

**Minutes of FAP Meeting #12 AY2017-18**  
**November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017; 11 a.m. – 12 noon**  
**Faculty Governance Conference Room - SL225**

In Attendance: Tanja Dominko (Chair), Nancy Burnham (Secretary), Fabienne Miller, Kristopher Sullivan - Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Jeffrey Solomon - Executive Vice President/CFO

Absent: Tahar El-Korchi

1. The day's agenda was approved.
2. The minutes from Meeting #11 were approved.
3. Institutional support of research activities. The motion to replace the description of the Research Development Council (RDC) was slightly amended and approved by FAP. The motion is attached.
4. FAP is undertaking an analysis of institutional administrative vs. instructional spending following "The Guide to Controlling Administrative Costs through Effective Oversight" that was issued by ACTA's (American Council of Trustees and Alumni) Institute for Effective Governance in July 2017 (<https://www.goacta.org/publications/controlling-administrative-costs>).

"Not only is the relationship between administrative and instructional spending central to institutional efficiency and reflective of institutional priorities, but it also raises issues of appearance, public image, and institutional morale. Institutions risk signaling misplaced priorities, which can have adverse effects on their ability to grow in areas pertinent to their academic missions, such as attracting and retaining prominent faculty."

The financial data that institutions report to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), through its Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is readily available for this analysis through FY2015.

FAP will discuss the analysis and formulate a report for the WPI Board of Trustees Budget and Finance Committee meeting in February 2018.

5. The meeting was adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A Burnham  
FAP Secretary, AY 2017-18

**Date:** January, 2018

**To:** WPI Faculty

**From:** Financial and Administrative Policy Committee (Prof. Dominko, Chair)

**Re:** Motion to replace description of Research Development Council

**Motion:** The Financial and Administrative Policy Committee recommend, and I move that the current language describing Research Development Council (in Part Two of the Faculty Handbook) be replaced by the new description below.

**Description of the Proposed Modifications:**

**B. Research Development Council**

(Approved by the Faculty, May 22, 1986, **replaced January 2018**)

*Roles and Responsibilities*

The role of the Research Development Council (RDC) is to serve as an advisory board to the Vice Provost for Research (VPR). RDC provides advice and assistance to the VPR on the development of research, research planning, and research policy. The specific roles and responsibilities of the RDC are:

1. Strategic planning to maximize research productivity of faculty and staff and to support highly innovative, transformative research
2. To administer internal review of pre-proposals for limited submission opportunities
3. To administer internal research funding programs
4. To review and recommend updates to the indirect cost return (ICR) reinvestment model as needed
5. To develop yearly RDC budget recommendation, including, but not limited to support of:
  - repair and maintenance of research instrumentation,
  - multi-institutional research initiatives,
  - internal research funding programs for all disciplines, and
  - cost sharing
6. To coordinate research infrastructure requests in support of new Faculty recruitment across all disciplines with Department Heads, Deans and the Provost
7. To make recommendations regarding research infrastructure

*Membership*

The Research Development Council consists of the Vice Provost for Research and 8 faculty members with a record of significant scholarly research contributions. Faculty members serve staggered 3-year terms. Any member can be reappointed after a minimum of one year between terms.

- One faculty member is appointed by the Dean of Foisie Business School.
- Two faculty members are appointed by the Dean of Engineering.
- Two faculty members are appointed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences.
- One faculty member is appointed annually by the VPR.
- One faculty member is appointed by the COG.
- One faculty member is appointed by the Committee on Graduate Studies and Research.

Research Solution Institute staff will provide the RDC with administrative and staff support.

## Rationale

The Research Development Council (RDC) was conceived and approved by faculty vote in 1986 as a way to nurture and develop excellence in research and scholarship among members of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) faculty and was the group that oversaw funding under the Research Advancement Program (RAP). The purpose of the RDC was to provide relatively modest amounts of short-term (normally one year) financial support as "seed" money to faculty members and research teams with an emphasis on those who currently lack external funding.

For financial reasons, funding of the RDC was discontinued shortly after it was established until the winter of 1999, when an allocation was made to fund a limited number of programs.

Additional funding was then made available for awards to be made for fiscal year 2001 projects. The funding was discontinued in 2009.

Research Development Council is composed of Faculty with record of significant research/scholarship accomplishments and plays a pivotal role as an advisory board to the VPR. With the Strategic Plan goal to significantly increase research expenditures, it is critically important that we manage research activities and resources in a more structured manner. In addition to administering internal research funding programs across all disciplines, RDC will be undertaking activities that are currently not addressed adequately, such as limited submission reviews and recommendations, maintenance of research infrastructure and equipment, and coordination of capital requests with existing equipment availability, and other seed funding opportunities.

## Implementation

Immediate