

COMMISSION ON RESEARCH

April 8, 8 2021

3:30pm-5:00pm

Video Conference

Present: Raj Bhagavathula (presiding), Hypatia Alexandria, Jeff Alwang, Harry Dorn, Elizabeth Grant, Donald Hempson, Matt Holt, Ran Jin, Leslie LaConte, Kevin McGuire, Cristina Miliano, Tasia Persson, Jonathan Petters, John Phillips, Robin Queen, Manisha Singal, Stephanie Trout, Lijuan Yuan

OVPRI Support: Kim Borkowski, Laurel Miner

Absent with Notice: Jeff Hickman, Karen Roberto, Julie Ross, Dan Sui,

Absent: Emily Warwick

Guests: Matt Hulver, April Myers, Pam VandeVord (for Julie Ross), Melinda West

Raj Bhagavathula called the meeting to order at 3:32 PM. A quorum was present.

1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of March 11, 2021.

Raj Bhagavathula noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be accessed on the [Commission on Research shared drive](#).

3. Old Business

Responses to recommendations for the 5-year institute reviews

1. Virginia Tech Transportation Institute response to recommendation from Dr. Sui.

Recommendation [attached](#).

2. Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science response to recommendations from Dean Ross. Recommendation [attached](#).

COR Resolutions at University Council Second Reading Passed

Resolution COR 2020-21C

Resolution to Increase University Institute Representation in the COR

Raj Bhagavathula notified the commission that the resolution passed at the March 15 University Meeting. Resolution materials [attached](#).

Resolution COR 2020-21B

Policy 13015: Ownership and Control of Research Data, Results and Related Materials

Raj Bhagavathula notified the commission that the resolution passed at the March 15 University Meeting. Resolution materials [attached](#).

Post Doc Resolution Comments

Resolution CFA 2020-21G

Resolution to Extend Term Limit for Postdoctoral Associate Faculty Appointment

Laurel Miner provided an update on the resolution being put forth by the Commission on Faculty Affairs (CFA) to extend the term limit for postdoctoral associate faculty appointment from four (4) years to five (5) years. The CFA did receive comments from the Graduate Student Assembly related to the following topics: 1) How do we make sure that this increase does not hinder postdoc progression? It was not clear from the resolution itself that an extension is better for a postdoc than a promotion to a research faculty role. 2) How is this related to labor exploitation - how does this limit/interact with that challenge? 3) The lack of support that postdocs currently receive from Virginia Tech in terms of career development, advocacy, networking, fellowships; as well as having a central point of contact and administration.

Discussion followed and it was explained that the resolution would not hinder postdoc progression, that it only provides additional flexibility and aligns Virginia Tech policy with that of peer institutions. Questions 2 & 3 are not directly related to the resolution.

The resolution will go to University A Second Reading will be held at the April 19 University Council Meeting. Resolution materials [attached](#).

4. New Business

New Centers

Laurel Miner provided information on new centers that have been established over the past year (2020-2021) in accordance with Virginia Tech policies [13005](#) and [3020](#). New research centers, if they are department, college or institute level centers, are reviewed by the offices of the vice president for research and innovation, and the vice president for finance. The Commission on Research receives information about new centers; however, new institutes come to the commission for a full review. We anticipate to have one new institute for consideration, the National Security Institute (NSI), with the possibility of its charter to be a discussion topic in our May meeting.

Laurel described four new centers; two have administrative homes in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and two are in the Fralin Life Sciences Institute. New Centers list [attached](#).

5. Presentations

Cristina Miliano, Postdoctoral Associate in the Buczynski Lab and postdoctoral representative on the CoR, gave a presentation on the National Postdoctoral Association Chapter at Virginia Tech ([attached](#)).

Matt Hulver, Executive Director of the Fralin Life Sciences Institute gave a presentation on the Vision for Fralin Life Sciences Institute ([attached](#)).

6. Announcements

OVPRI Announcements

- Laurel Miner noted that the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation is currently developing a revised version of the research continuity guidance for working in labs in the pandemic situation and what will happen once more people are vaccinated. It is expected that the updated guidance will allow more students in labs for all purposes and to lower the level of approval from dean to department head, etc. [COVID-19: Research Continuity Guidance](#) website.
- Upcoming events:
 - April 16, 2:30-4pm: [VT-FAST: Finding extramural funding](#)
 - April 23, 10:30am-Noon: [Exploring Diverse Postdoctoral Career Paths](#)
 - May 20, National Lab Partnership Webinar

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:59 PM.