

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of 11 April 2019

**Members Present:** Osama Abudayyeh, Onur Arugaslan, Manuel Bautista, Martha Councill-Vargas, Chris Coryn, Anthony DeFulio, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Katherine Joslin, Terri Goss Kinzy, Aneudy Mota, Paul Solomon, Susan Stapleton, Susan Steuer, Patti Van Walbeck (for Vice President Jan Van Der Kley), Andre Venter

**Members Absent:** Jonathan Eiseman, Jennifer Bott, Willem Homan, Jill Rowe

The meeting was called to order at 2:31 p.m. by Chair Steuer, and a quorum was met.

**A. Procedural Items**

*Acceptance of the Agenda*

At the suggestion of Steuer, the agenda was amended: A report on Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award was added to Information Items. A motion was made by Solomon, seconded by Ghantasala, to approve the agenda as modified. Motion carried.

*Approval of Minutes*

The minutes of 14 March were approved as written.

**B. Information Items**

1. **Charge 5:** Ghantasala and Kinzy distributed two lists of policies that need review by the RPC on a regular basis. There was discussion about how to find a procedure that will reconcile the differing schedules; the RPC charge dictates a 5-year review of policies; University policy requires reviews every three years. Kinzy said that the Office of the Vice President for Research will track changes to policies and send "pre-reviewed" policies to the RPC. Venter suggested alternating 'light' and more 'substantial' reviews by RPC every three years. Kinzy said there is a backlog of policies that need review. A motion was made by Van Walbeck, and seconded by Ghantasala, to align the schedule with reviews every three years. The motion was approved. There was further discussion about which policies need to be reviewed first, and when. Kinzy said 15 policies need to be reviewed now. These would include all of those under the heading Grants and Contracts; a policy on Conflict of Interest; and one on Intellectual Property. Kinzy said she will make a prioritized list and send those policies to RPC members by email. There was discussion as to whether there will be a quorum to begin the process at the May meeting.
2. **Charge 6:** Ghantasala explained that the RPC needs to recommend best practices to communicate research and creative activities, find ways to

highlight accomplishments in research and creative activity by faculty, and share them with Marketing and Strategic Communications, as well as find other means to call attention to faculty accomplishments and record them for posterity. In discussion, the need for immediacy of reporting was emphasized. A wide-ranging discussion included the potential use of SelectedWorks in ScholarWorks and the Faculty Activity Report System (FARS) for this purpose. There was agreement on the need for procedures that addresses a repository for data on accomplishments, and for need of individuals to make judgements on what information is most valuable. In addition, regarding the need for a depository, there was agreement on the need to identify proper channels for conveying information, the need for people with expertise in how publicity can best be generated, and for keeping a broad-based history of what WMU accomplishes. Venter noted that current practice is to email administrators broadly across campus. Kinzy recommended that RPC look at colleges who do this well as models.

**Representatives of the various colleges were asked to inquire about the process in their college and report back to Steuer and Solomon before the May meeting about whether there are official processes for reporting faculty research to the Dean's office and what these processes are.** This will allow the council to better understand how this information could be communicated University-wide and make recommendations for a pipeline for research information. **Solomon volunteered to recruit specialists in social media and marketing to come and speak to the council in the fall. He will contact Tony Proudfoot, vice president for marketing and strategic communication, to solicit recommendations.**

Some initial suggestions to explore included: 5-10 points of best practices

- FARS
  - Convocations and other recognition events
  - Publications – contact library
  - Timeliness – liaison to marketing, social media
  - Each college should have a process
  - Network across the University
  - Repository in each college
3. **FRACAA:** Bautista reported on conclusion of the FRACAA awards for the current year. Fifteen proposals were approved; 12 were rejected. There were fewer applicants overall, compared to last year. Two applications were made in the arts; they were both funded. Two of six of the qualitative sciences were approved. \$147,268.02 was approved for the accepted proposals. With money left over, money rolls over to next year. The Faculty Research Travel Fund, as well as the Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Works, funded at the same rate. More than \$32,000 is left over in FRACAA and will be used for overages, then rolled over. Kinzy praised the efficiency of the committee's deliberations.

### C. Action Item

None

### D. Updates and Reports

1. Steuer: The council needs a new secretary and new vice chair. DeFulio volunteered to be vice chair.
2. Kinzy: Candidates are being interviewed for the position of associate vice president for research. First quarter data will be out soon. A trend is evident showing that Facilities & Administrative (F&A) recoveries are down. Soon there will be a meeting with Mayor Bobby Hopewell about entrepreneurial endeavors.
3. Stapleton:
  - Spring awards for graduate students have been announced; about \$40,000 total.
  - Graduate students traveled to Washington, D.C. and advocated with congressional representatives to make college more affordable. There is a lack of loans available for graduate students. Also advocated for was research money and for federal policies that affect international students, that will be “friendlier” to international students. Mota spoke about the need for more fellowships for graduate students who had limitations on time. Stapleton said that there are those who are not supportive; it’s a question of public good vs personal good; why the opportunities are important for the nation.
  - The Research and Creative Activities Poster and Performance Day was held earlier in the day at which 52 posters were presented by graduate students doing research, and creative activities.
  - On April 25, there will be an honors competition with approximately 35 Brown and Gold graduates participating, and more than 100 participants in total.
  - Representatives from Aquinas College and Kalamazoo College were on campus to evaluate WMU for graduate work.
  - There was also discussion about the pros and cons of having FRACAA posters at the convocation, versus the event described above.
  - Stapleton also talked about the fact that graduate students also want tours. They need to know about the culture of the campus and the city. “It’s become a big business,” she said.

Ghantasala raised questions about the relative amounts that graduate assistants are paid. Stapleton also talked about the need to provide ‘pathways’ for graduate students to be successful. She just signed an agreement with Grand Valley State University.

### E. Adjournment

It was moved by Van Walbeck to adjourn; seconded by Stapleton. Motion carried.  
The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Paul Solomon and Susan Steuer