



Research Board

Minutes

Date: October 10, 2019
Time: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Place: ERC 1058
Attendees: K. Atkinson, E. Beverley (for V. Sharpe), B. Chang, C. Davidson, G. Edwards, S. Forrester, J. Freeman, L. Jacobs (Chair), H. Kishawy, M. Lemonde, J. Li, V. Sharpe, A. Slane
Guest(s): J. Moseley
Regrets: L. Roy

1. **Approval of the agenda**

Approved by consensus.

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

Approved by consensus.

3. Consultation on the Animal Care Committee (ACC) Policy, ToR, SOPs*

Prior to the meeting, following documents were circulated to the Research Board members for review:

- ACC Cover report – Research Board – October 1, 2019
- Animal Care Committee TOR- amendments – July 22, 2019
- Animal Care Policy – Amendments – July 22, 2019
- LCG 1121.01 Review and Approval of Animal Utilization Protocol – July 2
- LCG 1121.02 Reconsideration or Appeal of Decisions – July 22, 2019

J. Moseley, Research Ethics Coordinator, attended to answer questions or provide clarification. S. Forrester noted that the Research Policy under Scope and Authority says, "Individual researchers and teachers, consultant veterinarian(s), and animal care personnel are responsible for conducting research and teaching activities in compliance with this policy." He contended that, since our vet neither teaches nor does research at Ontario Tech U, it might be more appropriate to move the veterinarian to a separate line. J. Freeman clarified that the statement is historical and broadly used with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) as the consultant veterinarian can conduct research and teaching activities on animals.

Decision:

The statement will remain in its current place to align with the CCAC standards.

SOP Process or Reconsideration or Appeal of Decisions of the ACC – Questions were raised about the process for rejecting an application. Clarification was provided that research projects which have substantive ethical concerns which cannot be resolved through collaborative efforts with the ACC and animal user are usually rejected. However, prior to rejection, the ACC and animal user(s) will work collegially and collaboratively to modify the AUP to ensure compliance and ethics. In addition, the animal users are invited for a question-and-answer period at the ACC meeting for the review of their AUP. If the application is still not in good standing, the committee asks for resubmission.

4. Business Arising

A. Power Outages Update

In a previous meeting, the board discussed asking SLT to consider terminating the practice of an annual July power shut down as of 2020. L. Jacobs and J. Freeman met with the Provost, CFO, Assistant Vice-President, Planning and Analysis to discuss the issue. They conducted a review of other universities and found that an annual shutdown is common practice because it is the most efficient way to perform annual maintenance with the least amount of disruption and noted that measures are taken to ensure back-up power. Steps are being taken to increase communication and understanding of how the benefits outweigh the inconveniences.

J. Freeman confirmed that highly impacted labs are notified as soon as possible, particularly the fish lab. The fish lab also has the most robust systems including back-up power and remote monitoring.

5. Report of the Vice President Research & Innovation

L. Jacobs reported on:

- The Research Infosource rankings

Pros:

- Ontario Tech's standing increased slightly from 44 to 41, which is positive.
- Will rank first as grant leader in cross-sector in undergraduate, which means a strength in industry partners compared to other universities.

Cons

- Ontario Tech U still ranks slightly below in the undergraduate tier and in publications

- Current Initiatives

ORCID: A notice has gone out today to all deans that we are spearheading comprehensive ORCID registrations. The intent is to ensure that institutional publication data is captured. Since there is not good data on how many faculty members have their registration IDs, student Research Office assistants will go-door-to-door to each Faculty over next 8 weeks enroll all faculty members. **Action** – V. Sharpe to circulate the ORCID memo.

Energy Initiative: The President's Office is leading an Energy Initiative.

Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences: Plans are in the works to build more substance in the relationship with Ontario Shores.

Development on Quantum Computing Initiative: There is a lot of interest and many funding opportunities in this area. For example, we have submitted a FedDev application regarding ACE and are working on a partnership with IBM. IBM asked Ontario Tech to send a delegation to their New York IBM Quantum Computing Hub. There is an upcoming strategy meeting in which board members are welcome to attend and participate.

MITACS Membership: We are evaluating whether Ontario Tech should buy a full membership. It will cost more but gives access to an undergraduate pilot. The last fiscal year was our highest success rate with MITACS ever; and there is a representative on campus now.

Research Institutes: Ontario Tech has no active research institutes currently but has received two well-developed applications.

- One application is for a Digital Life Institute, which currently has an existing research cluster.
- The second application is from Pierre Cote to upgrade his existing research centre (Centre for Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation) in partnership with Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC), to an institute. M. Lemonde asked what initiated the change request. Les noted that when research clusters have institutional status, it improves their external applications; to keep pace with other institutions; and to increase support from the university. G. Edwards asked about the space requirements and impact on an already strained infrastructure. Both entities already have space so there will be no impact.

Issues:

Does the board want to implement a set of evolving steps to transition an entity from a centre to an institute? It was proposed that as a minimum, applicants must make a presentation to the Research Board justifying the transition.

How much institutional support should be available and who will provide it? The VPRI or Faculty-level support? What information needs to go into a proposal?

How do you decommission if necessary? There was a suggestion that perhaps entities should be approved on a 5-year renewable basis.

