

## Research Board Minutes

Date: April 9, 2020  
Time: 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm  
Place: Google Meets  
Attendees: K. Atkinson, C. Davidson, G. Edwards, S. Forrester, J. Freeman, L. Jacobs (Chair), M. Lemonde, J. Li, R. Kay, S. Rahnamayan, L. Roy, V. Sharpe (Secretary), A. Slane  
Guest(s): None  
Regrets: B. Chang

---

### 1. Approval of the agenda

Approved by consensus.

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

Approved by M. Lemonde. Seconded by J. Li. Approved by consensus.

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

L. Jacobs noted that:

- Times are very busy due to changes because of COVID 19. There are lots of interesting developments regarding the newly launched Ontario Together fund. Lots of our industry partners have been successful in collaborating with us.

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

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

- Pandemic Effects on Research
  - Outlined on-campus access processes for essential and COVID19 research.
  - L. Roy asked how many labs are being accessed. J. Freeman noted that there are 10-15 labs being accessed, in particular animal care, highly sensitive materials, and COVID specific research. More requests are now coming in. ORS is working with Insurance and Risk and Health and Safety to examine the process for bringing all the labs back on board when the time comes.
  - L. Jacobs noted that he is participating in weekly Council of Ontario Universities calls for the Vice-Presidents Research and that all other universities are operating their research enterprise as we are with the exception of Queens who is still operating their labs.
  - J. Li noted that Indigenous Communities are not allowing external people in to the community to conduct research. J. Freeman noted that researchers should contact their Grants Officer/ORS to obtain agency specific responses to COVID19, including extension requests to funded research projects. If researchers have questions related to contract research please contact ORS Partnerships and/or Research Legal Team. L. Jacobs noted that no projects with Indigenous Communities have been approved since the outset of the crisis.
  - Research Ethics Board (REB) update – No research involving direct person-to-person contact is taking place. COVID-related research approvals are being fast-tracked by the REB. There are now ~8 COVID-related research projects at Ontario Tech.
  - There are several special COVID19 funding calls from research agencies. ORS is updating these through the daily university COVID email, the Research FAQs, etc. L. Jacobs noted that CIHR has decided to suspend their Spring Competition and divert the money to COVID research.
- Research Funding
- Grants & Funding Programs Program Announcements and Deadlines and Results

- USRAs – A survey was sent to supervisors to determine if projects could be done remotely. Approximately 40% said they could. Under no circumstance can university assets be deployed to student’s homes (insurance & risk, Occupational Health & Safety). J. Freeman is requesting feedback on managing and modifying the program. S. Forrester suggestion to define “remote location” – work from home, field-based research, converting garage into a lab, etc. J. Freeman confirmed that they’ll update the language to define it as working from home on a computer and that communication will go out today to students and supervisors today to inform them that ORS will follow up with each in more detail next week as each is a case by case basis. S. Rahnamayan asked if the number of weeks is shortened would the faculty member still be required to contribute. **ACTION:** J. Freeman will check with NSERC. She noted that ORS will work to find the best outcome that works for each project and student and is working daily to update the research website.
- Research Ethics Board (REB) – use of new REB application will be mandatory as of May 1, 2020.
- Animal Care Committee
- Biosafety & Radiation Safety
- Partnerships

## 5. Business Arising

None.

## 6. Strategic Research Plan (SRP)

L. Jacobs presented the latest version of the draft Strategic Research Plan (SRP) for discussion and feedback.

- L. Jacobs noted that there has been wide consultation.
- Discussion ensued including the following points:
  - Language of “Small research-intensive university” as opposed to “primarily undergraduate university”.
  - Importance of EDI is explicit. Unfortunate re: no Director of EDI employed yet.
  - Fine line threading the needle issue – recognizing that different areas have overlapping interests in how an area is understood and highlighted.
  - Clearly seeing that we are aiming for success metrics. Eg: 5 years from now we’ll see whether we’ve made progress on those metrics.
  - Goal is to finalize this in the next couple of weeks.
- L. Roy – will send comments to Les but will comment on a few:
  - “Driving the Future” is the slogan for Renault car industry, also the name of a book. Is this an intentional reference to automotive? L. Jacobs noted that the reference is precisely not that and that he is very receptive to another title.
  - L. Roy – positioning as a “small research-intensive university” – do we want to position as small? By enrolment we are a medium size. L. Jacobs noted that most small universities in Canada are not research intensive. J. Freeman noted that the Tri-agencies consider us a small institution and as such we have access to special funding pots.
  - L. Roy – In the second paragraph of the Strategic Research Priorities perhaps replace “These priority areas, which build on and are complementary to our current research strengths,...” with “These priority areas identify extensions of the areas where the university intends to focus and impact, ....”. L. Jacobs noted his agreement and said that it worked well to use the word extensions.
  - L. Roy suggested that there are more traditional ways to measure research success. L. Jacobs noted the need to tread carefully because tri-council has embraced the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and we endorsed it last fall. DORA challenges the traditional metrics. He is hesitant to define research excellence.
  - L. Roy asked about the different forms of Clean Energy outlined on page 7 under Research Strengths. Wondering how active we are in wind turbine research. L. Jacobs noted that he relied on FEAS & FESNS to inform what forms of energy we are researching. We have a CRC Tier 1 application and the person does some research in this area.
  - L. Roy noted suggested a revision to the wording regarding Digital Technologies, Machine Learning, and Artificial Intelligence to change “...is having a transformative effect on almost every field of scientific discovery...” to “is impacting all research”.
  - L. Roy suggested more emphasis on our strength in clean tech (fuel cells) in the Priorities section.
  - L. Roy noted that in the Healthy Populations and Social Justice section there isn’t a lot on social justice. L. Jacobs is getting feedback from FSSH.
- Question about the definition of sustainability.

- S. Rahnamayan asked what the metrics are upon which we would look back after 5 years to measure success? L. Jacobs said that he's not against measuring research success; although at an institutional level it is hard to do.
- M. Lemonde thanked Les for speaking to the Health Sciences Faculty and questioned where E Health and Telehealth are in the SRP. L. Jacobs noted that the version of the SRP for this meeting hasn't been revised since that meeting.
- **ACTION**: Please send feedback on the SRP to L. Jacobs.

**7. New Business**

None.

**8. Other Business/Faculty Exchange**

**A. Roundtable on issues that impact research in Faculties**

None.

**9. Next meeting** – ~~May 7, 2020, 2:30-4:00, DTB 524, Bordessa Hall, 55 Bond~~  
April 24, 2020, 8:45 – 10:00 am, Google Meets

**10. Adjournment** – 3:59 pm.