
**Research and Creative Scholarship Council
Minutes of 9 October 2025**

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Research and Creative Scholarship Council was called to order at 2:32 p.m. on 9 October 2025 in Walwood Hall-Connable Room-112 E, by Lofton Durham, chair.

Members in Attendance: Onur Arugaslan, Upul Attanayake, Carrie Barrett, Benjamin Brady, Amy Bocko, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Christopher Cheatham, Anthony DeFulio, Lofton Durham, Angela Groves, Gellert Mezei, Selim Ozyurek, Remzi Seker, Jesse Smith, Bilinda Straight, Rohullah Wahidi, Xiaoman Wang (substitute for Beixi Li), German Zarate-Sandez

Members Absent: Patrick Bennett, Rohullah Wahidi

Ex Officio in Attendance: Anthony DeFulio, John Miller (substitute for Andre Venter),

Guest: Christine Stamper, Office of Research and Innovation

Quorum

A quorum was present with 21 members in attendance, of the 11 needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Brady, seconded by Bocko, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by DeFulio, seconded by Ozyurek, to approve the 11 September 2025 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Durham did not provide a report.

Ex Officio DeFulio did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Seker reported regarding the Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund fiscal year 2026 report. The total budget is \$440,000. So far there have been 69 Faculty Research Travel Fund awards and seven Preparation and Publication of Papers and Exhibition awards granted. Support for Faculty Scholars Award or Faculty Research and Creative Actives Award has not yet been awarded. Applications have not yet been reviewed. The total remaining award balance is \$356,756. The university continues to navigate the current complex federal funding environment.

Discussion was held regarding the state of National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health funding agencies in particular and asked if WMU had any strategies to suggest. Seker reported that the country is currently in a government shutdown. There is no control for federal funding. There is no current oversight of the organizations. Regarding this, WMU is working on diversifying its portfolio. All faculty working on federally funded research projects should continue their work as normal, until they receive notification to discontinue a project.

Byrd-Jacobs reported that there are several upcoming opportunities and events for graduate students to help them with writing and research. There are writing circles taking place every Wednesday during the semester, and graduate students are encouraged to participate. Students also have the option of in-person or virtual writing circles. There are workshops scheduled for students working on thesis or dissertations. There is a dissertation writing workshop on 10 November in Waldo Library for students in any phase of the dissertation process. They also have the option of one-on-one sessions with dissertation coaches. Detailed information about these events can be found in the graduate student events newsletter. Graduate student research and travel grants are due on 10 October. Applications for fellowships are coming soon. President Kavalhuna will be a judge in upcoming graduate student competitions.

Angela Groves attended the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Provost Cheatham reported regarding a new learning center grant. The funding totals \$13,300,000 over seven years. The goal of the grant is to improve high school graduation rates among other things. The award is in collaboration with the Kalamazoo Promise program and targets middle and high schools in several Kalamazoo areas. Provost Cheatham reported that all the changes and uncertainties at the federal level regarding research funding may have an impact on WMU faculty pursuing promotion and tenure. The University is determining ways to support faculty who work in research areas where funding has been eliminated or where applications are not being reviewed. WMU's administration and faculty should proactively plan strategies, such as pausing tenure clocks or negotiating other ways to minimize the disruption to faculties' professional pursuits.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Miller reported regarding the Research Screening Committee Support for Faculty Scholars Award and Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award. He continues to stay in contact with Venter and will inform the council of any developments.

New Business

Chair Durham reported regarding the Faculty Scholars Award and Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award Application process. There is a need for additional language to be posted on the Office of Research and Innovation website regarding Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund programs in order to clarify the process and avoid potential conflict regarding eligibility issues and the timelines of these awards. A handout was distributed with the proposed additional language. Discussion was held regarding past issues with faculty applying for both awards with slightly different project ideas in the hopes of increasing their chances of securing funding. It was agreed that the application process needs to be clarified, and that any substantive changes to this process are considered part of this year's council charges. Changing the language or timelines on these respective awards would be the remit of the Research and Creative Scholarship Council.

[MOTION] It was moved by Straight, seconded by Bocko, to accept the additional language SFSA and FRACAA applications and add it to the ORI website on FRACASF funding programs. With one abstention, the motion carried.

Chair Durham reported regarding the 2025-26 subcommittee charges. An announcement was made regarding the composition of each subcommittee and suggested that each subcommittee meet soon. Membership, charges, and all other relevant information about each subcommittee is available in newly created folders on the Teams platform. There was a question about the timeline for the subcommittees' work and when reports on its work would be due. Subcommittees should aim to offer a draft report of their work by the Research and Creative Scholarship Council 12 February 2026 meeting.

Upul Attanayake joined the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

Unfinished Business

None.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Miller, seconded by DeFulio, to adjourn the meeting at 3:09 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Research and Creative Scholarship Council will meet next on 13 November at 2:30 p.m. in-person in Walwood Hall-Connable Room-112 E.

Approval

Submitted by Jesse M. Smith, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 13 November 2025.