

Bloomington Faculty Council Research Affairs Committee

February 21, 2025 10-11 am – via Zoom

Minutes

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

Unable to attend: Ethan Fridmanski, Timothy Mickelborough, Alexis Harbour, Brea Perry, David Rutkowski (on leave this semester)

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

Please refer to this site for RAC meeting schedule and 2024-25 Assignments:

<https://bfc.indiana.edu/committees/standing/rac/index.html>

January 17, 2025 Minutes approved.

Jillian described a situation involving minutes from a January 2024 BFC RAC meeting that were supposedly archived but were still attainable via a Google search. Pete and Jillian collaborated with David Taylor to address the matter which included working with UITS and Google to remove the minutes. Additional follow-up on this matter includes a request to David Taylor: “BFC RAC recommends that BFC committee meeting minutes and other sensitive documents are behind a firewall to ensure their confidentiality, integrity, and availability.” The committee supports this request, and David confirmed this is on his list of things to do.

Work stoppages are occupying current attention and among the 23 Centers that Scott oversees. Thus far, a relatively small number of grants effected. Seems to be AI software finding buzzwords, a scattershot stoppage. Tangentially related to DEI. Then grants get back on again. Definitely a period of uncertainty where people don’t know what’s happening next. What is the approach? Work with the investigator, email to report stoppages, there is a website for all federal agency communications: <https://research.iu.edu/news-events/federal-agency-communications/index.html>

Proposal to cut ICR to 15%, was temporarily blocked by a judge. Uncertainty remains of what happens next and to what degree this will impact research conduct at IU. It is anticipated that ICR reduction will be mandated moving forward.

With IU 2030 plan to expand funded research, and the recent federal limitations or elimination of research RFPs and rising uncertainty about what will be available, suggests a concern about diversifying and expanding IU research funding. The establishment of a Research Center for DOD funding is vital to expansion, as is aligning with corporations and the state’s industries via the IU Lab Launch Accelerator, which is designed for IU to get firmer footing in this work. Committee members wondered about ways to capture federal data sets that are being eliminated. Could the IU Research Data Commons be an entity to keep track of the status of or be a site to store federal datasets?

Updates on campus research space use/allocation guidelines. The Provost indicated that the space use guidance was progressing through the working group, and input from RAC would be further solicited. RAC confirmed it wished to have input on this to help assure it is practically implemented.

With regard to “dark money” we are trying to follow up on the charge and draft policy led by former BFC Chair Sally Letsinger. There was a discussion with IU Foundation who also referred her to Steve Martin in ORA. With changes to IU policies, we need to explore what gaps still remain as RAC agrees that disclosure of research funding is critically important.

A few other matters were only briefly discussed. First was the topic of non-tenure track research leaves. This topic will be explored further at upcoming meetings. Committee members were encouraged to review [ACA-A1](#) (see section; REGULATION OF RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS Research Ranks) for alignment with [ACA-A5](#). Agreement was attained otherwise, and this task can then be marked as complete. The Post-Doc minimum work continues, with most concern coming from units most impacted, including science based units in the College. More input will be provided next meeting. The discussion about research incentives and its impact on research will be raised with the AVP for Research Compliance.

As always, committee members are urged to consider: How can we help good research get done?

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

Next meeting: March 28, 2025 10:00 am via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted, Jillian Kinzie