

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

MS Teams Online

| Voting Member Quorum: 7 | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------|---|
| Amit Shukla Daniel Bernstein, Chair Deborah Henderson Ishant Goyal June Kaminski | Leeann Waddington Shelley Boyd | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr style="background-color: #d3d3d3;"> <th style="text-align: left; padding: 2px;">Non-voting</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"> Catherine Schwichtenberg Taranum Sultana </td> </tr> </table> | Non-voting | Catherine Schwichtenberg Taranum Sultana |
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| Catherine Schwichtenberg Taranum Sultana | | | | |
| Regrets | Senate Office | Guests | | |
| Alan Davis Brett Favaro Gayle Bedard Karen Meijer-Kline Mandeep Pannu Paul Adams Sue Fairburn | Sonia Orlu (recorder) | Cathy Parlee Jackie Au Keith Leung Melissa Cuthill | | |

1. Call to Order and Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair, Daniel Bernstein, called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Shelley Boyd moved the agenda be confirmed as circulated.

The motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes, November 28, 2023

Leeann Waddington moved the minutes be accepted as circulated.

The motion carried.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair, Daniel Bernstein, initiated the discussion by reiterating the two primary objectives for the academic year 2023-2024, with a focus on revisiting these for the subsequent year. The top priorities highlighted were the Research Advancement Strategy, previously known as the White Paper on Research and Scholarship, and the responsibilities of SSCR in relation to this strategy.

Bernstein noted the varying levels of response received from faculty councils over the past years regarding the implementation of recommendations from the original White Paper. He highlighted that the first year's response was unsatisfactory, but there was improvement in the following year. Bernstein raised a question about the significance of the update process in the context of the broader Research Advancement Strategy. He stressed the need for continuity and consistency in reporting on research activities across faculties.

The committee proposed a potentially less formal, consultative approach for gathering updates, suggesting that a brief report from the Deans might be more effective. Additionally, it was suggested that the term 'plan,' used in previous feedback requests, could have been intimidating for some faculties.

Members emphasized the importance of involving faculties in discussions about their research progress and achievements. They suggested a more structured approach to reporting, including a status update on the research plan and a highlight of key achievements, with a maximum length for the reports. Regular inquiries would help faculties become more familiar with what is expected in their responses, which could lead to clearer and more meaningful contributions over time.

5. Regular Reports

5.1. Associate Vice-President, Research and Innovation

Amit Shukla, the Acting Associate Vice-President for Research and Innovation, presented his report to the committee. He announced that Deepak Gupta will resume his role as AVP Research and Innovation in March 2024 after a leave of absence.

The committee inquired about the upcoming research showcase, especially regarding whether research not directly linked to sustainability could be included. Shukla clarified that while the showcase's main theme is sustainability, research from various disciplines could fit into this theme. He pointed out that many research projects could align with one or more of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. He assured the committee that research fitting any of these goals would be suitable for the showcase, indicating a flexible and inclusive approach to the theme. Shukla also noted that it's rare for research to not align with any of the 17 goals, underscoring the wide scope of the sustainability theme.

5.2. Working Groups

5.2.1. Research Advancement Strategy

Daniel Bernstein provided an update on the progress made by the team working on this document, which included Victor Martinez from the Wilson School of Design, Bernadine Sengalrayan, and himself. He highlighted Bernadine's background in knowledge mobilization, emphasizing her valuable contributions.

The team plans to hold several meetings throughout the term to inform the research advancement strategy. These meetings would involve town halls with faculty and students, faculty council subcommittees on research, and external groups, including consulting with Larissa Petrillo and Tracy Kinney, who was working on the academic plan.

Committee members raised concerns about external party involvement in creating the document, questioning the approach and suggesting ensuring adequate internal consultation before seeking external inputs. They emphasized the need to include and document the contributions of many individuals in the creation process, suggesting it might be more appropriate to acknowledge these contributions rather than specifying individual authors.

Amit Shukla clarified the role of the external advisory committees, known as "Super PACs," which are typically industry representatives advising faculties on curriculum and trends.

Bernstein expressed openness to input and feedback on whether names should be attached to the document and invited committee members to share their opinions. He stressed the importance of the document as a university-wide strategy, which should inform how its authorship should be represented.

Leeann Waddington discussed the integration of research into curriculum design and program reviews, emphasizing the need to enhance questions around research in these processes. She mentioned ongoing projects to promote undergraduate research initiatives and suggested potential improvements in curriculum design and program reviews to better incorporate research skills.

6. Items for Discussion

Leeann Waddington updated the committee on the near completion of the Teaching and Learning Commons renovation, a space designed for faculty collaboration and various activities. She proposed hosting an upcoming committee meeting in this new space to showcase and promote it. Daniel Bernstein suggested April or May for this meeting to ensure better attendance. Additionally, committee member Deborah Henderson offered to bring strawberries, grown in the university's greenhouse, as an appealing incentive for participants.

To finalize the date for this in-person meeting, the Senate Office was tasked with conducting a poll to determine the preferred month, either April or May. Waddington agreed to reserve the classroom in the Teaching and Learning Commons for the selected date.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.