To: SACUA

From: Yulia Sevryugina, Chair, Research Advisory Committee

Subject: Report on Activities of Research Advisory Committee for AY 22-23

Members: Yulia Sevryugina (Chair), Amanda Brown, Marilia Cascalho, Hui Deng, Claudia Figueroa-Romero, Vania Hinkovska-Galcheva, Suresh Madathilparambil, Vilma M. Mesa, Robert Ploutz-Snyder, Vitaliy Popov, Nathan Qi, Hakam Tiba, David Cooper (Undergraduate Student), Vaibhav Khanna (Graduate Student)

SACUA Liaison: Allen Liu (2022)

Meeting Dates: 10/5/22; 11/14/22; 12/12/22; 1/23/23; 3/2/23; 3/20/23; 4/18/23

Committee Charge

SPECIFIC CHARGE 2022 – 2023

1. Provide input on continuing plans for research operations in the post-COVID-19 environment.
2. Support the development and implementation of recommendations for DEIA-informed policies and practices in research in partnership with other organizations on campus.
3. Engage with internal university structures (e.g., Library, IACUC, RDPS, IRBs) that support research across all three campuses to address challenges as needed and as time allows.
4. Consider how both internal and external partnership may facilitate faculty engagement in U-M Office of the President Initiatives and Focus Areas.
5. Address other issues brought forward by the committee members and deemed important for the committee to discuss with the VP for Research.

Committee Actions

RAC had 7 well-attended and informative meetings during the 2022-23 academic year.

The topics of focus for the academic year 2022-23 included:

1. *Internal University Structures*, such as:
   a. **Research Data Stewardship Initiative (RDSI)** addressed by *Nick Wigginton* (Associate VP for Research) – (10/5) - Overview of RDSI and their focus on four areas: defining what counts as 'research data', clarifying ownership, accessibility, and retention.
   b. **Opioid Epidemic Initiative** addressed by *Chad Brummet* (Senior Associate Chair for Research, Bert N. LaDu Professor of Anesthesiology, Co-Director, Michigan Opioid Prescribing Engagement Network) and *Amy Bonhart* (Associate Professor, Research Investigator, The Center for Clinical Management Research, a Health Services Research and Development Center of Innovation, Department of Veterans Affairs) – (11/14) - Overview of the opioid epidemic and UM's current

research portfolio on opioid research, founding and expectations in regard to the new Opioid Institute.

  c. **Support for Research Cores on Campus** addressed by *Evan Keller* (OVPR Director of Cores) – (1/23) - Overview of the main tenets of the Research Cores, such as community, accessibility, service excellence, accountability, career path, and fiscal sustainability.

  d. **Open Research & Scholarship: Update on Library Resources & Services** addressed by *Alexa Pearce* (Associate University Librarian for Research) – (3/20)- Overview of publishing and data sharing activity, policies & mandates, and researcher attitudes and advocacy. The [Library Guide on Publication Discounts](#) was recommended as a resource.

2. *Grant Support Infrastructure and Initiatives*

  a. **Internal funding opportunities** addressed by the guest-speaker *Jill Jividen* (Director of Research Development) – (12/12) - Overview of internal funding opportunities and RDPS: [Research Commons](#), the [Blueprint Newsletter](#), and the [UM Library Guide](#) were listed as central resources for finding opportunities.

  b. **Amplify Strategy: Enhance Support for Foundation-sponsored research** (Pillar 2) and **Establish infrastructures to coordinate faculty honorific**s (Pillar 4) addressed by the guest-speaker *Nick Wigginton* (Assistant VP for Research – Strategic Initiatives) - (3/02) - Overview of the strategy to amplify research and scholarship by enhancing support for foundation-sponsored research and establishing infrastructures to coordinate faculty honorifics.

  c. **Bold Challenges initiative** addressed by the guest-speaker *Arthur Lupia* (Gerald R. Ford University Professor at the University of Michigan and Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation) – (4/18) - Overview of programs and services set up to support researchers with bold ideas, to increase U-M's competitiveness, promote skill-building, and offer broad and inclusive pathways to new collaborations.

3. *Faculty and Research Development*

  a. **Research Scientist track promotion process** addressed by the guest-speaker *Bradford Orr* (Associate Vice President for Research - Natural Sciences and Engineering) – (11/14) - Overview of research faculty statistics: where they are, different tracks, promotion and review processes, criteria for promotion. Recommended source: https://research.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Research-Faculty-Track-Promotion-Criteria-2022.pdf

  b. **Internal Research Review** addressed by the guest-speaker *Arthur Lupia* (Gerald R. Ford University Professor at the University of Michigan and Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation) – (4/18) – Participated in interviews around the [Vision 2034](#).

