



Research Board Minutes

Date: May 20, 2021
Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Place: Google Meets
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:

1. Approval of the agenda

Approved by consensus.

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Approved by M. Lemonde & L. Roy.

3. Report of the Vice President Research & Innovation

L. Jacobs noted that we've met more frequently than on a typical year and that he appreciates the enthusiasm and momentum in keeping the research enterprise moving forward. Upon reflecting on the 13-14 months of the pandemic he noted that it is remarkable how the research enterprise has kept moving and thriving and that Ontario Tech has continued to make extraordinary strides such as research funding of around \$22 million. Two years ago it was around \$12 million. We have two new Canada Research Chairs in place. We have had a dramatic increase in the number of funding applications submitted and a significant increase in the success rate. L. Jacobs noted that he is thinking about how to measure research intensity in a meaningful way. The traditional way is funding dollars per researcher. Our funding is about \$100,000 per tenure stream Faculty Member.

Other metrics to consider include successful research grant funding where we have more than 1 grant held per Faculty Member. On an annual basis this is a significant indicator of research intensity. There are lots of measures that show remarkable resilience in the research enterprise. L. Jacobs offered his thanks to all on the Research Board who have played a significant part and a role in leadership in your faculties.

M. Lemonde asked how we can keep the momentum rolling. L. Jacobs responded that there are many factors where we can play a National Leadership Role and he noted the creation of a Research Centre for Long Term Care. He provided the example of how P. Cote's centre moving to an institute is a clear illustration of how our university research is continuing and growing. Another example is our status as an IAEA Collaborating Centre which puts us in a space that McMaster dominates, there is also the creation of the Brilliant Energy Institute which is a commitment of Finance and SLT to consolidate our strength in energy research to position ourselves a major leader in this space, and the strength we have in technology in the Faculty of Education. We also have two new CRCs (Horia Hangan, Tier 1 CRC in Adaptive Aerodynamics, FEAS, and Peter Lewis, Tier 2 CRC in Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence, FBIT). He noted that in the past Ontario Tech was a university that tried to do everything and wasn't overly successful and that we have so many strengths in all our Faculties and we have the potential to be national leaders.

B. Chang asked about documenting the research priorities. L. Jacobs noted that he is working on a draft report and that some subcommittees made greater strides than others. The Strategic Research Plan was already finalized when the pandemic started.

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

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

- The Research Data Management Committee – trying to recruit members. She noted that the tri-agency released new requirements that universities must have Data Management Plans and later on Research Data Deposits.
- EaRTH Initiative application deadlines
- VPRI hiring and recruitment
- Grants, Partnerships, Ethics and committees, Legal and IP,
- Controlled Goods program
- Undergraduate Student Research Awards

5. Proposal for the creation of the Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research

L. Jacobs welcomed P. Cote and he provided a presentation on the IDRR on behalf of his co-proposers. He outlined the prevalence of disabilities in the world and how disabilities lead to mental health concerns, underemployment and poverty, primarily among vulnerable populations such as women. He noted the success of the Centre for Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation and how this institute would grow on these successes.

He shared the Institute vision of becoming a global leader in the creation and dissemination of knowledge to improve the quality of life and well-being of people with disability, and those in need of rehabilitation services.

S. Rahnamayan asked if there are plans in the far future about developing a medical school. L. Jacobs replied that creating a medical school is based on population and it is a highly contentious issue right now. York has revisited their proposal to have a medical school. It is a highly competitive sphere. If Ontario Tech were to have one it would be in partnership with another established institution. If we were to do it, it would likely be around the technology piece or in partnership with something already established. The costs to pursue a medical school are very high with very low success rate.

S. Rahnamayan asked about data mining and donations to support this institute. P. Cote said that if the institute is approved he is happy to include researchers with expertise in data mining and has already been in touch with Advancement about philanthropic donations.

A. Slane noted that there are a lot of researchers at the university with expertise in a number of areas who could be involved. B. Chang asked if there is interest in having more researchers join. P. Cote replied that if the proposal is accepted as presented he and his co-proposers will then reach out to other researchers to join and make the Institute even larger and with more depth.

C. Davidson asked if there would be interest in putting together a journal to support this centre. P. Cote noted that the proposers hadn't thought of that and that there definitely would be interest.

