

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE  
Research Policy and Advisory Committee

**Minutes**

May 11, 2020; 3:00 p.m.

**Via Microsoft Teams**

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

Robin Mello called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.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. Automatic Consent**

The minutes of the March 2, 2020 meeting were approved as distributed.

**3. Promoting UWM's Research**

Michelle Johnson, Senior Director of Integrated Marketing & Communications, University Relations & Communications, spoke about various tools used to share results of research at UWM with a wide audience, including the following:

- The UWM Research magazine has been extremely successful; distribution includes incoming graduate students and legislators; will have to scale back length of next issue due to budget reductions
- Newswise – a subscription service that helps distribute news releases nationally, also works as a liaison to connect faculty with reporters looking for on-the-spot expertise
- The “For media” page <https://uwm.edu/news/media/>– populated with special topics lists and links, anticipates future interest

She noted that our researchers are appearing more often in publications such as the Washington Post and Politico.

She also mentioned a new hire in University Relations & Communications, Genero Armas, who will be covering the humanities, social sciences, education, social welfare, the arts and information studies, architecture and urban planning.

#### **4. Election of Chair for 2020-21**

Alan Wiseman nominated Robin Mello as chair. Thomas Holbrook seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations; Robin Mello was elected by acclamation.

#### **5. Update from the Office of Research**

Mark Harris, Vice Provost for Research, spoke about

##### COVID and Research Space:

With advent of COVID, labs had to close rapidly, process for re-opening will be more complicated and take more time– involving state, local regulations, legal concerns; the health of UWM community is highest priority. Reopening will need to be conducted in stages, with smaller groups – at perhaps 1/3 to ¼ of normal density.

Priorities in returning to labs once safety guidelines have been approved: – Grad students (especially those close to degree completion), COVID research, early career researchers, researchers using animal populations in danger of aging out/not being useful for results; other time-sensitive research (including seasonal fieldwork) having the highest priority.

Even if individual labs are well-trained in use of personal protective equipment and biosafety protocols, researchers need to take into account building-level occupancy and capacity of (now reduced) custodial staff for enhanced and more frequent cleaning procedures and availability of PPE and cleaning supplies.

##### R1 advisory group:

The group has been discussing how recommendations from the 2017 Research Excellence report may need to be reset given declines in enrollment and in state support. However, several points remain unchanged.

- There is likely to be an increase in collaborative/multi-investigator research projects in the future.
- There is a need to make stronger connections between research and academics. Undergraduate research is good for retention, especially with underrepresented groups.
- The campus needs to consider flexibility in workload assignments – the “equation” needs to consider more than courses.
- The campus should consider restructuring position titling to better support research

#### **6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen Koch