



**SENATE RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

Friday 21 October 2022 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom

**Attendance:** Guy Faulkner (Chair), James Stewart (Vice-Chair), Nancy Ford, Romina Hajizadeh, Jorden Hendry, James Olson, Greg Martyn, Gail Murphy, Anubhav Singh

**Regrets:** Robert Boushel, Benjamin Fischer, Rob Kozak, Merje Kuus, Susan Porter

**Senate Staff:** Michael Jud

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Senate Research and Scholarship Committee (the “Committee”) was called to order at 10:03 a.m. on 21 October 2022 by G. Faulkner, Chair.

**ITEM 1: AGENDA**

The agenda was approved by general consent.

**ITEM 2: MEETING MINUTES OF 22 APRIL 2022**

The meeting minutes of 22 April 2022 were approved by general consent.

**ITEM 3: Annual Report of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation**

The Annual Report was briefly introduced by Gail Murphy, Vice-President, Research and Innovation.

The Chair invited Dr. Murphy to deliver a brief high-level presentation on the Annual Report at an upcoming meeting of the Vancouver Senate. Dr. Murphy accepted the invitation.

Committee members asked the following questions:

- Q** How has the Report typically been used, and what objectives does it contribute towards? Will there be printed copies?
- A** The Report has been used quite a bit throughout the year. It is posted on various webpages, distributed to guests, shared with government visitors, etc. It is a useful means of highlighting UBC’s research accomplishments. There are typically a few printed copies but it has become more common to just share links to the electronic document given the contemporary focus on digital media.

- Q** There was a one time a program to fund undergraduate research, but funding was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. Are there any plans to resume funding?
- A** The program was a pilot which launched before the pandemic. There was a senate committee on undergraduate research and this pilot was a response to the recommendations which came out of that initiative. The research projects were just launching when pandemic hit, which led to most of them being derailed. It is still necessary to do some evaluation on what happened with these projects. The VPRI organization is still looking to investigate how UBC can better support undergraduate research and compensate students for the prevalence of volunteering and other issues.
- Q** Regarding the Report's research highlights, only some items are attributed to researchers. How is it decided whether these highlights are attributed?
- A** This is a subject of concern. It is often the case that the communications which announce projects do not have individual attribution. Work will be done to improve on this issue going forward.

#### **ITEM 4: ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY**

The Academic Policy Committee of the Vancouver Senate is currently developing a Senate policy on academic freedom. This work has been under way for several years. Academic freedom was a key issue in the Research & Scholarship Committee's deliberations on the Peter Wall Institute matter.

It was agreed to table this item until the Committee's November 18 meeting.

#### **ITEM 5: RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES POLICY**

The initiative to develop a Senate policy on research centres and institutes ("RCIs") was introduced by the Chair was a major undertaking for the Committee this year. Once a draft policy is complete it will be necessary to undertake extensive consultation with interested parties across UBC.

A document outlining in plain language a list of positions on key issues (the "Document") to be addressed by the draft policy was circulated in advance for the Committee's feedback.

Committee members discussed about the following issues:

- For-credit academic programs. The Document indicates that category 1 RCIs will be permitted to collaborate with other academic units in the delivery of for-credit academic programs, but may not deliver such programs autonomously. This language mirrors that found in the Okanagan Senate RCIs policy (Policy O-5). It remains to be further worked out exactly what this arrangement might look like in practice.
- Faculty appointments. The Document does not address whether category 1 RCIs shall have the ability to hold faculty appointments. Policy O-5 provides that Senate-approved institutes may hold part-time faculty appointments provided that the faculty member holds a primary appointment in an academic department, however this is rarely done in practice and may be removed from the policy in the near future. On the UBCV campus some existing centres and institutes function as academic departments with their own faculty members appointed.
- "Academic Units". The Document indicates that category 1 RCIs shall be academic units. Committee members expressed concerns about whether this is desirable to include in the draft

policy. “Academic Unit” status has many implications, some of which may be unknown to the Committee. It was suggested that this term should not appear in the draft.

Committee members continued to express uncertainty as to the implications of an RCI being granted Senate approval or not. It was noted that some faculties have internal processes in which Senate approval is used as a bar to determine whether units may engage in certain activities. It was also noted that under the status quo Senate approval would seem to empower RCIs without placing them under a commensurate level of oversight.

The Committee requested that a fact-finding exercise be undertaken to gather more information about the implications of Senate approval for existing RCIs. Senate staff agreed to begin work in this area when circumstances permit. It was noted that the Committee should likely not expect this effort to be completed in time for its November meeting.

#### **ITEM 6: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON TOPICS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was invited to offer topics of interest for the Committee’s work in the 2022-23 academic year. The following topics were discussed:

- A presentation from the Office of the VPRI on the subject of research security, with the aim of gathering feedback and considering what this should look like. It was noted that the government of Canada has taken an increasing interest in ensuring that Canadian research is conducted subject to appropriate security measures.
- Issues relating to timely disbursement of MITACS funding.
- The Committee’s role in the ongoing issues surrounding the Peter Wall Institute. The Committee would presumably need to weigh in on any proposed changes to the Institute’s governance structure.
- Exploring ways to promote undergraduate research support which fall within the scope of the Committee’s mandate. It was suggested that it would be worthwhile for the Committee to review the report of the Senate Working Group on Undergraduate Research.
- Issues pertaining to research decolonization.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.