

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE  
Research Policy and Advisory Committee

**Minutes**

March 2, 2020; 10:00 a.m.

**Kenwood IRC 2175**

**1. Call to order and approval of the agenda**

Robin Mello called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Members Present:

Abigail Amisssah-Arthur; Razia Azen, Liam Callanan, David DiValerio (GFC Representative), Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska (ex officio; via teleconference), Mark Harris (ex officio), Tom Holbrook, Robin Mello (chair) Kate Mollen (ex officio), Vali Raicu, Kristin Roosevelt (via teleconference), Brooke Slavens (via teleconference)

Members Absent:

Victoria Moerchen, Doug Stafford, Alan Wiseman

Guests:

Kathleen Koch, Kristian O'Connor, Michelle Schoenecker, Kari Whittenberger-Keith (Office of Research); Peter Schwander (ITPC liaison)

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**2. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**3. Automatic Consent**

The minutes of the February 3, 2020 meeting were approved as distributed.

**4. Research Advocacy – 2017 Research Plan and Updates**

Mark Harris, Vice Provost for Research, discussed the Research Excellence plan. The original plan was written nearly five years ago and many changes have occurred at UWM since then. A new, smaller working group is working on updates to the plan, taking into account:

- Deans have been asked to work with their faculty in developing school/college specific plans
- Internal funding budgets have been reduced by 50%
- There is pressure on the faculty to grow enrollments, but many fewer faculty, making it difficult to stay active in research. It is especially hard to find ad hoc/replacement instructors to allow course releases for upper level classes.
- Indirect cost rates are insufficient to support research infrastructure.
- Some research-related themes from the Chancellor's retreat in January 2020:
  - There is a need for more collaborative/multidisciplinary work.

- We need to think about the best use of the entire UWM workforce in supporting research.
- The benefits of making research experiences available to more students.

Kris O'Connor, Associate Vice Provost for Research, confirmed that similar points have been raised in the 2030+ Think Tank, which he co-chairs.

## 5. **Barriers to Collaborative Research**

### **Office of Research Support of Collaborative Research**

Kari Whittenberger-Keith from the Research Development unit spoke about attributes and challenges of collaborative/multidisciplinary research:

- It requires development of skills for effectively communicating within a group vs. one-on-one.
- It requires an understanding of disciplines other than your own, both in content and research design.
- It involves managing people within a non-hierarchical structure.
- A decentralized organizational structure can impede collaboration.
- "Target" journals may be different than those for single-discipline research.
- It takes 9 to 18 months for a team to become functional.
- It takes perseverance in the face of diminishing time to devote to research.
- Tenure/promotion criteria often value individual studies over collaborative studies, and early career faculty are discouraged from participating in collaborative work until tenure is achieved.

She also spoke about characteristics of institutions that facilitate collaborative research.

- They send a strong message from the top that encourages collaboration.
- They have workload flexibility.
- They have tenure/promotion guidelines that value collaboration.
- They provide start-up time in addition to start-up funds.

Mark Harris briefly mentioned some activities in support of collaborative research:

- The DIG and ARC internal funding programs have higher budget caps for multi-investigator projects.
- The TIP program, which supports the formation and development of interdisciplinary research teams and provides seed funding for small, multi-investigator pilot projects.
- In the future, we may have more multidisciplinary research centers or institutes.

## 6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen Koch