



## Research Board Minutes

Date: March 18, 2021  
Time: 10:00 a.m. – noon  
Place: Google Meet  
Attendees: K. Atkinson, B. Chang, C. Davidson, A. Eamer, G. Edwards, S. Forrester, J. Freeman, L. Jacobs (Chair), M. Lemonde, S. Rahnamayan, L. Roy, V. Sharpe (secretary), A. Slane

Regrets:

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### 1. Approval of the agenda

Approved by consensus.

### 2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Approved by consensus.

### 3. Report of the Vice President Research & Innovation

L. Jacobs welcomed the group and made a presentation on Research Strategy that included four pillars:

1. Research Reputation - CRCs, FRSC, & soft skill features like nimbleness and ability to work with industry and other university partners.
  2. Research Funding – tri-council funding, provincial government competition funding, industry-sponsored or foundations, and contracts.
  3. Research Ranking – feeds into Research Reputation, research rankings can be very up-to-date where as research reputation rankings can be because of a lengthy history (e.g. legacy universities). Most important to the ranking is research funding.
  4. Research Intensity – matters a lot to Ontario Tech because of our small size. The important number is not our total number of dollars or citations because we are small so we focus on our intensity such as the ratio of faculty to graduate students.
- Making an impact in one of these pillars makes a difference in 2-3 of the pillars because they're all interconnected.

The presentation included the university research progress since 2019 including that we were designated as one of the twelve research universities of the year in the country. He noted that this is a good indicator of our research reputation. In the Research Rankings we moved from 44<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> – based on overall research dollars. In terms of research intensity we moved from 36<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> which is 2<sup>nd</sup> in the country for annual increase in industry-sponsored research (450%). Our research funding increased from \$11.3 million to over \$20 million this year.

L. Jacobs discussed the institutional priorities that guide the research strategy and in particular Tech with a Conscience and Partnerships. He noted the research commitments of Strengthening Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and Developing Research Capacity and Core Research Facilities and how improvements on these translate into improvements on all four of the Research Pillars.

#### **Strategic Research Priorities:**

Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, and New Technologies  
Canada's Energy and Environmental Future

Healthy Populations, Community Well-Being and Social Justice  
Autonomous Vehicles and Systems  
Intelligent Manufacturing and Materials Innovation  
Social Innovation, Disruptive Technologies and the New Economy

S. Rahnamayan asked which Maclean's ranking category Ontario Tech is in. L. Jacobs noted that Research Infosource doesn't categorize and that Maclean's is targeted to high school students and their parents while Research Infosource is aimed at a technical and academic audience. The highest ranked university overall is the University of Toronto and in terms of research intensity it is McMaster, which is half the size of the University of Toronto.

L. Roy noted that the four research pillars are linked to money, noted that USA is different, and queried why this is. L. Jacobs noted that the American government only has a few government-funded programs (e.g. National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation) that are relatively small and in particular that federal funding is dispersed to very few institutions. In the US there is much more involvement with foundations and a blurry line between advancement and research funding. There are some small liberal arts universities that claim huge research revenues but if you were to drill down it would turn out to be a big committed alumni. It's not the same in Canada. The United Kingdom has something more aligned with Canada and has a much more concentrated mechanism. International rankings such as Times Higher Education Rankings don't use research dollars at all because they know there's huge compensability problems. In a Canadian context we're interested in how we compare to other Canadian universities. L. Jacobs provided the link to [the Research Infosource findings](#).

B. Chang noted that all four pillars are related to money because they relate to Research Infosource which is money based. She noted that traditionally research metrics include papers, citations, ranking of journals. L. Jacobs noted that there are some of those metrics used but the largest source is money. In a Canadian context success at research funding has become a proxy for those other things and the challenge is compensability across disciplines. In some disciplines patents are important indicators of discovery and in other fields not so much. In some disciplines the reputation of the journals papers are published in is most important and in others not so much. At Ontario Tech across all of our disciplines we have excellent success in research and research funding.

K. Atkinson noted that we've had a reasonable amount of success in each faculty and that we could do a lot more if we all got excited. L. Jacobs noted that the research intensity pillar addresses that and that for a small university we need a high level of participation and contribution. He applauded the research support team in the Office of Research Services and said that they are really good at giving people advice about applying again and encouraging faculty to not get discouraged. Members of the Research Board were in enthusiastic agreement.

