

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL (RPC)
Minutes of 13 March 2014 Meeting

Members present: Osama Abudayyeh, Steve Bertman, Lori Brown, Paul Ciccantell (arriving 3:21 p.m.), Martha Councell-Vargas, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Michael Kiella, Dan Litynski, David Rudge, Susan Stapleton, Mary Ann Stark, Susan Steuer, Betty McKain (for Patti Van Walbeck)

Absent without substitution: E. Brooks Applegate, Thomas Rienzo (for Muhammad Razi), Matt Reid

Quorum Call: A quorum was present at the start of the meeting.

Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Stark called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

Procedural Items

Approval of Agenda for 13 March 2014

A motion was made by Michael Kiella, supported by David Rudge, to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of 13 February 2014

An improvement was suggested by Dr. Litynski regarding the researchers coming on board with the Homer Stryker M. D. Medical School in the Charge #8 report.

A motion was made by Susan Stapleton, with support from Muralidhar Ghantasala, to approve the amended 13 February 2014 minutes. Motion passed.

Discussion Items: Michael Kiella

- Dr. Stark asked to hear a report from the RPC Secretary that was requested by Dr. Applegate regarding the requirements for a quorum at the RPC monthly meetings.
- Kiella provided a written opinion interpreted from the Standard Code for Parliamentary Procedure - 4th edition (Alice Sturgis original edition) which the Faculty Senate has designated as the official procedures structure for the RPC.
 - The opinion document is attached as **Appendix I**.
- Kiella asked the RPC if a majority of the members is based on 18 voting members (the fully authorized membership), or 16 filled (the currently filled) members (absent Drs. Kiddle and Wuosmaa from the College of Arts and Sciences).

- Dr. Abudayyeh agreed to petition the Faculty Senate to resolve this question and convey the requirement to the RPC
- Post-meeting communication: Dr. Rantz and Dr. Abudayyeh concur that the current membership count for the RPC is 16 members. **Appendix II**.
- This means that a quorum of the RPC members is 16/2+1, or 9 members.

Reports

Council Vice Chair – Mary Ann Stark

Council Vice Chair Stark did not offer a report

Vice President for Research – Dan Litynski

Vice President Litynski provided the following:

- The Elsevier Discovery Experts program was linked to the Michigan Portal.
 - The portal was checked in the domain of Personal Expertise to verify that it works.
 - Asked for statistics from Elsevier to find
 - 896 visits to the site from 719 unique viewers
 - 6499 pages viewed and approximately 300 of the inquiries were from inside WMU
 - Region making the highest number of requests is North Carolina
 - Discussion regarding grant funding possibilities
 - Prefer to have questions about the Elsevier Discovery Experts program sent to the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVRP) (e.g. keyword improvements and additions, personal descriptors, &c.).
- Draft reports received on the Hanover study and analysis of preliminary data for Discovery Plans

Dean of the Graduate College – Susan Stapleton

Dean Stapleton reported:

- Reported on the progress of the WMU-internal search for an associate dean of the Graduate College
 - Discussion regarding Grant Writing
 - Posting coming down on 17 March 2014
- Topic of debt load for both undergraduate and graduate students

- Originally tied to a grant that was not received, but WMU became an affiliate of the group, which will conduct seminars to help manage student expectations.
 - Program will outline and inform students regarding average debt load, average income expectations in a particular discipline based on a national dataset.
 - www.gradsense.org
- Celebration of Graduate Student Achievements is scheduled for 28 April 2014 at 5 p.m.

Continued/Old Business

2013-14 Council Charges

1. No Report
2. No Report
3. OVPR working with EPIGEUM
4. Continued discussion regarding Conflict of Interest (COI) regarding reviews that have financial impact/outcomes, and are intended to be anonymous in the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA) and Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA) processes
 - General discussion followed regarding COI definition, and other topics; e.g. anonymity of reviewers, anonymity of RPC members as to the need and reach of current COI that pertains to other areas; e.g. Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF)
 - The process requires a procedure to certify that no COI exists
 - Dr. Abudayyeh will verify with the Faculty Senate that resolution of this matter is not a policy change, but a matter of procedure (i.e. guidelines and a waiver form).
 - Drs. Litynski and Bertman will create a recommendation for the RPC.
 - Outstanding Question: will the resulting procedure require a Memorandum of Action (MOA)?
5. FRACAA reviewers still reading: report next month
6. Research and Creative Activities Day – 11 April 2014
 - The College of Arts and Sciences is still under-represented for judging
 - Six Music and Creative Writing presentations are currently scheduled
 - There was question regarding the cut-off for submissions.
 - The RPC discussed and recommended the deadline be extended
 - Subsequently, the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) clarified all dates via an email
7. Discussion that the SFSA rubric is inadequate to inform submitters
 - A panel, which could include Melanie Greer, Drs. Kohler and Litynski to revise proposal guidelines, was discussed.
8. Researchers are coming on board at the Homer Stryker, M.D. Medical School.
 - Structure of the required Human Subjects Institutional Review Boards (HSIRBs) are currently under discussion
9. No Report

New Business

None

Adjournment

Michael Kiella made the motion to adjourn, with support by Steve Bertman. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The next meeting is Thursday, 10 April 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in the Faculty Lounge of the Bernhard Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael L. Kiella

Appendix I

Question¹:

How do parliamentary procedures² guide us with respect to the loss of a quorum?

