

**Minutes**  
**COMMISSION ON RESEARCH**  
**3:30-5:00pm | February 9, 2023**  
**130 Burruss Hall and Zoom**

**Present:** Alexander Leonessa (presiding), Sheryl Ball, Cynthia Devers, Roseanne Foti, Ronald Gibbons, Robert Gourdie, Donald Hempson, Ben Knapp, Rajnish Kumar, Leslie LaConte, Kathy Lu, Kevin McGuire, Laurel Miner (for Randy Heflin), Eric Newton, Lydia Patton, Jonathan Petters, Kevin Pitts, Alexandra Poetter, Steve Rideout, Chloe Robertson, Ryan Stewart, Keri Swaby (for Leanna Blevins), Lijuan Yuan

**Absent with Notice:** Leanna Blevins, Randy Heflin, Luke Neurauter, Dan Sui

**Absent:** Chris Headley, Elizabeth White, Joshae Gordon

**Guests:** Tom Archibald, Barbara DeCausey, Kim Linkous, April Myers

**Research and Innovation support:** Kim Borkowski

Alex Leonessa 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 December 2022**

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

**3. Presentations**

Barbara DeCausey, Human Research Protection Program Director and IRB Administrator, gave a presentation on Human Research Protection Program Updates ([presentation attached](#)). She described improvements that have been made to the Human Research Protection Program to support faculty and accelerate processes. These include responses directly to researcher feedback on templates and data management. Finally, DeCausey emphasized the need for additional faculty to serve on the Institutional Review Board. Leonessa suggested that the request for IRB members be brought to Faculty Senate, and offered to make the connection.

Alexandra Poetter, Associate Director, Program Management, Virginia Tech National Security Institute, gave an update on Representation of Research Faculty in Shared Governance. Following feedback from Faculty Senate, the working group is next tasked with establishing structures and processes to ensure that research faculty can represent their constituency. In the

long-term, this may best be accomplished through a Research Faculty Association. A.K. Ward, from the Pamplin College of Business, has provided suggestions and information based on her experience establishing a similar association for the College. Leonessa and Poetter will work together to clarify the timeline to implement these changes.

Laurel Miner, Assistant Vice President and Chief of Staff, Research and Innovation, gave an update on the Working Group on Center Policies ([presentation attached](#)). The Working Group has continued to meet, and has made progress in several areas of the policy. First, they will propose adding additional definitions and categories of centers and institutes: *thematic institute*, *investment institute*, *sponsored center*, and *administrative center*. They are also clarifying the process of establishing a new center to support a more collaborative process and clarity of mission and goals. The proposed changes streamline and provide flexibility for center reviews and reports, allowing the oversight to be tailored to the center size, structure and mission and the administrator's goals. Miner will provide an additional update at a future meeting.

#### **4. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:30pm.