



General Faculties Council
RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting 53
February 18, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

Robert Thompson, Co-Chair
Andy Knight, Academic Co-Chair
Lyndsay Campbell – left after Item 4
Carolyn Emery
Sabine Gilch – left during Item 5
Claire Kamaliddin – left during Item 6
Seok-Woo Kwon – left during Item 5
Alex Paquette
Mary-Jo Romaniuk – arrived during Item 2, left after Item 6
Cathryn Ryan – left after Item 4
Dora Tam
Annette Timm

Regrets

Semhar Abraha
David Eaton
Michael Hill
Tom Keenan
Dawn Kingston
Sylvie Roy
Robin Yates

Guests

MacKinley Darlington, Manager - Knowledge Engagement – present for Item 4
Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research) (VPR) – present for Items 4 and 5
Kathryn Graham, Executive Director - Performance Management & Evaluation, Alberta Innovates – present for Item 4
Jenny McLean, Manager - Marketing & Communications, Office of the VPR – present for Item 4
Penny Pexman, Associate Vice-President (Research) – present for Item 4
Susan Skone, Associate Vice-President (Research) – present for Items 4 and 5
Lorna Very, Executive Director, Office of the VPR – present for Item 4
Abdel Yousif, Director - Information Technologies – present for Item 5

Non-Voting Members

Hamid Habibi
Thomas Oldenburg

Secretary and Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

Staff

Jaclyn Carter

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

The Co-Chair reported that a discussion item entitled “Thoughts from the Growth Through Focus Congress” has been added to the agenda under Other Business.

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the February 18, 2021 Research and Scholarship Committee meeting be approved, with the reported amendment.

Carried

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

The Co-Chair included the following in his remarks:

- The Growth Through Focus (GTF) Congress is underway and participation has been strong. Feedback on GTF is being collected through the Congress and other means, and interesting suggestions and concerns are being gathered.
- Recent changes to staffing within the Research area include the appointment of a new Director of Grants, Awards and Ethics, and a new Senior Legal Counsel (Research) will be announced soon
- The end of the University’s fiscal year is approaching, and it has been a surprisingly busy year. 2020 is the first time that the University has surpassed 10,000 ethics submissions to the Institutional Research Information Services Solution (IRISS) system.

The Academic Co-Chair made no remarks.

3. Approval of the December 17, 2020 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 December 17, 2020 be approved.

Carried

4. Research Impact Assessment

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Bill Ghali and MacKinley Darlington presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that the University became a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in January 2021. The presenters then gave a presentation reminding of the DORA principles and providing information on the University’s Knowledge Engagement Impact Evaluation Framework Project which is funded by a Research Impact Canada grant. The presenters reported that this project will establish a research impact assessment framework, develop an impact evaluation tool for use by researchers, and produce a video series

for training and to promote the use of the framework.

- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The University's Knowledge Engagement Unit is studying other research impact assessment frameworks, and will draw from these
 - The Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook aligns with the DORA principles for the assessment of research. It was noted that the Handbook is not a Research portfolio initiative, and it is expected that Faculties will be supported in its implementation by Human Resources.
 - The Knowledge Engagement website is being rolled out in phases and will be fully functional during Summer 2021
- Discussion included:
 - How open access journals differ from other publication options, and that open access journals can promote research impact because of the accessibility
 - That the University's research impact assessment framework can be customized to fit with the University's local, provincial and national context

5. High Performance Computing / Secure Research Computing

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Susan Skone and Abdel Yousif presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters gave a presentation on the high performance and secure computing initiative at the University, which serves to ensure that research teams are not limited by a lack of computing resources. The presenters reported on the office of Research Computing Services, provided an overview of what high performance computing is, highlighted the services provided, and presented statistics on the number of jobs done for Faculties and examples of supported projects.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - The Research Computing Services high performance computing system includes the machinery housed in Math Sciences but not that in the Prairie Regional Research Data Centre
 - Research Computing Services can assist in the preparation of grant proposals with high performance computing requirements
- Discussion included:
 - The management services provided to Faculties by Research Computing Services is appreciated as a good partnership
 - Researchers in the Arts are increasingly in the need for high performance computing, such as for video processing, large files, and Optical Character Recognition
 - The Libraries and Cultural Resources unit operates the Prairie Regional Research Data Centre which archives data in a secure computer facility, and provides services such as for digitization

6. Other Business

Thoughts from the Growth Through Focus Congress

Discussion included:

- The Faculty of Arts GTF Working Group is preparing a submission outlining concerns with GTF and would like to connect with similar groups from other Faculties so that the submission can reflect multiple perspectives
- Graduate students would like greater involvement in the development of GTF (graduate students are not represented in the GTF development working groups) and the work going forward
- Some of the language originally in GTF (e.g. “frontier” and “unstoppable”) was problematic,
- There is worry that some of the expressed concerns will not be reflected in the final version of GTF
- The University is experiencing a difficult time, with a provincial post-secondary system review underway, reduced funding, the impacts of COVID-19, and an economic recession, and it is necessary for the University to establish a plan for moving forward in a positive and strategic way. It is important that the persons participating in the GTF Congress and submitting comments through other means feel heard.
- There are three categories of feedback being heard: 1) comments about the GTF consultation process to date, 2) the importance of meaningfully weaving Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into GTF, and 3) comments on the Three Big Ideas in GTF (transdisciplinary scholarship, deeper community integration, and future-focused program delivery) and that the concept of entrepreneurship must be broadly defined
- The GTF Congress sessions opened with a pre-written statement about positive and charitable feedback, and some participants felt that this implied that they were being characterized as unconstructive naysayers rather than expressing genuine concerns.
- Some of the persons attending the GTF Congress sessions have conferred with their colleagues before attending, and represent the opinions of many people and not only themselves
- There is lack of clarity regarding if and how programs and units will be closed
- Some institutions are focusing on spending cuts, but the University is striving for revenue generation
- Continuing to cultivate a strong research enterprise at the University will draw researchers to the institution

7. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

The February 18, 2021 Research and Scholarship Committee meeting was adjourned by consensus.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.