

# MINUTES

## Commission on Research

February 12, 2026

3:30 – 5:00pm

Zoom

**Present** – Jan Helge Bøhn (presiding), Gibran Ali, Thomas Archibald, Thomas Bell, Yancey Crawford, Alberto Cano, Rebecca Cockrum, Joseph Gaeddart, Randy Heflin, Ehren Hill, Atharva Shashank Kokane, Andrew Krum, Daniel Lobree, Laurel Miner (for Dan Sui), Corinne Noirot, Albert Pan, Daniel Pauly, Jorge Reyes, Manisha Singal, Connie Stovall, Stella Volpe, Jeffrey Walling

**Absent with Notice:** Daniel Hindman, Caitlin Woodson

**Absent:** LaTawnya Burleson, Kirk Cameron, Dan Givens, Ishveen Kaur, Quinn Thomas, Michelle Theus

**Guests:** Kim Borkowski, Lynn Byrd, Stacy King, Rob McCarley, Lori Rose

Jan Helge Bøhn called the meeting to order at 3:31pm. A quorum was present.

### 1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by Jan Helge Bøhn to amend the agenda by moving the Presentation after Unfinished Business. The motion was seconded to adopt the revised agenda. Motion carried.

### 2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of December 11, 2025.

Jan Helge Bøhn noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be accessed on the CoR SharePoint site.

### 3. Unfinished Business

#### **COR 2025-26A Resolution to Revise Research Faculty Non-Professorial Rank Structure in Faculty Handbook**

Laurel Miner and Lynn Byrd presented the COR 2025-26A for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded. Discussion focused on the distinction between levels and ranks. A COR member suggested an edit to the first paragraph of section 2.1.1.3 to emphasize that research faculty are found across the entire university, rather than just in academic departments, schools, or colleges. A vote was taken on the motion, and the motion passed.

### 4. Presentation

Rob McCarley, Executive Director, Fralin Life Sciences Institute, provided an overview of the Fralin Life Sciences Institute (FLSI), one of four investment institutes, whose mission is to improve the human condition by supporting innovative life sciences research, education, and engagement. Rob shared that FLSI engages in strategic partnerships and focuses on stakeholder needs by investing in space, people and research opportunities and the distinct and distinctive outcomes and impacts it has on the pathway to Global Distinction. The institute works across the university to support a variety of programs, projects, affiliated centers and groups and serves as the administrative home to four research centers. Additionally, FLSI fosters collaborative space for faculty amongst five buildings located on campus and in the Corporate Research Center, provides

dedicated personnel, research infrastructure facilities, and proposal development support (VT-FAST). Rob also touched on the areas of study encompassed by affiliate research, the robust growth in federal research expenditures, research outcomes and impact that is shared through their communication team; as well as the scope of accomplishments and key priorities for FY26.

## **5. Reports**

- Global Distinction Fellowships – Jan Helge Bøhn: The Global Distinction Fellowships Workgroup continues to meet and discuss the potential creation of a Global Distinction Fellowship program that would bring top scholars from around the world to Virginia Tech for extended visits. Jan Helge provided a brief overview of the working document presented at the December 11, 2025 COR meeting, and summarized challenges of the program which include housing, workspace, fiscal constraints, and having a pilot program. The floor was opened for discussion with a suggestion of having a different investment model.

## **6. Other Items**

- Jan Helge Bøhn proposed to add May 7, 2026 as the last Commission on Research meeting of the semester to accommodate the review and voting on the Five-Year Review of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. COR members were in agreement and the date will be added to calendars.

## **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:55pm.