

University Research Council  
Minutes of October 13, 2020 Meeting

**Members Present:** *Rob Rutenbar, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research; N. John Cooper, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research; Mark Lynn Anderson, Department of English; Karen Arndt, Department of Biological Sciences; Velpandi Ayyavoo, Graduate School of Public Health; Dominic Bordelon, University Library System; Ryan Champagne, Assistant Director for Research Development, Office of Sponsored Programs; Yvette Conley, School of Nursing; William Dunn, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs; Julie Fiez, Department of Psychology; Robert B. Gibbs, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Shelome Gooden, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research in the Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Related Fields; Kent Harries, School of Engineering; Michael Holland, Vice Chancellor for Science Policy and Research Strategy; Neil Hukriede, Department of Developmental Biology; Sean Kelly, School of Education; William Layton, Department of Mathematics; Elizabeth Monasterios, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures; Frits Pil, Katz Graduate School of Business; Anne Robertson, School of Engineering; Shilpa Sant, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Jeremy Somers, Office of Research, Health Sciences; Steven Stern, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Alexandre Vieira, School of Dental Medicine; Jennifer Woodward, Vice Chancellor for Sponsored Programs & Research Operations*

**Members Absent:** *Debbie Brake, School of Law; Heidi Ann Scharf Donovan, School of Nursing; Shaun Eack, School of Social Work; Ray Engel, School of Social Work; Brian Galla, School of Education; Alexandria Harris, Graduate and Professional Student Government Board; Holger Hooch, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, School of Arts and Sciences; Matthew Kropf, University of Pittsburgh Bradford; Jeremy Levy, Department of Physics & Astronomy; Kacey Marra, School of Medicine; Margaret Rosenzweig, School of Nursing; Susan Sereika, Department of Health and Community Systems; Stephen Weber, Department of Chemistry*

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Rob Rutenbar welcomed the Council members and called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. A representative from the library, Research Data Librarian Dominic Bordelon, was welcomed to the Committee

**2. Sept. 2020 URC Meeting Minutes**

The Sept meeting minutes had been circulated to the Council and were approved *nem con.*

### 3. Update on Momentum Fund Applications and reviews

Dr. Mike Holland gave an overview of the Pitt Momentum Funds: Seeding Grants, Team Grants, and Scaling Grants. Members of the URC will begin reviewing proposals for these awards soon.

Ryan Champagne shared the calendar/timeline for the review process, noting reviews for Teaming and Scaling grants will be due earlier than those for Seeding grants because of the need to schedule “pitch” events for the Teaming and Scaling proposals.

Dr. John Cooper asked for volunteers to serve as chairs for the various review teams. These are listed as follows:

#### **Seeding:**

Arts/Humanities	Mark Lynn Anderson & Elizabeth Monasterios
STEM	Kent Harries & Neil Hukriede
Health & Life Sciences	Karen Arndt & Yvette Conley
Social Sciences	Frits Pil & co-chair TBD

#### **Teaming:**

Alex Vieira will co-chair, but still needs a partner.

#### **Scaling:**

Velpandi Ayyavoo will co-chair, but still needs a partner.

Ryan Champagne agreed to share the titles of the grant proposals with the committee members to enable them to make suggestions regarding reviewers.

Dr. Cooper noted that we could reach out to those not in attendance to see if they’d like to volunteer for the seats that need to be filled [**Note:** some of the new members may also be asked to help with these committees]

### 4. Update on IP Policy

Dr. Rutenbar reported that the Faculty Assembly endorsed the proposed new policy at a meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Concerns that had been expressed earlier in the process by some faculty regarding ownership and use of faculty-produced course materials were taken back to the IP Policy Committee and they re-worked the language in the policy to address those concerns through added clarity. A statement pointing out an appropriate grievance process had also been added so it is clear what procedural options faculty would have if they feel an issue had not been resolved appropriately. Dr. Rutenbar indicated that he would introduce the proposed new IP Policy to the Council of Deans later that week.

## **5. Responsible Conduct of Research**

Dr. Rutenbar explained that changes in federal expectations and policy on foreign engagement have complicated the role of Responsible Conduct of Research training. The regulations around research awards are evolving rapidly, and we need to help faculty protect themselves and the institution. This will be helped by the move of the COI disclosure process online, which has led to almost 100% disclosure by those required to disclose. Questions about disclosure of foreign activities were added, but the fraction of activities identified as involving foreign entities has been surprisingly low. This probably means that more explanation may be needed regarding what needs to be disclosed. An online training module is being developed that all faculty will need to complete upon being hired and again on a regular, predetermined basis.

After a question was asked regarding whether there is a need to disclose work for foreign entities, even if there is no payment involved, Dr. Rutenbar indicated that those activities should still be disclosed, because that is expected by the large funding agencies/Federal government.

It was noted that there is a lot of concern about how new limits on foreign involvement and politicization of this topic will negatively affect research operations and that the best way to combat this is to disclose activities.

## **6. Any other business**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:13 pm.