



Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

Minutes of Meeting: 11-16-23

Circulated: 12-5-23

Approved: 12-12-23

Present: Yulia Sevryugina (Chair), Quentin Stout, Vaibhav Khanna, Heather O'Malley, Mrinal Sarkar, Jessica Durkin (OVPR), Nathan Qi, David Cooper, Tyler Nix, Orsolya Lautner-Csorba, Suresh Madathilparambil, Jesse Capecelatro,

Absent: Marilia Cascalho, Claudia Figueroa-Romero, Derek Peterson, Mohamad Tiba, Rebecca Cunningham (VP for Research)

Guests: Arthur (Skip) Lupia (Gerald R. Ford University Professor at the University of Michigan and Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation, Associate Vice President for Large-Scale Strategies, Office of Research; Executive Director, Bold Challenges)

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe, Luke McCarthy

1:02pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the October RAC meeting were approved.

1:03pm-1:58pm: Engagement with Bold Challenges

Summary: The Chair of the committee introduced the guest speaker and the Bold Challenges initiative. There are times when collaborating across disciplines can lead to innovation not otherwise possible. This program is in place to work to put these teams together.

How can we work together? The Bold Challenges initiative is a program within the Office of Research Development (ORD) within OVPR. They provide services, events, and programs. The goal of the initiative is to create inclusive pathways for networking, finding collaborators and forming teams. Another goal is to work on team-building and create a collaborative environment. A desire is for the program to create competitive teams to vie for large-scale externally funded research opportunities.

ORD has programs that support cross-school and multi-disciplinary teams. The programs are application based. They focus on actions that improve success probabilities for funding opportunities.

2023 saw the rollout of a team development program that is called "Boost." It is theme-based. Each team is provided \$75,000 to put the team together. The themes for 2023: build trustworthy environments, smart health systems, and strength through sustainability. There was great interest in this last year. 8 teams were selected. Up to 20 teams can be selected this year.



The “Accelerate” program is a program that is for more established teams. Teams are provided \$250k and expert consulting. It requires a less than 2-year pathway. Funding is available in July. Applications are open year-round.

The guest acknowledges that there are opportunities for improvement within these programs. Some teams do not need all aspects of the Boost program, and moving forward ORD will be providing a menu of options for the teams, rather than a one-size fits all approach. This is addressed in the 2024 iteration of the program.

A new program, “Elevate”, is proposed for rollout next year. It is focused on communication. There will be an event in February with keynotes, resource fair, etc. There will be pollination events in March and April.

The themes are being decided now for 2024. The committee is asked for suggestions. The themes have been broad in 2023. They are going to be a little more focused in 2024. ORD will be working on themes in early 2024, so feedback would ideally be provided by January. There will be new themes each year.

Are there other university’s doing this? There is nothing exactly like this specific program. There are some that are similar to the Accelerate program.

Should the Faculty Senate work on putting on a pollination event? Skip is on board.

Trust in science and the emergence of AI are suggested as potential themes. It is described as the validation of information.

The guest describes the work being done on the Dearborn and Flint campuses.

Action: Presentation and Discussion

1:58pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office