6. Report of the Executive Director, Office of Research Services

J. Freeman provided a presentation (attached) that included information on:

- Hiring:

ORS Project Co-ordinator - Yvonne Mais will start on October 15.

Director, Creativity & Entrepreneurship - Osman Hamid will start on October 21 and will report to the VPRI.

Grants Officer - Raluca Dubrowski, who is currently serving as a Partnerships Officer, will move to the Grants Officer position on November 4. This will create a vacancy of a Partnerships Officer.

Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – J. Freeman, representing the VPRI, is working with the Provost to assist in the selection process. Candidates have been shortlisted for pending second interviews. The goal is to hire by November.

Articling Student: This hire is to augment contract flow. The goal is to have the person in place for January 2020.

Contracts Officer: pending.

- Funding Update:

Dr. Deborah Saucier Early Researcher Award: 19 applications; 1 funded.

Research Infrastructure Fund: 17 applications; 1 funded.

Ontario Shores Clinical Demo: 3 applications; 2 funded.

Launch of student awards programmes: Available to students are the NSERC USRA and the ORS funded STAR award (1 per Faculty). ORS is working with student aid surrounding challenges on payment and how to tether to their processes. Currently, NSERC pays \$4 500 per USRA award and the PI has the option to top up the award by \$1 500. However, this is not even minimum wage. J. Freeman suggested raising the match (paid for by the PI) to \$2 500 per award to at least achieve minimum wage and to be more consistent with other universities. J. Freeman asked the board whether this top up should be mandatory or continue to be optional, since not all faculty members (particularly in FSSH or FEd) have external funding. **Motion** – maintain programme as it is - with flexibility - with addition that the dean can choose to top up. Decision – maintain programme flexibility for PIs but seek to have mandatory top up from Deans.

Other Items:

J. Freeman informed the board that ORS is increasingly getting grants applications from PIs at the last minute, limiting the department's ability to provide intense support and comprehensive review by Grants Officers. J. Li asked for reminders from ORS. This is ORS' current practice but they will look to increasing the frequency. **Action**: J. Freeman will ask Grants Officers to increase frequency of reminders about grant deadlines.

Brilliant Solutions: This is a co-curricular, multidisciplinary programme for all student levels; it involves working with industry. The first pilot project is with Ontario Shores.

CRC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan: The deadline was September 27. The programme has been expanded and the onboarding of the Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will be very helpful in achieving compliance. C. Davidson asked what the scope of the Director was, particularly if it will be research focussed. J. Freeman said that it will not be research focussed and instead a decision was very consciously made that it would be better to position this person in the Provost's Office as a direct report to the Provost in order to provide neutrality and also because some of the major changes need to be in academic areas.

Action: V. Sharpe to distribute J. Freeman's PowerPoint presentation.

7. Strategic Research Plan

A. Report of the Working Groups

Principles and Values and Goals - This group found the topic to be difficult as it is university led. They considered whether the institution is more local or broader (beyond Ontario). After looking at SWOTs, they felt that a benefit is the university's small size, which keeps it nimble and more responsive to industry needs. They felt it would be beneficial to set goals for the next five years based on MacLeans' styled metrics and that new research areas should be explored.

Research Areas of Strength - This group reported that they are using a data driven approach on a preliminary review of data. They had to use a combination of data and intuition to interpret data currently available in various tools but there is a risk that some data is missing. **Action:** VPRI will probe deeper at the data to look for consistent capacity data and will continue to update the board.

Strategic Research Priorities - This group looked at the institution's values and principles and brainstormed the following four priorities:

Clean and sustainable energy;
Intelligent and autonomous systems;
Health and community wellness; and
Digital economy (technology).

K. Atkinson said that the current SRP is too broad and would like to see a focus on potential solutions to real world problems.

Action: Working groups will schedule more meetings. Each working group will produce a short report (approximately 2 pages) to circulate before the next meeting and to bring to the next meeting. B. Chang will circulate a document of funding priorities from other funding agencies for board members to add to.

8. New Business

A. The university is working towards a visiting scholar policy.

9. Other Business/Faculty Exchange

A. Roundtable on issues that impact research in Faculties

University branding - H. Kishawy noted that it is important that the institution's message is that it is research intensive and to avoid emphasizing that it is primarily an undergraduate university as that

association could have a negative impact on research. K. Atkinson that the branding should concentrate on research success.

Accounting Issues - H. Kishawy raised concerns that his faculty members have regarding expenses claims and, in particular, a situation where a researcher travelling on research leave was expected to pay certain costs personally. Research accounts should not be mixed with operational accounts.

J. Freeman advised that there is a policy but the Research Board has not seen it. Two faculty members (that are known of) were randomly asked by Research and Trust Accounting (RTA) to consult on the policy. The board agreed that such requests should be sent to the board or Deans/Associate Deans, not random faculty members.

L. Jacobs suggested that RTA policies be added as a future agenda item. **Action:** V. Sharpe will add RTA Policies to a future agenda. C. Davidson suggested that RTA be added as regular guests.

10. Next meeting – November 7, 2019, 11:30-1:00, ERC 1058

11. Adjournment – 1:05 pm.