

MINUTES

Commission on Research

April 10, 2025

3:30-5:00 pm

Zoom

Present: Nicole Pitterson (presiding), Gibran Ali, Manish Basal, Thomas Bell, Leanna Blevins, Esra Buyuktahtakin Toy, Alberto Cano, Joseph Gaeddert, Dan Givens, Randy Heflin, Ben Knapp, Andrew Krum, Barry Miller, Laurel Miner (for Dan Sui), Esther Park, Daniel Pauly, Jonathan Petters, Jorge Reyes, Karen Schnatterly, Michelle Theus, Quinn Thomas, Janell Watson, Caitlin Woodson

Absent with Notice: Thomas Archibald, Ryan Stewart

Absent: Ella Atkins, Ron Gibbons, Albert Pan, Elizabeth Sicking, Sophie Thompson

Guests: Linda Duffy, April Myers

Research and Innovation Support: Kim Borkowski, Laurel Miner

Nicole Pitterson called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm. 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 March 6, 2025

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

3. Presentation

Linda Duffy, Assistant Vice President, Research and Innovation and Director, Sponsored Programs, gave a presentation on procedure updates in the Office of Sponsored Programs ([attached](#)). Topics covered an overview of federal regulations, allowable cost procedure, reallocation of budget across categories, and what's on the horizon in 2025 in sponsored programs. Duffy highlighted the hierarchy of federal regulations, emphasizing that the specific terms of any award take precedence over any more general regulations. She acknowledged that clarification around a newly revised policy on funding redistribution was warranted to ensure it meets faculty needs and expectations. Discussion included challenges with splitting costs for publication across multiple grants, and uncertainty regarding which office implements different policies.

4. Other Items

Laurel Miner gave an update on the current federal landscape. To note, we recently finished the first quarter of the fiscal year and have not yet seen a big decrease in awards and expenditures. There have been a number of stop work orders and award terminations related to foreign assistance, minority and transgender issues, and agency downsizing. For terminations, the Office of Research and Innovation, Office of Sponsored Programs, and Legal Counsel are meeting with the PI, discussing and navigating the process for appealing the termination. Additionally, Laurel noted that

changes to F&A rates are still going through the legal system, which currently allows us to still charge full rates and get reimbursed for work.

Laurel Miner notified the commission that the Faculty Senate has recently updated its Constitution to provide representation to Research Faculty who are not part of an academic college. With this new member group, there are vacancies for six (6) Senators and six (6) Alternate Senators, with no more than two research faculty to be elected from any one constituency. The Office of Research and Innovation is currently administering the nomination and election process.

Nicole Pitterson, notified the commission that the recently approved University Mission Initiative (UMI) Committee to Recommend Updated Policies for Funding Doctoral Research at Virginia Tech has asked for a Commission on Research representative to sit on the committee. Karen Schnatterly volunteered to serve.

Nicole Pitterson opened the floor for additional topics of discussion. Related to the federal landscape, Karen Schnatterly suggested coordinating information sharing across units and to talk to constituencies about what questions and experiences they have that would be helpful to have guidance on. CoR members can provide feedback at the next Commission on Research Meeting for further conversation.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:31 pm.