

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of 12 September 2019

**Members Present:** Osama Abudayyeh, Onur Arugaslan, Manuel Bautista, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Steven Carr, Martha Councell-Vargas, Anthony DeFulio, David Huffman, Betty McKain (for Terri Kinzy and Patti Van Walbeck) Louann Bierlein Palmer (for Wanda Hadley), Jill Rowe, Paul Solomon, Susan Steuer, Andre Venter

**Guest:** Richard Gershon, Faculty Senate President

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Council Chair Onur Arugaslan, who welcomed the council membership to the first 2019-20 fall meeting.

**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

*Acceptance of the Agenda*

A motion was made by Steuer to accept the revised agenda, which was distributed at the beginning of the meeting with the additions of two action items, 7. Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund and 8. Faculty Research Travel Fund. Rowe seconded. Motion carried.

*Approval of the Minutes*

A motion was made by Venter to approve the minutes of 16 May 2019, as distributed; Solomon seconded. Motion carried.

*Announcements/Chair's Remarks*

There were no remarks.

**DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEM**

*Presentation of RPC Charges for 2019-20*

Gershon discussed the importance of the work of RPC and highlighted charges:

#5 "Recommend best practices to communicate research and creative activities and highlighting the accomplishments in research and creative activity by faculty and share them with the office of Marketing and Strategic Communications." Gershon noted that this is a problem and asked that RPC look at the ways this can be improved at WMU using strategies used by other institutions.

#7 "Develop a procedure for the regular review of the University policies related to research and creative activities by the RPC." Gershon noted that many policies are very old and do not reflect current expectations for research policies. He noted that Research Misconduct would be covered today and asked for a very serious review of policies as memoranda of action are proposed to make sure that the policies which are being reviewed are timely and in the best interest of the faculty prior to moving them forward to the Faculty Senate Executive Board.

**ACTION ITEM**

*MOA-19/08 Creation of the Eligibility to Serve as WMU Principal Investigators on Sponsored Projects Policy*

A motion was made by DeFulio to approve MOA-19/08; Byrd-Jacobs seconded.

Bierlein Palmer noted that the designation of tenure/tenure track faculty specialists is not clarified throughout the MOA.

A motion was made by Bierlein Palmer that on page 2, in each list of designated individuals, amend second bullet to read "all tenure/track faculty specialists". Also, on page 3, fourth primary bullet term, add fourth secondary bullet to read "term faculty and faculty specialists." Abudayyeh seconded. The amendment passed.

The motion passed to approve MOA-19/08, as amended.

*MOA-19/09 Revision of the Research Misconduct Policy*

A motion was made by Byrd-Jacobs to approve MOA-19/09, seconded by Abudayyeh.

A motion was made by Abudayyeh to remove bold-faced bullet on page 9 beginning "In addition" on the grounds that it repeats earlier information and is already covered in the WMU-AAUP contract. Rowe seconded. Discussion ensued. DeFulio asked if this creates non-compliance with federal regulations. Bierlein Palmer asked if additional language could be added to make the statement comply with the contract. Abudayyeh argued that it is repetitive and redundant with the contract and other policies which are more clearly outlined elsewhere. He is concerned with the vagueness of the statement.

The motion did not pass.

MOA-19/09 was postponed for further information from OVPR about the intent of that language, by a vote of 7 Yes, 6 No, 0 abstentions.

*Support for Faculty Scholar Award Deadline Revision*

A motion was made by Bautista to accept the revised proposal for SFSA dates, with the amendment that the time between notification and award be shortened to two weeks on the proposed timeline from OVPR. Solomon seconded.

Discussion ensued because the handout had not been received by all members. The dates and timelines were discussed in relation to faculty timelines for research. The consensus of the council was that two weeks was an adequate amount of time for OVPR to release funds after the notification of award. Revised dates for use of funds would be May 15 and December 15.

The motion carried.

The following policies have come from the University Policy Committee. These are required on federal grants and the policy is simply to codify WMU compliance with federal flow-through projects, particularly in view of a coming review in November. Discussion ensued about whether these are action items or simply information items and what the appropriate actions should be on the part of the council.

- *Fly America Act Policy*
- *Unallowable Costs – Reasonableness Doctrine Policy*
- *Subrecipient Monitoring Policy*

These materials were not received by RPC members prior to the meeting. Discussion ensued about whether things were being made more difficult by these policies. McKain noted that closer monitoring was being done, but many procedures were longstanding. In November, a representative from the National Science Foundation is coming to examine WMU policies to make sure that Federal regulations are being followed. Further review of these items was postponed until the members can see them.

*Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund  
and Faculty Research Travel Fund*

A motion was made by Abudayyeh to keep the fund levels per award at the same level as last year and each program be allocated as it was last year with the rollover funds designated for Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Works. DeFulio seconded. This should be revisited in December.

PPP&E went over last year, but the others were fine. Over \$23,000 rolls over from 2018-19 because RPC was focused on only funding quality proposals and those funds were designated for PPP&E. The FRTF did not go over, but it was the first time in many years. Discussion of the allocation ensued, but it was agreed to revisit the issue at the December meeting.

The motion passed.

**UPDATES AND REPORTS**

*RPC Chair and Vice Chair – Arugaslan and DeFulio*

No significant updates were warranted.

*Office of the Vice President for Research – McKain*

Expenditures and awards were up last year. Submissions remained flat. McKain provided several charts reviewing submissions during 2018-19 and referred the council to the full report on the OVPR website. She noted upcoming policy reviews.

*Interim Dean of the Graduate College – Byrd-Jacobs*

A graduate award specialist has been hired to process fellowship and graduate award applications and promote graduates applying for their own funding. Workshops to increase productivity from specialists are being offered across campus. There is a new email newsletter for students about funding opportunities. Another goes to chairs, graduate directors and coordinators.

**OTHER**

The Interdisciplinary Collaborations Committee needs two additional members, including the chair, as Steve Bertman (chair) is on sabbatical and Katherine Joslin

has retired. Bautista offered to become a member. A representative from a humanities discipline and a chair from the body of the subcommittee still need to be recruited.

Solomon noted that he had requested a visit to the council by Tony Proudfoot, vice president for marketing and strategic communication, but had received no response and asked the council if he should pursue it. It was agreed that he should proceed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Abudayyeh, seconded by Rowe. Motion carried.  
The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Submitted by Susan Steuer, RPC secretary