

General Faculties Council
RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting #23
May 24, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

A167

Voting Members

Ed McCauley, Co-Chair
Carolyn Emery, Academic Co-Chair
Abubaker Abdelhafiz
Nancy Arthur
Tom Hickerson – arrived during Item 4
Andy Knight
Alicia Lunz
Alan McLuckie
Marco Musiani
Hermann Schaetzel
Joseph Sparling
Karen Then
Lisa Young – arrived during Item 4
Gerald Zamponi

Non-Voting Members

Paddy Campbell
Anne Katzenberg
Rose Tobias

Observers

John Reynolds, Associate Vice-President (Research)

Regrets

Thomas Baumgartner
Jasmine Girgis
Vina Goghari
Michael Sideris
Alain Verbeke

Secretary

Susan Belcher

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the May 24, 2016 Research and Scholarship Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair

The Co-Chair welcomed Alicia Lutz, Students' Union (SU) Vice-President (Academic), and Abu Abdelhafiz, Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Vice-President (Academic), to their first Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) meeting.

The Academic Co-Chair made no remarks.

3. Approval of the February 23, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Research and Scholarship Committee meeting held on February 23, 2016 be approved.

Carried

4. Annual Committee Performance Review and Review of the Research and Scholarship Committee Terms of Reference

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Ed McCauley, Co-Chair, and Carolyn Emery, Academic Co-Chair, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Committee discussed its non-voting membership. The University Secretary explained that General Faculties Council (GFC) purposefully designed its committees' memberships so that the majority of voting members are academic staff members, and noted that non-voting members can participate fully in any discussions held.
- The Co-Chair remarked that it is intended to bring the RSC and the Associate Deans (Research) Council together for at least one meeting in 2016-2017, as their topics of discussion are similar
- The Committee discussed that its Co-Chairs report to GFC, but that there is not a formal process for reciprocal communication. The Co-Chair suggested that members could look at the approved GFC minutes for information on the business of GFC, as these are posted after they are approved.

5. Overview of Research Priorities

Ed McCauley, Vice-President (Research), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter reported that:
 - A process to develop the next University strategy has been initiated, following which new Academic and Strategic Research Plans will be developed in 2017

- The University's recent research-related growth includes external research revenue, position in university rankings, and number of awards received by faculty, post-doctoral scholars, and students
- There are challenges to the University achieving diversity in the fellowship and research chair domains (e.g. gender, visible disability)
- The six priority areas of the Strategic Research Plan (SRP) each now have formal research strategies, and advancements within each area have been made. The six priority areas are: 1) Brain and Mental Health; 2) Human Dynamics in a Changing World; 3) New Earth-Space Technologies; 4) Engineering Solutions for Health; 5) Infections, Inflammation and Chronic Diseases; and 6) Energy Innovations for Today and Tomorrow.
- The University continues to support four research stations: the Bamfield Marine Station in British Columbia, the Biogeoscience Institute in Kananaskis (Barrier Lake Station and R.B. Miller Station), and the Kluane Lake Research Station in the Arctic
- There are many opportunities to apply for federal, provincial, institutional, or private research funding. Major programs include the Canada Excellence Research Chairs, Canada Foundation for Innovation, and Alberta Innovates.
- The University's support systems for researchers have significantly improved
- In response to questions, the presenter reported that:
 - The University is actively seeking project funding in order to further progression in the Synthesis and Visualization of Data research platform
 - The Vice-President (Research) meets annually with SRP priority area Thought Leaders, to assess the progress being made in the priority areas and to identify opportunities for collaboration. It is possible that, when the SRP is developed in 2017, the priority areas may change or be expanded.
 - There is uncertainty about the future of several provincial research funding programs, including the Alberta Innovates programs, as the provincial government may make changes as it redirects funds from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund endowment to other areas
 - The University ranks in the top five of Canada's research institutions overall, but not across all Faculties in all measures
- The Committee discussed the limitations to applying for funding and to participating in large collaborative research projects, such as teaching commitments and other workload, and the complexity of the application processes
- The Co-Chair remarked that the Committee can expect to receive more updates on progress toward the University's research priorities in the coming year

6. Centres and Institutes

Ed McCauley, Vice-President (Research), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter reported that the Centres and Institutes Policy, a draft of which has been seen by the Committee at previous meetings, will soon be re-entering the policy development process

- The Committee discussed the need to clearly define centres and institutes, and discussed possible models for centres and institutes, including one in which centres would be housed in Faculties and institutes would be at a supra level
- The Committee considered that some institutes are funded externally and some are funded internally, and that some are dedicated to research while others include a teaching component
- The Committee discussed the complexities of graduate and undergraduate programming offered through institutes, noting that it is important to link teaching with research but that the administration of these programs can be challenging particularly when they are interdisciplinary in nature
- The presenter indicated that the policy writers will continue to incorporate feedback into the draft of the Centres and Institutes Policy, and that the Committee should see a revised draft at some point in the 2016-2017 meeting year

7. Other Business

Carolyn Emery was acknowledged for her service as Academic Co-Chair, and she and other retiring members of the Committee were thanked for their participation.

8. Adjournment

The May 24, 2016 Research and Scholarship Committee meeting was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.