

**Research Council Minutes**  
**Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019**  
**3:00pm – 5:00pm**  
**President's Conference Room**

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1. Minutes from September meeting approved.
2. VPREDGE updates since last RC meeting
  - a. Foreign Activities/Influence Memo (attachment)
    - MSU encourages international collaborations. Follow-up sessions to come. Open to suggestions and feedback on how memo has been received.
    - Discussion on definition of collaboration? What is required to disclose?
  - b. Three task forces, Senate meeting, deans/directors
    - VP Carter has now met with all three task forces, and is working with Provost Mokwa on suggestions that should be focus of VPREDGE or Provost or both. For example, there were suggestions on annual review process, which is outside current VPREDGE scope.
    - VP Carter also reported on meeting with Senate and the deans/directors.
  - c. Space subcommittee update
    - Clarified that the space subcommittee has met twice, and will continue to meet and be engaged in space committee and allocations. VP Carter and the subcommittee are working with John How to better understanding space across campus via new space software that they hope goes live in spring semester.
  - d. Strategic Marketing Innovations (SMI)
    - VP Carter met with SMI to incorporate some additional strategic areas to their annual fall campus visit on federal research priorities and appropriations. This will include a opening group presentation to several deans, dept heads, center/institute directors, and some faculty. The revised engagement plan and process aims to be more inclusive by broaden participation and communication.
3. Review, discuss, and set the charge of the four Research Council subcommittees (attachment).
  - In November, each subcommittee should discuss their specific area/issue broadly, and come back to the December meeting with a tentative subcommittee “charge” that will be discussed. Based on those recommendations and group discussion, VP Carter will work to solidify an official charge for January and February

**Core Facilities:** Mary Cloninger, Jonathan Hilmer, Leslie Schmidt and Colin Shaw

- Mary Cloninger suggests that the biggest issue is instrumentation and experts are expensive. VP Carter would like to figure out where it makes sense to have an institutionalized business plan to help.
- One potential under-utilized source of fund could be undergraduate student equipment fees for classes that utilize the facilities. There was interest in exploring a potential model for this.
- An article published at Northwestern University was shared/discussed. Reminder that while you can't accumulate funds, you can pay down debt. Northwestern designed an internal loan program housed centrally. Another example discussed

was providing vouchers in start-up packages that will support time in a Core Facility.

- VP Carter discussed a grant program he would like the subpanel to discuss. This might involve panel reviews proposals which allowed them to be proactive; build up fees.
- Core Facilities should be charging industry partners higher rates that are “regionally” competitive. This can help offset some of internal costs if done right. There is a need for VPREDGE to work with Office of Finances to move towards a transparent system of fees.

**Centers & Institutes:** Robin Gerlach, Brent Peyton, Nic Rae and Nikki Tuss

- Lot of discussion on definitions (i.e., Center vs. Institute). This is complicate by Board of Regents process. There was consensus that clearer definition – even if focused internally from VPREDGE – would be helpful.
- Group acknowledgement that there is a need for better articulation of short- and long-term “expectations” for a center/institute. Also suggested that clarity on sunset provisions would be helpful.
- Suggestion that some centers/institutes would benefit from leadership succession plans.
- There is a lack of consistency on how centers and institutes report to the VPREDGE office. Some of the larger and more successful centers/institutes have reporting outside VPREDGE (i.e., WTI, CBE, etc.). VP Carter would like the subgroup to discuss what is the best structure moving forward given our strategic plan and research goals.
- There is a need to modify research expenditure “crediting” to breakdown barriers between centers/institute vs. departments/colleges.

**Graduate Research:** Ron June, Craig Ogilvie, William Ruff and Eric Austin

- Dean Ogilvie discussed the Material Science model and Optic model, and solicited insight from the group about how to support both models. Also reported that graduation rate for PhD students is ~56%, which is too low.
- VP Carter has been in conversations with President Cruzado and others regarding a potential new model that would incentivize the inclusion of graduate students in external research grants by reinvesting a % of F&A affiliated with the graduate students to a PI’s laboratory.
- This subgroup – along with feedback from other leadership on campus – is charged with suggesting a reasonable distribution model to back to a PI’s laboratory. VP Carter suggested those funds will need to have a cap, and are meant to support further research and graduate growth within the laboratory. Feedback from Research Council was positive on the proposed system.
- Dean Ogilvie will rally his group, and try to recruit someone from social sciences/psychology/sociology to be added to the group.

**Large Collaborative Grants:** Alice Running, Blake Wiedenheft and Carl Yeoman

- This is subcommittee is perhaps the most vague and broad, but we have an interesting case study going with the NIH COBRE group and the McArthur Foundation (i.e., \$100 million proposal focused on Music & Suicide Prevention). Subcommittee is tasked with interviewing some of these groups (and other successful models) to look for common threads to see what is working well. Ultimate goal is to be more forward-looking.
- Question on Large Collaboration Grants – how large is “large”? Do we measure by numbers or by impact? As an example, a training grant may not be huge, does is

consistent with strategic plan and can be a foot in the door. There is likely to be crossover between this subcommittee and the graduate research subcommittee.

4. Other and Future Items

- a. Discussions on future structure of Research Council
  - For this year, this research council group will stay in place. Renewed structure will be decided by this group (with input from others), and begin Fall 2020.
- b. Plan for VPREDGE Fiscal/Investment Transparency
  - VP Carter plans to shared more details about VPREDGE budget, including required leases and loans being paid from F&A.
- c. Awards and other VPREDGE “dashboard” metrics (beyond expenditures)
  - Spring Convocation nomination deadline is Oct. 30 mentioned. Need to put together a subcommittee to review.
  - Additional question raised on seeking MSU researchers who could be nominated for national awards? How do we get that person nominated, and whose responsibility is it? VP Carter said he is working with Provost office to explore effective strategies, and agreed we need to get to the point where our research dashboard is more than simply expenditures. Professional society awards were mentioned as a potential “low-hanging fruit” to explore with faculty.
- d. State of Research & Scholarship Campus Address – January 2020
  - VP Carter hopes to use the January 2020 timeframe to reflect on fall conversations, observations and recommendations.
- e. Other items/requests/suggestions?
  - Colin Shaw reported on the visit from the NCUR national oversight committee meeting last week.
  - Abstracts are due on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>. MSU students who aren’t presenting can attend for free. There is a \$50,000 grant to bring in tribal college students; 30-40 students are expected. Native Americans are the most under-represented group in the STEM fields and we have a lot of experience working with them here at MSU. Community college students can also be included.

**Next Research Council Meeting: December 12<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm  
President’s Conference Room, Montana Hall**