

## Bloomington Faculty Council Research Affairs Committee

December 12, 2024, 3-4 pm – Zoom

### Minutes

**Present:** Jillian Kinzie (Co-Chair), Pete Kollbaum (Co-Chair), Ashley Clark, Stephen Hiller, Seda Durguner, Wen Qi (Ex-officio), Scott Michaels, Lana Spendl, and Kaylie Hash (Ex-officios), Student representative, Luke Saxton-Stivers (IUSG)

Unable to attend: Ethan Friedmanski, Timothy Mickelborough, Alexis Harbour, Brea Perry, David Rutkowski

The meeting opened with a welcome from co-chairs Pete and Jillian.

November 14, 2024 Minutes approved.

**Confirming RAC meeting time for spring 2025, 10am, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, beginning January 16.**

Scott Michaels provided an update from IU Research Office. The lists of all Centers and Institutes is circulating and work is underway to match 250 sites with their owners. The list is being confirmed with Deans. By the end of January we will have an accurate list of Centers and Institutes.

Kaylie provided an update from Brea regarding the 2030 Strategic initiatives covering 4 topics: AI, Quantum, Aging, and the Environment. She also announced some upcoming lectures, including Dr. Tyrone Hayes from Berkely March 6 lecture, and from the Aging Research Network, is a symposium with a banjo performer, March 28.

Pete introduced a new initiative at IU for “layered learning”. A call for proposals went out from IU Research to invite faculty to propose projects that would involve more undergrads in research. Funding is available for faculty in a research group and it includes a small stipend for students. Must be for a significant number of undergrads (about 10). Faculty propose the project topic, and again the intent is to get more undergraduate students doing lab research. Recruit students in the spring 2024 for fall 2024 opportunities. For more: <https://research.iu.edu/funding-proposals/funding/opportunities/layered-learning-program/index.html>

The next item on the agenda was about the proposal forwarded from the BFC Executive Comm regarding the oversight of research space. We are to review the campus research space use/allocation guidelines provided by the Provost’s task force and offer our comments to BFC Exec and the Provost to define next steps. Scott provided a brief overview of how space planning is done. The Provost is assigned to oversee space. The function of space planning moved from Provost to capital planning, yet there seems to be some vacuum with regard to planning. IUB Space Committee is supposed to vet space for any space changes, functions, and for units, however this group mainly adjudicates space requests brought to them, there is no planning function. So there seems to be no current policy on space planning. There is no clear way for space decisions to be made at a higher level. Departments and Schools can take care of their own issues, but with Provost level hires, including interdisciplinary appointments, and with for example, Luddy which doesn’t have wet labs, it is not clear how space would be arranged, and or how to get active researcher input into space utilization. Hopefully this document will help us better resolve space issues. RAC member space policy feedback is due to Pete and Jillian by Dec 17, 2024.

The committee then discussed updates and a proposed plan for post-docs salary minimum. Pete met with Budgetary Affairs and sought feedback from several units regarding adopting a Postdoc minima to be set at the NIH postdoc level. However, he reported that given the diversity in Postdoc positions across schools and departments that this might be a large ask financially given lower salaries in some units. Then the discussion moved to graduate equivalent salary. This could be the benchmark, and consider moving to the higher NIH minima later. Current grad stipend is in the neighborhood of \$52,800. So, this could be the postdoc minima, and then frame faculty at a ratio of that minima across ranks with 1.1 x for assistant, 1.3 x associate, and 1.5 x full. Proposal will be to update the table provided in the proposal from Budgetary Affairs. The expectation is to develop a plan to determine who is below the rate, and how this could be addressed budgetarily.

Wen and her team explored if there are people with salaries less than the current posted minima. Unfortunately, some are lower. Wen will have to check with those units, to explore the differences and why this might be. Wen also reviewed all units to gauge the impact budgetarily, including the number of people and the cost. Adjustments would cost IU about 580K. Since our task as RAC was specifically the PostDoc salary minima we should focus on this topic. The budgetary impact is approximately \$150K. Wen knows who this is and what would have to happen to address. Chemistry and Biology are most impacted.

Once Budgetary Affairs Committee (BAC) has reviewed the PostDoc minima proposal it would then be sent to BFC as a proposal for what we believe is reasonable, a discussion of the impact and other implications for work in this direction. Since a proposal was put forward 2 years ago and nothing happened, we're committed to acting on this issue this year. Hopefully we can work with BAC to advance something with regard to salary to attract and retain postdocs.

Additional discussion on the postdoc minima included questions about our current posted minima, which is 40K; and assistant is 41K for 10 months. There are postdocs assistant professors that are below graduate student equivalent. The committee agreed that this seems like something we need to fix. The salary minima at IUB's peer institutions were also discussed. We are actually not the lowest. UMD minimum was 40K, while others were higher including 47K at Purdue, MSU, 50K,

We would like to move through postdoc policy quickly. Spring might be for raising awareness and getting it on the BFC agenda. RAC member feedback is due to Pete and Jillian by Dec 17, 2024.

We then initiated a short discussion about the revised financial policies enacted 10/16/24 regarding contests and giftcards <https://policies.iu.edu/policies/fin-acc-640-contests-drawings-games-prizes/index.html#scope> and <https://research.iu.edu/news-events/announcements/2021-09-06-ora.html> Drawings that fall under human subjects' compliance are exempted from the prize limitations of this policy; however, tax and financial aid implications for prizes still apply. There seems to be some inconsistent policy with regard to the required "gift card logs" and challenges to protecting human subjects. Jillian will follow up with Ashley who has experienced some challenges with this policy for research projects, including barriers to providing research participants cash, or gift cards.

We did not have time for Open Forum discussion.

Respectfully submitted, Jillian Kinzie