University Research Council
Minutes
September 15, 2015
2:30- 4:30 pm
MUSC 220

Attendees:

Allison Sekuler, Chair
Bonny Ibhwoh
Tony Porter
John Preston
Pamela Swett
Gianni Parise

Peter Mascher
Naresh Agarwal
Barb McKenna
Kathy Charters
Nick Markettos
Greg Weiler
Gay Yuyitung

Regrets:

Steve Collins
Jonathan Bramson
Vivian Lewis

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes URC Meeting of March 5, 2015.

2. Business Arising/Action Items

3. Strategic Research Plan (Allison Sekuler)

4. Indigenous Research – Allison Sekuler

5. Prizes and Awards – Allison Sekuler
6. Report from the VPR Team – (Nick Markettos, Kathy Charters, Gay Yuyitung, Barb McKenna)

7. Planning for the Upcoming CFI Innovation Fund Competition – Kathy Charters

8. Faculty Updates – Associate Deans, Research

9. Roundtable Discussion/Other Business

1. MINUTES OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 5, 2015

- Dr. Peter Mascher motioned to accept the minutes of the March 5, 2015 meeting and Dr. John Preston seconded. Motion carried.

2. BUSINESS ARISING/ ACTION ITEMS FROM THE MARCH 5, 2015 MEETING

- NOTHING BROUGHT FORWARD FROM THIS MEETING

3) Strategic Research Plan (SRP)

- Dr. Sekuler noted that the SRP was developed a number of years ago – the purpose was to provide an overarching view of where we’re going
- can submit to a max of one per year; usually tweaked in minor ways
- the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) is also useful to update especially the Strengths & Emerging Opportunities section (our SMA can be found online at: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/universities.html)
- Keywords are important, as well as ensuring that everyone is represented in the document
- Kathy Charters has done a draft of the SRP; Dr. Sekuler will tweak this somewhat then it will be circulated with the group; Kathy noted that the SRP is used with the CFI/ORF and other institutional funding opportunities

4) Indigenous Research

- Dr. Sekuler said that McMaster is at a convergence point with Indigenous research and knowledge
- Pilot program with summer residence program (Indigenous Undergraduate Summer Research Scholars program)
Also implementing a module with mygradskills.ca; in discussion with Council to provide an Indigenous research framework; working towards an institute for Indigenous research and knowledge at McMaster

Dr. Sekuler asked for the URC to help with their own areas

Mr. Weiler asked about the relationship with the Chiefs of the local Indigenous communities

Dr. Sekuler said that she has met with the Clan Mother and connected with Six Nations (Roberta Jamieson from Six Nations Polytechnic) – while we have connections, they need to be stronger

Mr. Weiler noted there are issues with the Research Ethics Board with consultations

Dr. Sekuler said that we need to get a better sense of the Research Ethics Board/Community Ethics Board – issues with being perceived as paternalistic and cumbersome. We need to think about the preference and needs of Indigenous People: “nothing about us without us”

Dr. Sekuler referred to the Indigenous Education Council re: research framework and talked about the Mac-Laurier-Brock roundtable that was held in the summer for SSHRC/CAGS

On the research framework point, Dr. Preston said that Engineering has a connection with Hatch: Indigenous engineers; firm with ties to reserves; Engineering has run a number of years camps with elementary kids; pipeline disappears at high school level; should think about reconstructing that pipeline with alumni – move forward with scholarships with Indigenous students

Need to have resources in place – academically and culturally it’s a multi-year process

Dr. Sekuler said she wants to see progress before the end of December

Dr. Preston noted that it’s a challenge to integrate the Research Ethics Board and the Indigenous Research Board – but it was noted that some agreements are in place

5) Prizes and Awards

President Deane asked Dr. Sekuler to firm up a strategy for prizes and awards

Range of departments and Faculties who are good at it; need a common framework

Need to build a portfolio for individuals – if they can win one award they can win another; need a point person in each department or cluster of departments to disseminate information about prizes and awards

Dr. Parise said that they are working on a document in Science and compiling a list for standing committees

Dr. Preston said they have 2 committees: for junior and senior level profs; looking more at international awards to help get people’s names out (Max Wong leading the committee on Sr. Awards)

Committee for Royal Society of Canada should have a chair with FRSC
• Need staff members with institutional knowledge to organize committees and invest in them to do the writing; often it is the junior faculty members who write the nomination, but the nominator has to be a Fellow
• Dr. Porter proposed that Chairs in each department are the most appropriate for prizes and awards committees because they’re following the careers of those in their department
• Dr. Ibhawoh said that a staff person should be the point person – there has to be administrative support which could be provided, for example, through the Research Support Facilitators in the Faculties
• Barb McKenna said that Awards walls – like the one in FHS – work well

6) Reports from the VPR Team

Nick Markettos

• Fraunhofer-BEAM facility will be located at MIP
• The application to Fed Dev stalled with election
• City and province have provided funding – Fed Dev application is for $12M
• CECR submitted by Professors Xu/Fang/Selvaganapathy – WATERMART
• Advanced Manufacturing Hub proposal (Mo Elbestawi with Siemens & CME); Prime Minister said if elected his government will support the proposal
• McMaster Institute for Transportation Logistics (MITL) received an Automotive Partnership Council award of $1.8M; call from the MRI to do a study on issue with transportation and innovation: Pavlos Kanaroglou’s application accepted
• Undertaking a joint review of the McMaster Innovation Park/McMaster, looking at what’s been done up to now, expectations, changes, relevant governance structure
• Burlington Economic Development Corporation – keen to expand their relationship with McMaster; Patrick Deane has met with Mayor Goldring to increase presence

