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**RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of 10 October 2024****Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Research Policies Council was called to order at 2:30 p.m. on 10 October 2024 in Walwood Commons Bertha Davis Room 111W by Andre Venter, chair.

**Members in Attendance:** Onur Arugaslan, Mert Atilhan, Carrie Barrett, Patrick Bennett, Amy Bocko, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Christopher Cheatham (substitute for Julian Vasquez Heilig), Angela Groves, Wanda Hadley, Selim Ozyurek, Jesse Smith, Bilinda Straight, Remzi Seker, Andre Venter

**Members Absent:** Lofton Durham, Michael Osei, Kevin Wanner

**Ex Officio in Attendance:** Anthony DeFulio

**Guest:** Christine Stamper, Office of Research and Innovation

**Quorum**

A quorum was present with 15 members in attendance, of the 11 needed to establish a quorum.

**Agenda**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Cheatham, seconded by DeFulio, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Byrd-Jacobs, seconded by DeFulio, to approve the 12 September 2024 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Groves joined the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Cheatham joined the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

**Reports of Officers**

Chair Venter commented on Charge 2 and questioned how helpful it is to be reviewing the Memorandum of Actions (MOA) rather than reviewing the policies that originated from MOAs. Chair Venter asked RPC to consider the extent to which to evaluate policies and procedures versus MOAs. Seker provided an example of the Institutional Review Board and federally mandated agencies, stating that in such cases, evaluations have to be done regularly. It was suggested that the charge is to evaluate all relevant MOAs, including bio-safety MOAs, but that it wasn't always clear whether stating that the MOA is fine and there is nothing else for RPC to do. There was discussion as to RPC's exact role regarding this issue.

Chair Venter asked Bocko to discuss with other librarians and administrators their need for open access publishing funding and how to better share information about how faculty use Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF) funding for these purposes. Bocko reported on current efforts to get funding for open access publishing more available to faculty.

Arugaslan joined the meeting at 2:41 p.m.

Ex Officio DeFulio asked RPC to consider whether announcements of the Executive Board can be included in a single paragraph. Ex Officio DeFulio reviewed two changes to the RPC considered by the Faculty Senate. One involves a change to the name of the RPC. They will raise this issue at the next Faculty Senate meeting with Christopher Cheatham. The other change involves adding undergraduate student representation to the RPC. RPC has suggested replacing one of the graduate student representatives with an undergraduate. The Faculty Senate will vote on the changes to the bylaws at the 7 November meeting.

## Reports of University Representatives

Seker reported the following:

1. RPC-related expenditures and a forthcoming newsletter from the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) that would provide additional information.
2. There were 24 applicants for the Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF). Of the \$160,000 budget, there is a remaining balance of \$139,200.
3. Six applicants for Publication of Papers and Exhibition of Creative Works (PPPE) spent \$2988.38 with a remaining balance of \$17,011.62.
4. There has been a total of 30 applicants across the four funding sources. The remaining balance for Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA) was \$100,000, and \$20,000 for Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA).
5. The total remaining balance across all four funding sources is \$267,211.62.
6. Seker also mentioned the Presidential Search Advisory Committee and encouraged input from RPC.

Byrd-Jacobs reported the following:

1. Graduate student travel grants are due 15 October 2024.
2. Strong interest from graduate students in various funding sources.
3. In 2022, the Graduate College gave out \$96,940, with 70% applications awarded.
4. Byrd-Jacobs will be in Lansing meeting with all 15 universities and should be able to get enrollment data.

There was a discussion about how universities fund graduate students through grants and how WMU can better prioritize funding for graduate students.

Cheatham encouraged RPC to attend the fall wards' celebrations at 11 a.m. on 11 October.

## Action Items

Chair Venter asked the RPC to start thinking about FRACAA-related workshops.

Chair Venter suggested developing a single MOA that combines all three research funds. There was discussion about charges linked to all MOAs, and that some do not state much. MOA 08/03 is more elaborate, which states the purpose of FRTF. Chair Venter asked, in relation to Charge three, whether the MOA should lead with language about a more inclusive definition of scholarly work. The following questions were proposed:

1. Should MOA 08/03 be mimicked in structure, but change the content so it aligns with the contract?
2. What is the purpose of the award?
3. Who is eligible?
4. How is the award determined?
5. What should be the maximum level?

Remzi suggested not putting any specific numbers, keeping it generic so RPC can still set values for awards. Ex Officio DeFulio proposed to create an MOA, and discussion followed. A suggestion of a subcommittee to be formed. There is still no valid MOA for FRTF. RPC should document what is in practice now and then make changes later if needed. There was further discussion about what the RPC should say about each MOA and how to decide who gets funding. This is known as FRTF. With PPP&E, is first-come, first-served to continue, or go with some other plan? Remzi stated that the RPC sets these amounts based on data and that the RPC needs to know what the budgets are before any specific numbers are set. The MOA should state that the RPC is empowered to determine procedures for the selection of recipients. Ex Officio DeFulio commented that, in other words, RPC should not make any change to the SFSA. For FRACCA, there were some questions as to who is empowered to set this. Anthony mentioned there should be a research screening committee, and that there should be a FRACCA manager, but it is an RPC decision. If the FRACAA manager has ideas about changing procedures, these procedures will be for RPC to decide. Ex Officio DeFulio mentioned that RPC should now be able to put together a non-controversial MOA.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by DeFulio, and seconded by Byrd-Jacobs, to table MOA 24/02A. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees**

None.

**New Business**

None.

**Unfinished Business**

None.

**Announcements**

Chair Venter announced that he will not attend the 14 November RPC meeting. Vice chair Hadley will lead the meeting. Byrd-Jacobs suggested RPC could move in-person meetings to a new space if RPC chooses to.

Seker reported that ORI staff Kelli Bond is retiring. The office merged with the Executive Assistant Senior and Budget Manager Associate positions in ORI Operations Manager and hired Genevieve Ludwig. Renzi encouraged RPC members to communicate with other faculty to talk to David Johnson, patent attorney, about protecting intellectual property, inventions, etc. WMU had five patents successfully licensed, and graduate students should be involved in invention disclosures.

Arugaslan left the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

**Adjournment**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Straight, seconded by Byrd-Jacobs, to adjourn the meeting at 3:48 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Research Policies Council will meet next on 14 November 2024 at 2:30 p.m. in-person in Walwood Commons Bertha Davis Room 111W.

**Approval**

Submitted by Jesse Smith, Secretary

Minutes approved on 14 November 2024.