

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of 15 March 2012

**Members present:** Alhassan Abdul-Muhmin, Brooks Applegate, Osama Abudayyeh, Steve Bertman, Kimberly Dunn Adams (for Martha Councell-Vargas), Gene Freudenburg, Muralidhar Ghantasala, James Kiddle, Paula Kohler (for Vice President for Research Dan Litynski), Carrie Leatherman, Sandy Steinbach, Vladimir Risukhin, Stephen Tasko. **Absent without substitution:** Manuel Bautista, Mary Ann Stark, and Lisa Minnick (sabbatical). **Also present:** Allison (Green) Weiner, Research and Sponsored Programs; Hal Jenson, Dean, WMU School of Medicine.

Council Chair Brooks Applegate called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes of 9 February 2012**

A motion was made by Steinbach and seconded by Bertman to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

**Approval of Agenda for 15 March 2012**

A motion was made by Kohler and seconded by Tasko to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

**Reports**

*Council Chair – Brooks Applegate*

The chair reminded the RPC members that the scheduled meeting with Dr. Hal Jenson, Dean, WMU School of Medicine, should focus on how the dean envisions integration of the new School of Medicine with current and planned WMU research. Bertman asked why the meeting with Dean Jenson was listed under Charge #9. Chair Applegate noted that this meeting was prompted by a formal charge to the council by the Faculty Senate Executive Board.

*Vice President for Research – Paula Kohler for Dan Litynski*

Associate Vice President for Research Paula Kohler reported that Jack Luderer resigned his position as associate dean of the WMU School of Medicine.

Kohler reported on a number of activities occurring within the Office of the Vice President for Research.

- First, in an effort to determine strengths of WMU, OVPR has identified eight general focus areas for enhanced research. Applegate asked about the research domains and how these areas were identified. Kohler reported these focus areas came about from a variety of input and that the focus areas were not necessarily fixed. The areas generally include

engineering, education and education leadership, health and transportation, basic and applied biomedical research and environment and sustainability. The next step will be to identify people to bring together to form teams.

- Second, Kohler announced a number of activities aimed at fostering funded research at WMU.
  - Representatives from the National Science Foundation were having a workshop hosted at Northwestern University in Evanston IL in late March. A total of 27 WMU faculty/staff were attending the workshop. OVPR was paying the tuitions to attend and individual colleges were covering the room and board.
  - A similar workshop sponsored by the National Institutes of Health is occurring in Indianapolis on 17-18 April. As with the NSF workshop, OVPR and colleges will cost share the event. There is support for eight faculty and three associate deans. Individuals need to express interest by 19 March.
  - OVPR is hosting a series of workshops for faculty 2-4 May. All workshops will be lead by an outside person who specializes in developing research proposals. Day one will be a full day event that focuses on proposal development. There are 25 spaces available for faculty. The second day will focus on specific funding agencies (i.e. Department of Energy, Department of Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Science Foundation). Attendees can go to all workshops or just individual meetings. The final day is a workshop limited to Research Development Awardees. Applegate asked if much attention is being directed at foundations (as opposed to federal sources). Kohler noted that some efforts are directed at this, but not as much as for federal funding agencies.

Kohler reported that the Research Advisory Team is currently working on developing some financial compensation guidelines that will simultaneously meet federal agency limits on allowing using grant funds to pay faculty overload salary, conform to the AAUP contract and maintain an incentive to faculty to seek federal funding.

Kohler also reported that the associate dean's group is working to develop a 'model' portfolio for colleges and/or departments which can then be used to reflect current work by people at WMU. This would be helpful when seeking support from various funding agencies.

Kohler reported that Gina Betcher is leaving WMU and, as a result, OVPR will be searching for a new research officer.

*Interim Dean of the Graduate College – Gene Freudenburg*

No report as Interim Dean Freudenburg had to leave the meeting. On his behalf Applegate reported that 26 April was Graduate Student Awards Day.

