

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL
Minutes of 10 November 2016
Room 204 (MLK), Bernhard Center

Members present: Osama Abudayyeh, Steve Bertman, Paul Ciccantell, Chris Coryn, Robin Criter, Martha Councell-Vargas, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Betty McKain (for Patti Van Walbeck), Sarah Pratt (for Dan Litynski), Muhammad Razi, Jessaca Spybrook, Sue Stapleton, Susan Steuer, Andre Venter
Also present: John Risley, Office of the Vice President for Research

Council Chair Paul Ciccantell called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

Procedural Items

Acceptance of the Agenda

A motion was made by Venter, seconded by Spybrook, to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of 13 October 2016

Spybrook moved, supported by Abudayyeh, to approve the minutes of the 13 October meeting as amended by Bertman to take note of the changes in the funding allocation. Motion carried.

Discussion/Information Items

*Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award Study Committee
– Steve Bertman*

Bertman presented information about the process by which questions and data were pursued, which included data from OVPR and qualitative interviews. Bertman and Coryn wish to determine if getting a FRACAA award improves the chances of getting external funding both from numbers and from speaking to researchers who have and have not applied for FRACAA and who have subsequently applied for external awards. Once the quantitative data has been compiled, they will determine who to target for a few substantive interviews. Some data has been compiled and Spybrook notes that the data needs to be reformatted for analysis, which will take a little time. Bertman has some recommendations for improved data management and perhaps more staff support. Part of the problem is clearly based in the systems which track various aspects of the data. The question of how direct the connection between the FRACAA, submissions for external funding and success should be was discussed. The committee would also like to find out if unsuccessful FRACAA applicants are equally likely to submit and be awarded external funding.

It may be possible to get a student to do this as an internship credit in Spybrook's department. Discussion of best means of tracking (PAF, etc.) followed. These problems may constitute part of the obstacles to research which we need to address. The value of the PAF for tracking external grants under the new definition, which does not include a PAF part of the process if the grants go to an individual. We may need to look at different disciplines different ways, related to the kinds of funding available. Discussion of whether the new system is customizable to help track this in the future ensued, particularly on the PAF system. It was noted that many things are recommended to be added to the PAF. The new platform may be called "competition space." Bertman will look at the new interface and see how apt it is to our purposes.

Discussion of Office of the Vice President for Research Data on External Funding

This material was distributed in September. Ciccantell proposes that we each examine the data to look for where issues and obstacles are in research proposals. Ciccantell notes that the regulatory oversight is a real problem for OVPR. He notes that the funding rate for small proposals is very good, but small ones are not being funded. He asks that each member look at the data and see what they notice. He notes few changes between 2012-2013 and 2015-2016. Bertman suggests we compare it with the Carnegie peer data.

A motion to table to December when Litynski is in attendance and receiving the materials electronically was made by Venter and seconded by Bertman. Motion carried.

Reports

Chair's Report – Paul Ciccantell

Ciccantell arranged a meeting of the Support for Faculty Scholar Award committee at the Parkview Campus on December 1. The current budget appears to be on track, according to current numbers from OVPR.

Vice President for Research – Daniel Litynski

No further report

Dean of the Graduate College – Susan Stapleton

No further report

Adjournment

A motion was made by Bertman, seconded by Abudayyeh, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on December 8 in the same location.

Susan Steuer
Secretary