Information Obtained

1. *Internal University Structures*, such as:

During the 2022-23 year, RAC members learned about several university structures, including Research Cores, U-M Library, RDSI, and the Opioid Research Institute.

Specifically, many **Research Cores** at U-M operate with similar business models and encounter similar problems. The current university effort is to identify all existing cores and establish easy pathways for them to share their successes and issues. This includes:

- Community
- Accessibility
- Service Excellence
- Accountability
- Career Path, and
- Fiscal Sustainability

Identification and support of U-M Cores is obstructed by the decentralized structure of U-M and resulting duplication of services.

RAC members also learned about the **U-M's Opioid Epidemic Initiative** that includes a new Opioid Research Institute. The goal of this initiative is to address the opioid epidemic in Michigan and across the U.S. through collaboration with communities and policymakers, and using evidence-based strategies.

RAC members also learned about the U-M Library and its efforts to support **Open Research & Scholarship**. Several recent policies such as OSTP Nelson Memo and NIH Data Management policy were explained. Library undertakes many initiatives to support Open Access (OA) across the University, including joining larger consortiums and negotiations with vendors for OA publication discounts (APCs) and affordable subscriptions. Library faces challenges related to the ever-rising cost of subscriptions, especially in fields where faculty are not fully embracing the OA publishing. The need for faculty committees working together with library was emphasized.

One unit that collaborates extensively with U-M Library is the **Research Data Stewardship Initiative (RDSI)** that was formed to address the current absence of a global university policy in regard to the data management and sharing. The development of such universal policy was emphasized by the most recent NIH data management policy and OSTP Nelson's Memo. The objective is not only to design a general policy but also to help the U-M research community navigate the evolving research data landscape. The foremost challenge is to define what constitutes the research data for every unit on campus and for every type of research and to identify appropriate ways for sharing, storing, and managing each type of data.

2. *Grant Support Infrastructure and Initiatives*

During the 2022-23 year, RAC members learned about several internal and external grant support opportunities.

Among the **Internal funding opportunities**, OVPR office developed four new funding mechanisms: RCI Block grants, VPR-RAD Catalyst grants, Anti-racism grants, and Large-Scale Center and Initiative Planning grants. In terms of finding all available opportunities, the recommendation was to start with the department Chair, UM Library Guide, or the OVPR office.

Another interesting internal opportunity that also connects the team with an external funding is **Bold Challenges initiative**. It has been designed to promote the formation of interdepartmental collaborations and interdisciplinary teams and to provide support for their external funding applications. Currently, Bold Challenges initiative supports two programs: Boost and Accelerate. Boost is a cohort-based, six-month program that centers around priority university and funder themes and will nurture effective teams with structured activities and deliverables on topics such as Team Science, Broader Impacts, Community Engagement, and Strategic Planning. Accelerate is designed to support teams that are soon-to-be or actively seeking a large-scale external funding opportunity.

In terms of facilitating access to the external funding support, RAC members learned about **U-M's Strategy to Amplify Research and Scholarship**. Its Pillar 2 (**Enhance Support for Foundation-sponsored research)** is focused on the non-profit sponsored research. RAC members discussed benefits of the foundations-based grants as well as barriers and their impact on the tenure promotion process. The focus of Pillar 4 was to **Establish infrastructures to coordinate faculty honorific**s, and RAC members learned of the most recent OVPR's efforts to coordinate and support faculty applications for external awards and honorifics.

3. *Faculty and Research Development*

RAC members learned about two development and promotion tracks available to Research Faculty, namely the Research Scientist track and the Research Professor track. RAC members discussed cons and pros for each track, in which cases the transition between two tracks is possible and whether it is recommended. RAC members emphasized a current confusion associated with both tracks and varied amount of support and transparency between the departments.

Recommendations

There are several potential topics for discussion for the next academic year:
1. The GEO negotiations and its effect on faculty's research
2. New OSTP Nelson Memo and NIH Data policies promote a news research culture associated with open data handling and Open Access (OA) publishing. Libraries, as well as RDSI, will need faculty feedback on the development of new universal policies, engagement in OA initiatives, and identifying support of new and/or existing venues.
3. Yale faculty is pushing to revise faculty handbook to protect faculty for possible future investigation by government. *A year after Lin suspension ends, faculty call for support from admin during federal investigations - Yale Daily News*
4. Excessive administration and centralization that create additional barriers for conducting research.
5. Development of the **Strategy to Amplify Research and Scholarship**