Kathy Charters

• Advisors back from maternity leave
• Competitions: ORF-RE – in years past 4-6 applications were submitted; last year 28 NOIs resulted in 10 applications; this year will be more applications still;
• it is great to see so many researchers developing partnerships - January 19 is the deadline; researchers meet with the Faculty for discussion and to determine the strength of the partnerships
• SSHRC Partnership Development Grants – good community partnerships
• Smaller scale competition – ERA has more applications; 5 years ago there were 10-15, now in the 25-30 range
• 9 CRC applications will be submitted this fall:
• CFI – plans for JELF, more allocation anticipated
• Challenges of when researchers will apply – difficult for everyone to stay on schedule
• We have a close relationship with the CFI so keep them apprised on our plans; while CFI recognizes some need for flexibility, timely submission will be critical –

Gay Yuyitung
• Partnership/research funding; WATERMART presentation for CECR went well
• Doing more NSERC Engage and OCE – 10-15 throughout the year; number of applications from Science up; Business up as well (eligible for NSERC)
• MITACS – how to target more; MITACS graduate student fellowship grants have gone from $15K to $1M over 5 years; Opportunities for business, social sciences, and humanities; can be significant funding levels if they’re part of a cluster; Success rate is over 90%;
• Drs. Sekuler and Deane met with the president of MITACS – more internship funding; $15K over 4 months; new CONVERGE pilot program at MITACS
• Commercialization: interpretation document of IP policy, making it easier to read, getting good feedback
• Reviewing guidelines on selling shares we receive as part of commercialization; currently shares are held in the name of the University and divided as per IP policy; now drafting a policy which will provide clearer guidelines for both the university and inventors
• Success with ATH (anti-clotting drug) and ATTWILL – licensed out to a sub licensee
• IBDQ (Intestinal Bowel Disease Questionnaire) generates $3M-$3.5M annually for licensing – charged in US$
• Turnstone with Brian Lichty - $9M in venture capital funding
• Triumvira with Jonathan Bramson -- $350K for cancer cell therapy
• Mark Tarnopolsky – biotech to manufacture treatments for mitochondrial diseases (Exerkine Corp) – clinical trials in next year or two
• Entrepreneurship initiatives with Sean Van Koughnett: The Forge; downtown location on James N.
• Renewal application for funding for the Forge in progress (funding is from province)

Barb McKenna
• Working on FICR distribution; working with hospitals
• Haven’t heard about budgets; research finance busy with CFI reporting
• Cleaning up the data on PeopleSoft; haven’t made progress with Mosaic; researchers like the reports but not the way they are delivered
• Two outstanding items with Tri-Council

Greg Weiler
• Figuring out changes in CIHR funding and the impact on researchers
• Negotiating the research portion of the affiliation agreement with HHS
• 2 largest foundation grants in the country – 17% success rate (beat national average)
• Some long-standing researchers didn’t get foundation grants – what is that situation and how do we deal with it?

**Dr. Peter Mascher**

• Office of International Affairs has been moved to the Provost’s portfolio – what does it mean?
• No way to separate research from International Affairs – lots of uncertainty; he still communicates with ADRs
• Launched 2 International Initiatives Micro Funds – response has been great; not enough money in the pot, they’ve only approved Round 1 with 10 proposals submitted for Round 2 (awards of up to $5K/proposal)
• Dr. Parise asked how they vet the applications – Science has an International Strategy Advisory Group
• Dr. Mascher noted that the International Initiatives Fund is interdisciplinary and multi-Faculty, with Faculties putting money on the table
• General idea is that faculty work together with international collaborators or bring them here, or the grants are written elsewhere
• Discussed an International Strategic Advisor for isolated initiatives with Africa; emerging interests, many opportunities
• Idea to put together an “Africa Desk” – asking ADRs who’s appropriate for this? Would like people to be of self-declared interest, not a faculty member seconded to the Desk; asked for ADRs to go to their departments to get names of those who are engaged in or want to be engaged with Africa research (both topical and regional areas – Africa is huge)
• Mr. Weiler asked about the NCOs understanding in Africa – Dr. Mascher noted they haven’t started but have global health grand challenges
• The idea is not meant to fund research, but to lower the barriers
• Dr. Bonny Ibhawoh noted that his office is looking at developing partnerships at a proposed interdisciplinary retreat focused on exploring opportunities for partnering
• Kathy Charters mentioned that MILO and ROADS had offered workshops on how to develop research partnerships, lessons learned etc.; additional workshops are anticipated

7) Planning for the Upcoming CFI Innovation Fund Competition

• Draft call for proposals for the Innovation Fund final deadline (summer/fall 2016)
• CFI is hoping that the Innovation Fund will develop into a regular 2-year cycle – need to talk in the Faculties about planning initiatives for future competitions
• Internal competition seems to have become focused on obtaining the allocation vs developing the proposal itself
• Proposing a change to the internal process. While the first step was in the past a 3 page “blue sky” document, that is not as effective as has been in the past and now suggest sitting down with ROADS, HRS and Faculties for deeper discussion;
• Proposed that the second step in the process by a more fully formed application for internal review; will result in better informed decisions – if researchers are ½ way at this point, they won’t have far to go to develop a competitive application;
• Will request external review; while this is an extra step with coordination and some expense we think it will be beneficial
• Approval and provisional allocation will be provided; allocation will later be made final based upon the strength of the proposal
• Decision and allocation will be made by PVP
• VPR will provide the time of a “project manager” to assist in developing applications selected for submission to CFI