(The parenthetical after each statement directs the reader to the specific language in the attached annotated contents of Chapter 13 QUORUM of the Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, pp.111-113.)

Answer:

- The RPC may not transact business in the absence of a quorum³. (1)
- It is the duty⁴ of the presiding officer to *declare the meeting adjourned* at any times it is apparent that a quorum is not present. (5)
 - If the chair fails to do so, it is the duty of any member who doubts that a quorum is present at a particular time during a meeting to rise to a point of order and request that the members be counted. (6)
 - Or, a member may ask the presiding officer whether a quorum is present.
 - Both questions are in order at any time. (6)

¹ Requested of Michael Kiella, Secretary of The Research Policies Council (RPC) by E. Brooks Applegate, Ph.D., RPC Chair, on 13 February 2014.

² The RPC uses *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, now in its fourth edition (2001), as revised by The American Institute of Parliamentarians; the original edition by Alice Sturgis.

³ The By-laws of an organization prescribe the definition of a quorum. In the absence of any more specific prescription, The Standard Code defines a quorum as a majority of the members. A majority is defined as *one-half the members plus one*.

⁴ Duty: 1. something that one is expected or required to do by moral or legal obligation. 2. the binding or obligatory force of something that is morally or legally right; moral or legal obligation. 3. an action or task required by a person's position or occupation; function: the duties of a clergyman. (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/duty>)

- The RPC may hear reports, or programs in the absence of a quorum. (2)
- Urgent business that must be conducted on an emergency basis (in the absence of a quorum) may be conducted at the discretion of those present. However, the actions of the non-quorum body must be ratified at the next meeting where a quorum is present; otherwise, the actions remain individual actions, and not actions of the institution. (2a)
- The presiding officer is counted in computing a quorum. (4)
- A question about the presence of a quorum at the time of any specific vote must be asked prior to the time the vote is to be taken. It cannot be asked after the vote was taken. (7a)
- If the question (*is a quorum present*) is not asked, and the minutes indicate that a quorum was previously present, then the presumption is that a quorum is present because, as outlined above, it is the duty of the presiding officer and the members, equally, to inform when a quorum is not present. (7b)

Appendix II

From: janice.anderson@wmich.edu [mailto:janice.anderson@wmich.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2014 2:08 PM
To: michael.l.kiella@wmich.edu
Cc: Dr. Osama Abudayyeh, PhD, PE; mary.stark@wmich.edu;
 brooks.applegate@wmich.edu
Subject: RPC Quorum

Hi Michael -

Dr. Abudayyeh forwarded your email to me plus discussed it with Senate President Rantz. For a quorum, you need to have half plus one of the membership present excluding any vacant membership positions. Discussion can take place but for a vote to be called there needs to be a quorum present. Thank you for inquiring about this as the quorum issue sometimes is overlooked in meetings.

--Janice Anderson

Begin forwarded message:

From: Michael L Kiella <michael.l.kiella@wmich.edu>
Date: March 13, 2014 at 5:12:50 PM EDT
To: Osama Abudayyeh <osama.abudayyeh@wmich.edu>
Cc: Mary Ann Stark <mary.stark@wmich.edu>, brooks applegate <brooks.applegate@wmich.edu>
Subject: Question from RPC re: Quorum

Dr. Abudayyeh,
 Thank you for agreeing to advance an RPC's question to the Faculty Senate for clarification. The question arises from a respect for the Faculty Senate's design-intention of providing equitable and balanced representation on the RPC, especially in cases where votes authorize MOA, recommend policy, or have financial implication.

Background

Currently the Faculty Senate has authorized eighteen voting members to comprise the RPC membership.

At present, two authorized seats in the College of Arts and Sciences are vacant (previously James Kiddle and Alan Wuosmaa).

We understand that those seats will not be filled prior to the end of this year's RPC session. For the purpose of quorum at the monthly RPC meetings, a majority of voting members (or their voting substitute) must be present.

A majority is defined as one-half of the members plus one.

Often, organizations clarify, or place condition on their quorum rules in the by-laws approved by their sponsors. In this case, the RPC proceeds from Faculty Senate Charges and not from by-laws.

Questions

Is the current membership of the RPC eighteen or sixteen voting members (eighteen authorized less two vacant)?

Must the RPC have 9, or 10 *members present* to declare a quorum?

Method of computation:

Is it the intention of the Faculty Senate to require a majority of the **authorized** members to be present (e.g. $18/2 + 1$); or a majority of the **seated** members (e.g. $16/2 + 1$)?

The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, 4th ed. (Alice Sturgis) Chapter 13
 Quorum: Computing a Quorum; p112 states:

"A quorum always refers to the number of members *present*, not the number *voting*. If a quorum is present, a vote is valid even though fewer than the quorum vote..."

This method of computation provides no help in answering the current question as the RPC question remains: must we have 9, or 10 *members present* to declare a quorum?

Again, thank you for your help in obtaining clarification, with my very...

Best to you

Michael L. Kiella ABD-PhD, Doctoral Research Associate