 sessions by 1100 users have been recorded in the year since the system was implemented. New options will be provided by the system in the future.

Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award, Support for Faculty Scholar Award, and Undergraduate Research Excellence postcards were sent and deadlines are upcoming.

Seminars for office coordinators on working with internal and external funding are also available.

Academic program reviews are now in. Discovery plans are in the process of being reviewed and updated and completion by May is forecast. That material may be posted on the website at the Office of the Vice President for Research to help with collaboration between researchers.

External grant submissions and awards have been updated since December. We have more awards this year than the last three years. Submissions remain level. Expenditures are running lower than usual. FRACAA and SFSA statistics are available.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Rudge, seconded by Bertman, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Susan Steuer  
Secretary