

## MINUTES

Commission on Research  
November 14, 2024  
3:30 – 5:00pm  
Zoom

**Present:** Nicole Pitterson (presiding), Gibran Ali, Ella Atkins, Manish Bansal, Thomas Bell, Leanna Blevins, Alberto Cano, Joseph Gaeddert, Dan Givens, Randy Heflin, Andrew Krum, Barry Miller, Albert Pan, Esther Park, Jonathan Petters, Jorge Reyes, Elizabeth Sicking, Ryan Stewart, Dan Sui, Sophie Thompsen, Esra Buyuktahtakin Toy, Caitlin Woodson

**Absent with Notice:** Thomas Archibald, Benjamin Knapp, Corinne Noiro, Karen Schnatterly, Quinn Thomas

**Absent:** Ronald Gibbons, Daniel Pauly, Michelle Theus

**Guests:** Justin Lemkul, April Myers, Allie Oberoi, John Talerico, Melinda West

**Research and Innovation Support:** Kim Borkowski, Laurel Miner

Nicole Pitterson called the meeting to order at 3:31pm. A quorum was present.

### **1. Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

### **2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of October 10, 2024**

Nicole Pitterson noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be accessed on the [Commission on Research Sharepoint](#).

### **3. New Business**

#### **UC 2024-25A**

Justin Lemkul presented on the Resolution to Form a University Mission Initiative Committee to Recommend Updated Policies for Funding Doctoral Research at Virginia Tech. He reminded the Commission on Research members of the purpose and structure of a University Mission Initiative (UMI) as mechanisms to generate a university-wide process for undertaking major policy change. Doctoral research, as a major component of the presidential priority of Virginia Tech Global Distinction, is an apt subject for engaging the UMI process. The Commission on Faculty Affairs took on the responsibility for initiating the resolution process, and is seeking consensus from the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies (CGPSP), and the Commission on Research, to support the resolution.

Lemkul summarized the UMI as an effort to increase graduate enrollment to a scale appropriate for Virginia Tech's undergraduate research size, especially through increased doctoral research, especially on sponsored funding. The resolution envisions a number of areas for the UMI committee to investigate, including tuition remission, graduate fellowships, and PI sponsored funding choices. COR members made suggestions for the UMI, including: clarify the goal in the charge, differentiate

postdocs from other categories of research faculty, consider the chicken-and-egg issues of enrollment and sponsored program support, and ensure that the elevation of graduate students doesn't come at the explicit cost of postdoctoral researchers. In addition, the report of the Graduate Education Task Force from 2020 would be useful background for the UMI.

#### **4. Presentation**

Allie Oberoi, Associate Director, Global Safety & Risk Management presented on Global Travel Safety, specifically updates on Virginia Tech Policy 1070: Global Travel Policy. Key points of the presentation covered what stayed the same as well as what is new to the policy, including clarification on the definition of a "high risk" destination, insurance enrollment, required incident reporting, and the establishment of a Global Non-credit Approval Committee (GNAC). Oberoi also provided an overview of the approval process requirements for international travel, leading students abroad, support services provided to travelers, and emergency support contacts.

John Talerico, Assistant Vice President for Research Security and Chief Research Security Officer, presented on International Research and the role of the Office of Export and Secure Research Compliance (OESRC). Key points included review areas that OESRC is responsible for related to international research, such as agreements, foreign persons, international travel and shipping. Additionally, Talerico defined what research security is, requirements for research security programs, and how Virginia Tech is addressing and meeting regulatory compliance ([presentation](#)).

#### **5. Announcements**

- Randy Heflin welcomed and introduced Alberto Cano, the new Associate Vice President for Research Computing.

#### **6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:58pm.