## Continued Business

### *Council Charges – Brooks Applegate*

#### Charge #9 - Begin discussion of medical school issues pertaining to research. – Hal Jenson, Dean, WMU School of Medicine

Chairperson Applegate introduced Dean Hal Jenson to the group. Jenson reported that the primary activity at the Medical School is to complete the application for accreditation. The Medical School must be accredited by the end of 2012 and all paperwork is due by the end of March 2012. Jenson reported this to be an enormous task involving hundreds of people inside and outside of WMU. The process is complicated by the fact that the Medical School is a joint venture of WMU, Bronson and Borgess. As it is considered a distinct entity it requires separate authorization from the state of Michigan as well as accreditation from the Liaison Committee of Medical Education (LCME) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Jenson emphasized that the School of Medicine is not just a four year program but also includes graduate medical education and continuing education. The Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies (KCMS) will be merging into the Medical School which includes approximately 500 people.

Jenson reported that medical research can have a huge impact on the region. He noted that the estimated total economic impact of medical/health research in the U.S. is about 500 billion dollars a year and about 25 billion dollars a year in Michigan. Jenson reported that most of the impact in Michigan is in the Detroit area. The advantage of a Medical School is that it will open research doors that otherwise would not be available such as clinical trials. Jenson sees opportunities for collaboration between WMU faculty and the medical school.

Jenson reported that remodeling is beginning on the downtown building that will house the Medical School. There will be four floors of research space. There will be a single department of basic biomedical sciences. Jenson reported he is currently recruiting for a Chair of Biomedical Sciences. Following that, the goal will be to hire approximately six basic science faculty in 2013 with the rest being hired in 2014. Jenson expects there to be a total of about a dozen basic scientists.

Jenson reported that tuition is expected to be approximately \$50-55,000 per year. Admission requirements will initially be similar to other medical schools. Jenson did add that a report has recently come out that suggests traditional premed courses might not be the best courses and that plans are for the Medical School to require more behavioral sciences (e.g. psychology and sociology) for incoming students. However, that would not be feasible in the first year.

Bertman asked Jenson about the level of interest in the current medical community to do research or does he see research coming mostly from recruiting new faculty. Jenson responded that there is motivation to engage in research by the clinicians in the community since they understand that clinical trials research allow their patients access to the best treatments and procedures. Jenson also noted that the Medical School cannot compete for research in all areas and is looking to have yet-to-be determined research focus areas.

Jenson confirmed that Jack Luderer was leaving the Medical School and was very appreciative of the five years he committed to the project. There will be a search for a new associate dean of research.

Ghantasala asked about future plans for a Ph.D. program. Jenson responded that he envisioned MD-Ph.D. opportunities but not a Ph.D. program independent of WMU.

Tasko asked about whether the Medical School will have a separate research office or collaborate with WMU's OVPR. Jenson responded that a distinct IRB process is needed for clinical trials. Jenson suggested that there may be the need to contract services from OVPR if needed, but is not ruling out any options at the moment (i.e. that there may be a need for an independent research office in the future).

When asked about barriers to success, Jenson reported that some barriers include building a strong faculty of scientists, transitioning into the new building, and coordinating the new hires with the development of a funding for the research infrastructure.

Applegate asked what Dean Jenson was looking for in the early hires. Jenson responded that he was looking for "talent and fit." By fit he meant someone who can handle a new place with many new opportunities. The first recruits will steer the direction of future hires.

Applegate thanked Dean Jenson for coming and encouraged everyone to keep the doorway of communication open between WMU and the WMU School of Medicine.

#### Charge #6 - Research and Creative Activities Day Subcommittee

Allison Green reported that there were currently 25 graduate student submissions and 21 judges secured for the event. Although the official deadline for submission was Friday, 16 March, it was decided to extend the deadline to Friday, 23 March with the hope of receiving more submissions.

Abudayyeh motioned to table other charges until the next meeting and Tasko seconded. Motion passed.

### **New Business**

No new business.

The next meeting is Thursday, 12 April, at 2:30 pm.

### **Adjournment**

Bertman made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Kohler seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephen Tasko on behalf of Mary Ann Stark