

Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

Minutes of Meeting: 10/10/23

Circulated: 11/7/23

Approved: 11/16/23

Present: Yulia Sevryugina (Chair), Quentin Stout, Mohamad Tiba, David Cooper, Vaibhav Khanna, Heather O'Malley (SACUA Liaison), Rebecca Cunningham (VP for Research) Orsolya Lautner-Csorba, Tyler Nix, Nathan Qi

Absent: Jesse Capecelatro, Marilia Cascalho, Claudia Figueroa-Romero, Suresh Madathilparambil, Derek Peterson, Mrinal Sarkar,

Guests: Nick Wigginton (Associate VP for Research)

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe

2:01pm-2:10pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the April RAC meeting were approved. Brief introductions were made. The meeting schedule for the year was reviewed, and the working Google Doc was highlighted as a way for members to make suggestions, or ask questions.

2:10pm-2:30pm: Reviewing the RAC's charge for 2023-24

Summary: The charge was introduced by the Chair. Each of the points were individually reviewed. These were developed, between faculty governance, as well as OVPR. These can be modified based on the interests of the committee. There was an interest in AI as a potential topic.

1. Review current OVPR incentives and support for development and implementation of sustainability and climate change initiatives at U-M, including MI Hydrogen and the Institute for Energy Solutions, to raise awareness and identify ways faculty members could become more involved in supporting those efforts.

The Chair mentioned several suggestions of guests regarding this point of the charge, and put out a call to the committee members to make further suggestions.

2. Develop recommendations for how the University could better support research faculty development and retention.

3. In collaboration with the Office of the Vice President for Research, consider how the University and the Faculty Senate could better spark innovation and cross-discipline collaboration on research projects, such as by coordinating with the Bold Challenges team to host a "pollination" event or exploring AI-related initiatives.

The committee is asked to add ideas to the Working Google Doc to assist with brainstorming this type of event.



4. Consider emergent issues or topics brought forward by RAC committee members or VP Cunningham for discussion over the course of the year. While coordinating with the Faculty Senate Office to help avoid duplicating work that SACUA has now referred to itself or to another committee, the committee may also continue discussing any issues or topics raised in the committee's most recent annual committee report.

Action: Discussion

2:30pm-3:00pm: Guest-speaker Nick Wigginton (Associate VP for Research) on Limited Submission Policy

Summary: LSO's (limited submission opportunities) are funding opportunities where one institution has a limited number of proposals that can be submitted for a funding opportunity. It then becomes an issue for an institution determining what proposals are submitted. These LSO's are rising across funders.

These are not limited to STEM, they span multiple disciplines, including Arts and Humanities.

Once an opportunity is recognized, the University identifies interested parties by putting a callout for interest. A faculty peer- review panel is utilized and is how the most competitive proposals are identified. There can be challenges in reviewing these proposals, as some areas of research are very specific, and therefore mitigating bias is critical, as those submitting the proposals may be identifiable.

There have been improvements made by OVPR. These include diversifying the reviewer pool, transparency in the selection processes, and increasing competitiveness. Reviewers are having representation increased in units, tracks, and other demographics. There are early reviews provided by the University, in order to provide feedback. Workshops for high-priority opportunities are held.

Current challenges include shrinking turnaround times. OVPR has worked to set clear rapid turnaround procedures/practices. Another issue is the decentralized nature of UM. There is a push to provide clear, university-wide policy with clear roles and responsibilities.

There is a draft policy that OVPR is currently working on to improve this process.

A question is brought up of reviewing reviewers. OVPR has processes for doing this that involves the others reviewing the proposal to review their fellow reviewer's determinations.

There is no reward system currently in place for the reviewers. A committee member notes that it is good to recognize service. As of now, a letter of thanks is sent to the reviewers.

Action: Presentation and discussion

3:00pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,



FACULTY SENATE
SENATE ASSEMBLY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

1120 Ruthven Building
1109 Geddes Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office