#### 4. Report of the Executive Director, Office of Research Services

J. Freeman provided and circulated a presentation that included information on:

- CRCEF – all funds have been received. RTA working to disperse the funds.
- EaRTH Initiative – 2 NOIs submitted by Ontario Tech researchers. The NOI stage is to aid in matchmaking as it requires one researcher from each institution. Full applications are due May 15, 2021. Available funds are \$50,000 per project.
- EDI – Employment systems review kicks off this month.  
NEW CRC program updates for all Canadian institutions:  
New equity targets required by 2029 of Indigenous Peoples 4.9% (was 3.2%); Persons with disabilities 7.5% (was 5.5%); Racialized Minorities 22% (was 21.4%); Women 50.9% (was 38.6%)  
We are currently meeting all CRC requirements as they are to date.
- Conflict of Interest in Research Policy – Beginning to revise the policy as the Office of the VPRI is managing an increased number of Conflict of Interest Disclosures and Conflict of Interest Management Plans. J. Freeman reviewed the procedure.
- Hiring – Grants Officer (maternity leave backfill) and Project Coordinator for City Idea Lab hired. Open positions for Program Officer, Brilliant Catalyst and Executive Director, Brilliant Energy Institute.
- Funding Factbook

S. Rahnamayan noted that there are difficulties incorporating EDI when there's no mechanism for the candidates to self-identify and hiring committee can't make assessments. J. Freeman agreed that there are system gaps and one is the self-identification process. This information is gathered once the person is hired. The CRC process does have self-identification embedded in it.

## 5. Working Groups on Research Priorities

### **CRC program policy review**

L. Jacobs noted that the working group met with our current CRCs for feedback and suggestions. J. Freeman and L. Jacobs met with CRC Working Group to lay the foundation for the group. A significant piece that will affect the policy review is the new equity targets. There is a significant challenge as CRCs are normally 5 – 7 year awards. He noted that the general goal is to have a new policy in place by the time that the next CRC application goes in (October). This is the first time we have a targeted CRC; replacing Isabel Pedersen and ideally the candidate will be selected in the next 2-3 months.

### **Data Management Strategy**

C. Davidson noted that the Data Management steering committee was on hold and will soon be accepting nominations for positions on the committee. She provided a presentation that included information on the purpose and the requirements of the Tri-Agency Research Data Management (RDM) policy as well as a timeline. Additionally a [link](#) was shared

**ACTION:** V. Sharpe to circulate the Terms of Reference for the Data Management steering committee.

### **Research Metrics Dashboard**

L. Jacobs noted that two ORS staff have been working on a prototype to give back to us to review. J. Freeman elaborated that she is hopeful she'll be able to bring that to the next Research Board meeting and noted that the goal is to release the first details on the website by March 31.

### **Institutes and Centres**

No formal applications have come forward for any institutes or centres. There are two entities that continue to be in process (Centre for Disease Prevention and Rehabilitation and The Brilliant Energy Institute) and should be complete before the end of the year. L. Jacobs noted that there is an idea to create a Centre focused on Long-Term Care (FSSH and Health Science). M. Lemonde reminded everyone that they are welcome to add their ideas to the Google Drive form and noted that the working group is planning a meeting with J. Freeman and V. Sharpe to work on entities documents.

## 6. Faculty Exchange

FEAS – Hiring two faculty members, about to start interviews.

FBIT – hiring two faculty members.

SGPS – Three Minute Thesis (3MT) event is next week. There are 31 participants which is an all time high.

Education – The Faculty of Education has the highest number ever participating in 3MT due to it being online. New journal at Faculty of Education called Journal of Digital Life and Learning. C. Davidson provided these links: [link 1](#) and [link 2](#)

FSSH – hired one new faculty member who will be starting this summer. A CRC application (Criminology) is in process. A new faculty hire is being created in Media Studies. The Digital Life Institute is live on the web.

## 7. Other Business

None.

## 8. Next meeting – April 15, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Google Meet (subsequently cancelled)

## 9. Adjournment – 11:32 a.m.