

University Senate Research Committee Meeting (online)

July 24, 2020

1:00 PM

In Attendance: C Bonneau, D. Harrell, M. Hravnak, G. Huber, M. McCall, P. Morel, E. Oyler, R. Rutenbar, D. Salcido, S. Sant, M. Scott, A. Sethi P. Smolinski, V. So, A. Stephany and W. Yates

Concerning the Intellectual Policy (IP) Policy Draft:

R. Rutenbar gave a review of comments submitted by M. McCall, P. Morel, D. Salcido and S. Sant on the IP draft, IP Committee responses and draft changes. He stated that there is a difference between grants (best efforts) and contracts (deliverables). Overall, several grammatical errors were corrected, the word “perpetual” was deleted and several concerns will ultimately be addressed in the more detailed guidelines document that will be prepared once the IP policy has been approved. Details of the changes can be found in the attached document.

R. Rutenbar stated that the draft of the IP policy was sent to the IP committee and their response was good.

P. Smolinski stated that the term “University members” includes students, but that certain aspects of IP policy differ for students and other University members. R. Rutenbar agreed with this and said that IP policy is specific on what applies to University members and to students.

S. Sant asked if the IP policy applies to faculty on sabbatical. R. Rutenbar stated that sabbaticals may be at entities which have different IP policies than the University. The details of sabbaticals need to be discussed with Chairs and Deans to determine the particulars of IP rights.

P. Morel asked if the University IP policy applies to people doing sabbaticals at the University.

R. Rutenbar stated that in the visitors policy there are details regarding IP during visits to the University which includes sabbaticals.

S. Sant stated that IP rights may depend on who is paying the salary of the person on sabbatical.

R. Rutenbar said that there is a check list for sabbaticals that includes pay and other items.

R. Rutenbar stated that with regard to IP a FAQ is being developed on what constitutes University support. For example, start-up funds are considered University support. S. Sant stated that this was not stipulated in her start up letter.

D. Salcido asked if endowed chair funds are considered University support. S. Sant asked if grant RDF funds are considered University support. R. Rutenbar said he check on these two questions and will provide more guidance on start-up funds.

The word. “perpetual” has been removed from the description of University use of class materials. R. Rutenbar stated that this term was redundant in light of the rest of the statement

M. Scott asked if guidelines will be developed for the IP policy to clarify the intent of the policy. She said if intentions are not specifically noted they tend to get lost with time. R. Rutenbar that some intentions could be built into the policy. The previous IP policy was 15 years old and the intention now is to have more frequent updates.

P. Morel raised the issue concerning the responsibilities of the SVC of research, which are not defined in the policy, despite the important role that this office has in implementing the policy. R. Rutenbar stated he did not feel it necessary to be too specific since offices come and go and change names. P Morel countered that the OIE that is described in the Policy might also change its name or be replaced, and it would be helpful that the Office of SVCR be listed as ultimately responsible for implementing the policy. R. Rutenbar agreed to discuss this issue with E. Facher and will come up with some new language to cover this.

C. Bonneau asked if the Committee could endorse the IP policy draft before the August Faculty Assembly meeting.

There was a Committee vote to approve the proposed IP Policy pending the proposed changes and it received 7 yes votes, with no abstentions or no votes, from the voting members in attendance and thus was approved.

Concerning the University research restart:

R. Rutenbar stated Covid research standards will be changed to guidelines. A Covid policy website will be available in approximately ten days will be organized by T. Hitter. The research startup has gone well and researchers have been diligent with regard to safety precautions. Most buildings on campus will be fitted with card swipe access so that access to the buildings can be monitored

S. Sant said that the restart is doing well without undergraduate students on campus, but is concerned about the greater population with the return of students.

Concerning the Conflict of Interest (COI) reporting form:

P. Morel stated that the COI notification to supervisors does not work and it is difficult to understand what necessary actions for the supervisor.

W. Yates agreed that the supervisor’s role is confusing, and that this is a problem with the web site.

R. Rutenbar said there is a COI website and there is contact information for questions.

G. Huber stated the response rate has been 87%-90% on submission of the COI form.

W. Yates said the better training is needed for supervisors and further work is needed on matching accounts in the University with UPMC.

P. Morel stated the administrators do not appear to have access to accounts, which creates a problem as they used to be able to follow up with people who had not completed the form. W. Yates said the administrators can request access to accounts. They should email the COI office and request to be given access.

Concerning Box digital data storage:

P. Morel said that concerns have been expressed with the University announcement that the Box digital file storage system will be being replaced.

D. Salcido stated that Box is not approved for the storage of HIPPA data.

R. Rutenbar said that all NIH and NSF proposals now require data storage plans.

R. Rutenbar state that he understands that different communities will have different data storage requirements. He stated it would be a good idea to invited Mark Henderson (University CIO) to a Research Committee meeting to discuss the University's future data storage plans.

Action Item: Invite Mark Henderson to a future Committee meeting.

Concerning the Committee diversity plan:

P. Morel mention there has been a notification for Senate Committees to come up with a diversity plan.

D. Salcido that a plan could be a methodology on how to proceed. The scope of diversity planning can include: diversity, social justice and systematic racism.

The minutes for the July 10 meeting were approved.

It was agreed that the next Research Committee meeting will be 14 August at 1:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by P. Morel and P. Smolinski