



Research Advisory Committee (RAC) Minutes for 2/9/2026 Meeting

Meeting information:

Circulated: 3/11/26

Approved: 3/18/26

Members present: Audrey Bennett, William A. Calvo-Quirós, Orsolya Lautner-Csorba (Chair), Quentin Stout, Magda Ivanova, Tyler Nix, Fadhil Alakwaa, Seth Guikema, Jesse Capecelatro (SACUA), Arthur Lupia (Vice President for Research and Innovation), Alena Stocking (OVPR)

Members absent: Karen Downing, Greg Rybarczyk, Mrinal Sarkar, Nina White

Guests present:

Shandra White, Associate Vice President for Research-Sponsored Projects

Stefano Mengozzi, Associate Professor of Music (Musicology), School of Music, Theatre & Dance

Faculty Senate Office staff present: Eric Vandenberghe

Minutes:

1:00pm-1:01pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes, Announcements

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the December meeting are approved.

1:01pm-1:06pm: Federal Updates

Summary: VP Lupia provides the committee with an update on recent actions by the federal government that impact higher education. Funding for the science agencies remain steady for the coming year. Indirect cost rates will also remain steady for the coming year. Continued conversations at the federal level are taking place regarding the FAIR model.

Proposals to federal agencies have not been reviewed and funded at the same rate as in past years, which is concerning.

VP Lupia updates the committee on the Genesis initiative, DARPA's desire to collaborate with faculty, and ongoing conversations with congressional staff in both major political parties regarding future government-higher education collaboration.

Action: Discussion

1:06pm-1:41pm: Research Security

Summary: The Chair introduces AVP White who presents to the committee on the Research



Safety and Security Initiative Program. This program is being launched to protect UM's research enterprise by ensuring safety, security, and compliance. It is also meant to maintain UM's reputation as the premier destination for research excellence and partnership.

There are recommendations across five workstreams that will focus on specific outcomes. The five workstreams include Oversight of Biological and Other Research Materials, Training and Policy, Research-related Vetting and Onboarding, Facilities Security, and Change Management and Communications.

Initiative partners and leadership are shared. AVP White provides an update on each of the five workstreams:

Oversight of Biological and Other Research Materials: The Institutional Biosafety Committee has expanded their oversight to include moderate risk animal and plant pathogens and biological materials that require a permit. They have established a centralized research material inventory system. There has been an implementation of a process to control the movement of regulated biologics in and out of labs.

Training and Policy: Two new SPGs are being recommended. One focuses on research security, while the other focuses on PI responsibilities. Another recommendation includes developing a unified training program for all researchers.

Research-related Vetting and Onboarding: Recommendations include ensuring enforcement of clear procedures for physical and digital access. It is further recommended that researcher vetting be expanded.

Facilities Security: It is recommended that locks, card readers, and other physical access controls be evaluated.

Change Management and Communications: A recommendation includes increasing integration and connectivity across research compliance units.

AVP White describes the two new SPGs under development. The first focuses on the requirements and responsibilities of Principal Investigators. It includes responsibilities organized based on several categories. The second draft SPG focuses on research security. Its purpose is to "promote consistency and compliance in safeguarding and expanding the University's research activities through adherence to applicable legal, regulatory, contractual, ethical, and other requirements." AVP White shares University Responsibilities and commitments, as well as UM community requirements.

Feedback is requested on the training program recommendations, as well as the two previously mention draft SPGs. A link is provided by which the committee members can offer feedback.

At the conclusion of the presentation the committee has a chance to ask questions and offer feedback. A member discusses the necessity for community, particularly faculty, input. Regarding training, the member indicates a necessity that the training is concise and thorough with an understanding that time is not an abundant resource for faculty.



A member discusses new federal guidance regarding working with international populations of certain countries that are not viewed favorably by the federal government. Examples are given. AVP White indicates that they work with the federal government, as well as UM's Government Relations team, to ensure UM is in compliance.

Discussion concludes and AVP White is thanked for her engagement with the committee.

Action: Presentation, discussion, questionnaire for collecting feedback on the new SPGs

1:41pm-2:03pm: Block Grants

Summary: Members provide OVPR with their perspectives on how the prior funding of block grants to art and humanity disciplines impact the community. A member indicates that the sum of the funds is not large relative to other parts of the academic operation, but that the small amount of funds delivers a large impact. The member describes the impact that is had on the faculty, as well as the community. The member asks for guidance on how such funding can be made available, either in its prior form or in a new form.

A member states that humanities and the arts are crucial to having a well-rounded institution and community. Another member indicates that the work primarily done in their unit is not interdisciplinary, so the faculty don't qualify for as many grants. They indicate their understanding of budgetary issues but also indicate the significance of the funds to the unit.

VP Lupia acknowledges the great impact that the arts and humanities have on the community. UM's Budget Model is described. OVPR receives money from the Provost's Office, and most of their budget must go to compliance. To solve this issue, the funding would need to come directly from budgetary requests by units to the Provost.

The committee continues their conversation on this topic, and the meeting concludes.

Action: The contact information for the following faculty members was shared with the committee. They may be reached for any additional questions regarding the block grants or potential alternative funding ideas.

-Karen Fournier Research Associate Dean in the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance
kjfourni@umich.edu

-Geoff Thün Associate Vice President for Research
gthun@umich.edu

2:03pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office