

Minutes
COMMISSION ON RESEARCH
3:30-5:00pm | December 8, 2022
130 Burruss Hall and Zoom

Present: Alexander Leonessa (presiding), Sheryl Ball, Leanna Blevins, Cynthia Devers, Roseanne Foti, Ronald Gibbons, Chris Headley, Randy Heflin (co-presiding), Donald Hempson, Leslie LaConte, Kathy Lu, Tracy McElroy (for Alexandra Poetter), Kevin McGuire, Laurel Miner (for Dan Sui), Luke Neurauter, Eric Newton, Lydia Patton, Jonathan Petters, Kevin Pitts, Steve Rideout, Chloe Robertson, Elizabeth White, Lijuan Yuan

Absent with Notice: Ryan Stewart, Alexandra Poetter, Ben Knapp, Dan Sui

Absent: Kayla Alward, Rajnish Kumar

Guests: Vince Baranauskas, Sandra Burks, April Myers, Andy Schaudt, Melinda West

Research and Innovation support: Kim Borkowski

Randy Heflin called the meeting to order at 3:31pm. 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 November 2022

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

3. Presentations

Chris Headley, Associate Director and Research Associate Professor, Spectrum Dominance at Virginia Tech National Security Institute (VTNSI), gave a presentation on the working group for Representation of Research Faculty in Shared Governance ([presentation attached](#)). Headley confirmed that the Faculty Senate constitution has been modified to allow research faculty to be elected by their departments to serve in the Senate. To enable research faculty whose primary affiliation is not in an academic department (for example, those in research institutes) to also be

represented, the current suggestion is to include the election of two senators to represent the research faculty in those cases. This requires a longer-term plan and commitment to support the research faculty self-governance, including mechanisms for elected research faculty to more effectively represent the views of their constituents. The Commission voted unanimously in support of this proposal.

Sandra Burks and Andy Schaudt provided presentations to inform the Commission on ongoing efforts to strengthen career pathing and leveling for research faculty within existing policies and structures contained in the Faculty Handbook. Sandra Burks, Senior Division Director for Human Resources for the Office of Research and Innovation, gave a presentation on Research Faculty Career Paths ([presentation attached](#)). She described the importance of professional development and career pathing to talent retention and recruitment, and how the university is working to strengthen those paths within the existing structure of research faculty.

Andy Schaudt, Chief of Staff, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), gave a presentation on Research Faculty Career Pathway Activities at VTTI ([presentation attached](#)). Schaudt described the detailed work VTTI has undertaken to provide career pathways and professional development for VTTI employees.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:33pm.