

Research Policy Committee Draft Minutes

October 25, 2019

2:30-4:00pm

Fleming Regents Room

Chaired by Dr. Francine Dolins

Members present: Francine Dolins, Irene St Charles, Akira Nishii, Jenna Manshe, Teri Rosales, Natalie Colabianchi, Nocona Sanders, Nicholas Ernst, William Close, Annalisa Manera, Jacob Carlson, Ashley Kalinski, Jessie Lee, Yi-Su Chen

Guest(s): Joy Beatty (Faculty Senate Chair), Jay Vornhagen

Absent:

Review of minutes from September 27 2019

No comments

Minutes approved

Speaker: Jay Vornhagen, a postdoc from U of M's postdoc association

U of M Postdoctoral Association

What is a postdoc?: A postdoc is an individual holding doctoral degree engaged in mentored research and/or scholarly training. There are different types of postdocs- academic, federal, industry.

Postdocs have a lot of academic experience, and are great mentors

Most postdocs want a career in academia, most want to do academic research

There are not enough academic positions to take in the amount of postdocs training in the US

Question: Francine Dolins- Labs rely heavily on postdocs, if 1/3 or 2/3 of people decided not to go into postdoc position, wouldn't that affect research productivity?

Answer: Yes, Its more of a problem than it used to be.

Postdoctoral matriculation is a DEI issue

What do postdocs do?: They are the engine that drives research

Presence of postdoc positively affects graduate student growth

Who is the U of M Postdoc Association?- Volunteer postdocs who advocated for postdoc policy, supported by Rackham. They represent the interests and issues of U of M postdocs.

There are about 1400 postdocs at U of M.

2018 Cross-Sectional Survey: Main focus of the survey was: How are postdocs doing? It analyzed the population of postdocs, and ~50% of postdocs responded. The median matriculation of postdocs at U of M is 1.62 years.

Question- Joy Beatty: Could you be a postdoc forever at different institutions?

Answer- Jay Vornhagen: There are people who do 10-15 years at different institutions.

Most postdocs feel satisfied, valued, and supported. However, most do not feel that their needs, or the needs of their partners, are taken seriously- for example, childcare.

Postdocs want the creation of a centralized postdoctoral office.

Most institutions have a centralized postdoc office. They have a range of 1-9 FTE for the postdoc office.

Our postdocs would like 3-5 FTE. The positions would be: director, HR coordinator, conflict resolution coordinator/ombudsman, career and professional development coordinator, and support staff.

How can our committee help?

By not always assuming that everything is going okay at the University of Michigan.

Advocacy- support for a centralized postdoc office

Connections- Access to U of M administrators that postdocs can ally with in establishing a centralized postdoc office

Including postdoctoral fellows in the RPC

Questions?

Question- Jacob Carlson: Do you have a budget?

Answer: Roughly \$300,000-\$500,000

Question- Jacob Carlson: Are problems more specific to units?

Answer: Yes, for example engineering postdocs are less satisfied, while LSA postdocs are more satisfied. Postdoctoral satisfaction decreases the longer you are here.

After Presentation

Francine would like to set up a meeting with Interim VP Cunningham

Other business: Have 1 other meeting that is not yet set (April), Francine would like feedback.

People in humanities and social sciences felt disadvantaged with MCubed funding as they did not have the money to put in to get the MCubed support.

Humanities and other less funded research areas feel unrepresented.

Announcements

1. Senate office will no longer print agendas. Francine will send agendas, please print them or view them from your laptop or phone

2. Senate office is now providing refreshments at our meetings

Meeting adjourned 4:02