
RESEARCH POLICIES COUNCIL
REVISED Minutes of 8 February 2024**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Research Policies Council was called to order at 2:32 p.m. on 8 February 2024 via Webex by Andre Venter, chair.

Members in Attendance: Onur Arugaslan, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Christopher Cheatham, Lofton Durham (substitute for Paul Solomon), Angela Groves, Wanda Hadley, Daria Orlowska, Selim Ozyurek, Remzi Seker, Jesse Smith, Leslie Solares, Kevin Wanner, Andre Venter

Members Absent: Kristina Lemmer, Alessander Santos, Bilinda Straight

Ex Officio in Attendance: Anthony DeFulio, Mark Hurwitz

Guests: Joanne Mih and Christine Stamper, Office of Research and Innovation

Quorum

A quorum was present with 15 members in attendance, of the 10 needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

An amendment was made to discuss the Memorandum of Action (MOA) 24/02 first.

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

Minutes

An amendment was made to change the charges numbered 4, 5, 6 to 4a, 4b, 4c.

[MOTION] It was moved by DeFulio, seconded by Ozyurek, to approve the 11 January 2024 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Venter reported that the Three Minute Thesis competition (3MT) was an enjoyable experience and encouraged others to volunteer to serve as judges next year. The Support for Faculty Scholars Award (SFSA) review resulted in 11 out of 12 applications being funded. The one that did not receive funding was due to application to wrong funding mechanisms. As a result, \$21,148 of funds were allocated out of the \$32,600 budgeted.

Ex Officio DeFulio reported that Venter will present MOA 24/XX for Faculty Research Travel Fund (FRTF) to the Faculty Senate Executive Board on 9 February 2024. If approved, it will be brought to the floor of the Faculty Senate meeting on 29 February 2024. Ex Officio DeFulio requested that members of RPC send their support of MOA 24/XX to their Faculty Senate representative and convey any comments or concerns to him or Chair Venter. Ex Officio DeFulio also reported that the MOA 24/XX for Bio Safety is on hold as Faculty Senate President Summy will work out with the administration which body dictates compliance with federal requirements.

Reports of University Representative

Seker reported that the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) has submitted the Higher Education Research and Development survey to the National Science Foundation. The survey indicated that improvements to providing more funding for students are needed, as well as tracking internal support for research. A new process by ORI helped capture the bulk of the internal research expenditures made last fiscal year, which was not captured as thoroughly previously; the internal support that was not reported did not factor into the WMU's ranking. Seker also reported on the state of budget expenditures for the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund (FRACASF) funds. As of 8 February 2024, there are 112 FRTF applicants [remaining balance \$103,357,04] and 24 Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition (PPP&E) applicants [remaining balance \$33,209.75].

Hadley left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Byrd-Jacobs reported on the success of the 3MT competition on 7 February 2024 at the Graduate Student Commons in Waldo Library. Fourteen graduate students competed. The winners listed below represented the diverse research occurring on campus:

1. First Place - Hayley Brown, Psychology
2. Second Place - Hassan Shirzadi Jahromi, Mechanical Engineering
3. Third Place - Hellen Agbevey, Finance
4. People's Choice - Sandra Espinoza Montes, Counseling Psychology.

RPC members were encouraged to volunteer to judge the fall 2024 and spring 2025 competitions. In addition to the 3MT, Byrd-Jacobs reported that the welcome event for graduate students at the Student Center in January welcomed over a hundred students and their families. Byrd-Jacobs also reported that the Graduate College will be awarding travel and research grants later this month.

Cheatham highlighted two faculty members receiving National Endowment for the Humanities grants in the past month:

1. Dr. Ashley Atkins was awarded a Fellowship for her book project: "A Philosophical Exploration of Grief Through the Lens of Contemporary Memoir."
2. Dr. Dini Metro-Roland, Dale Brown, and Dr. Ann Miles received a Humanities Initiatives grant for "Building a New Liberal Arts Pathway for Incarcerated Individuals".

Seker commented that the National Endowment for Humanities gave out 17 awards this year, of which WMU received two.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Ex Officio Hurwitz reported that the FRACAA deadline is 9 February 2024, and he has sent reminders to all colleges. As of 8 February 2024, there are 20 submissions, with eight currently in draft. Last year, we received 33 total applications, so we are on track for average or better than average participation. Some discussions around future dissemination of the competition ensued, including a recommendation to advertise FRACAA through Faculty Senate Snapshots.

Ex Officio Hurwitz left the meeting at 3:27 p.m.

Charge 1: FRACAA Policy: Chair Venter reported that more work needs to be done on Charge 1 to address all the internal funding mechanisms under the purview of RPC, and so far, only work on FRACASF has been conducted. It is unclear if this work will be completed this year.

Charge 2: FRACAA Effects: Ozyurek reported on who has applied for FRACAA funding in the past 10 years, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of this fund by the college. There is variability between colleges, but the average return on investment sits at 1:15. This concludes with the charge for this year.

Charge 3: Strategic Information Distribution: Arugaslan reported that RPC does not have authority to enforce ORI activity, and this charge does not merit MOA at this time; it should be revisited in the future, given the change in research environment. Seker commented that Stamper could be a good resource about website resources, and Byrd-Jacobs is a partner around Research, Innovation, and Creative Scholarship Celebration Week. Chair Venter commented that it would be useful for faculty to receive email notifications from InfoReady when new items are posted. This concludes the charge for this year.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Chair Venter presented the revised draft of the Memorandum of Action (MOA) 24/XX for FRTF. Seker thanked RPC for the thoughtful work in revising the MOA, with an emphasis on equity and budgetary constraints. Venter brought concern to RPC about the timeline for the deadline and decisions. Instead of

two months for decision-making (1 June notification), Venter suggested only a single month (1 May notification). There was a discussion regarding the timing of the RPC meeting and the 1 April 2024 deadline.

[MOTION] It was moved by Seker, seconded by Ozyurek, to change the MOA deadline to the second Monday of April and the second Monday of November. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by DeFulio, seconded by Ozyurek, to adjourn the meeting at 3:43 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Research Policies Council will meet next on 14 March 2024 at 2:30 p.m. in the Bertha Davis Room 111W.

Approval

Submitted by Daria Orlowska, Secretary

Minutes approved on 14 March 2024.