L. Roy echoed the positive comments and indicated that he is fully supportive. He noted that there is a lot of room for growth with participating faculties such as FEAS in the assistive biomedical devices. He questioned Appendix D Financial Model asking where the industry funding in year two comes in. P. Cote noted that it is based on past-experience with the Centre and that the big thing that will stimulate the funding is if we become a Collaborating Centre with the World Health Organization which would increase reach, reputation, etc. He further noted that the Centre has a history of not spending more money than what comes in.

G. Edwards noted that there is no outside financial risk based on spending model for the C DPR.

M. Lemonde shared the support from the Faculty of Health Sciences. She noted that at the Faculty Council the governance was discussed and that there was a suggestion to have some users/stakeholders participate in the governance. A. Slane noted that J. Rinaldi always has a stakeholder involved in her research projects.

P. Cote left the meeting.

The Chair asked for approval of a motion for recommending the creation of this Institute to Academic Council's June meeting. The motion was moved with unanimous support.

6. Annual Reports from Research Entities

The Chair deferred this item to the September 2021 meeting when all reports would be available.

7. Conflict of Interest in Research Procedure

J. Freeman noted that we have more faculty and students who are involved in starting up companies and commercial funding. Per the tri-council agreement we signed we have to have a process in place for managing conflicts of interest in research. She reviewed the current procedure for reviewing and managing conflict of interest in research and requested feedback on the proposed changes.

M. Lemonde opined that process 2 seems more streamlined and asked if the Research Advisory Committee noted in process 1 is a new committee. J. Freeman replied that it would be a new committee, formally trained on COI, so that members understand it and provide consistency in reviews, rather than pulling together ad hoc members each time a COI requires review.

L. Roy opined that process 2 seems more streamlined.

S. Forrester asked about increases in COI disclosures. J. Freeman noted that ORS is finding that researchers often don't know that they are in a COI situation due to a lack of awareness and training. Sometimes there is a perception that having a conflict of interest or conflict of commitment questions the researcher's integrity. This is not the case.

B. Chang noted that researchers usually send the forms in right before the deadline and questioned how we can get disclosures in earlier? J. Freeman agreed that earlier disclosures are much better. She suggested that the biggest factor to help to identify COI earlier would be to revise the RGA form to ask more probing questions.

L. Jacobs noted that education is really key and the importance of getting clear messaging to Faculty.

Unanimous agreement to update RGA form, policy and procedures. ORS will work on it over the summer.

ACTION: Send feedback to J. Freeman.

8. Working Groups on Research Priorities

Data Management Strategy

J. Freeman addressed the membership issue. C. Davidson noted there have been discussions about raising our fluency and bringing in an external speaker on this topic. L. Jacobs noted that Tri-Council has been quiet on this topic lately. C. Davidson provided an example of an RDM committee description from Harvard:

<https://vpr.harvard.edu/research-data-management-committee>

Research Metrics Dashboard

L. Jacobs noted that ORS staff have uploaded an initial dashboard to the website and it is still a work in progress. Some of the numbers are already outdated and will be adjusted to reflect the new factbook numbers.

ACTION: L. Jacobs invited the Research Board members to think about what numbers should be added, refined, etc. and encouraged sending feedback to him.

9. Faculty Exchange

FEAS – Some faculty may want to work in the labs more often this summer due to smaller teaching workloads.

L. Jacobs noted that there is no capacity issue on campus in the summer.

Science – Had a question about vaccinations for grad students but now that the age limit has been reduced it's a moot point.

Health Sciences – The new building will be opening soon. The 4th floor will be Health Sciences. Question about Microcredentials. L. Jacobs noted he is on a funded proposal with other VPRs in the province on developing microcredentials in the broad service space such as researchers using social media for knowledge mobilization.

FBIT – no report.

SGPS – Next week at the Graduate Studies Committee they will be responding to a pain point heard about being a year into COVID and limited access to research facilities. We have a modest release package that we're routing through Financial Aid for those that have identified that they have financial struggles due to long-term COVID implications.

Education – no report.

FSSH – no report.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Next meeting – September 2021 – to be scheduled

12. Adjournment – 11:32 am