

University Senate Research Committee Meeting
10 January 2018
1:00 PM
156 CL

In Attendance: E. Chasens, A. DiPalma, K. Fike, G. Huber, K. Kohli, R. Melhem, P. Morel, R. Rutenbar, D. Salcido, P. Smolinski, T. Songer, D. Turner, J. Woodward

The minutes were of the December meeting were approved.

People in attendance gave introductions.

J. Woodward stated that so far over 150 grants have been processed using the PERIS™ module, MyFunding, and it will become mandatory for grant submission in a couple of months.

G. Huber reported that the Conflict of Interest Policy is the final stages of revision and will soon be brought to the Committee, probably at the next meeting.

A revised draft of the Visitors Policy was previously circulated to the Committee. A. DiPalma gave a history of the revision of this Policy which started with M. Redfern forming a committee in 2015 to perform the revision. The management of the revision process was placed under the Office of Export Control. The first draft of the Policy was circulated for comment in September 2016, and the Research Committee and others provided extensive feedback. After revision, the revised document was released in December 2017 for comment.

J. Woodward stated an effort was made to write the document with less legal terminology, and that she had engaged over 100 people concerning the current visitor policy to understand the problems in order to address those issues in the proposed policy.

A question was asked about the definition of a “visitor” for the purposes of deciding who must submit the document. A. DiPalma stated that a “visitor” is a person who will be at the University for more than 14 days and/or who will be working in a laboratory and that this information is available on the website related to visitors. A comment was made that this information may also want to be included in the opening paragraph of the Policy, and it was agreed that this will be done in a revised version.

ACTION ITEM: Preamble to the policy will include the visitor definition

P. Smolinski asked if all visitors must have the signature of their home institution on the Visitors agreement. A. DiPalma stated there is a box that can be checked on the application for self-funded visitors and that home institution signatures are not required in all cases.

R. Rutenbar stated that the Policy may not cover all cases, but was meant to cover the most common situations.

P. Morel raised the issue that the wording in point 1 was less than welcoming since many visits are mutually beneficial. J. Woodward stated that attempts were made to change the language but that legal counsel was adamant that it should remain as stated.

There was a general discussion on items 4 and 5 of the Policy. Concerns were raised concerning the use of the word "copyright" in both items and it was felt that this could lead to confusion. M. Goodhart sent comments by email and his suggestion "would be to delete "copyrights" from point 4, and then to modify point 5 to say something like "except when they are associated with Developments as previously defined." R. Rutenbar explained that the intent was that item 4 should refer to innovations, including copyrights, which are created as a result of the visit. Item 5 refers to prior scholarly works, of many types, that would not be subject to the Pitt IP policies. P. Morel raised the point that, according to prior discussions on IP and copyright issues, faculty members own the copyright of their work. After extensive discussion there was agreement that there was still some confusion in these two items, especially in the use of the word copyright. A DiPalma and his team will reexamine these points and will revise these two points to remove any ambiguity.

ACTION ITEM: Items 4 and 5 will be revised.

A. DiPalma also stated that this policy will also apply to trainees, including graduate students. The original intent had been to develop a separate policy for trainees but it is now felt that the present policy can also apply to trainees.

R. Rutenbar stated that he found the feedback very useful and it was agreed that the policy would be revised according to the comments. The aim is to bring the revised policy to the next research committee meeting on February 7.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Minutes submitted by Patrick Smolinski and Penny Morel.