

University Senate Research Committee (USRC)  
Meeting Minutes  
February 14, 2020

Attending: Jeffrey Edwards (Philosophy), Iris Fineberg: Chair (School of Social Welfare), Chris Kretz (Library), Marci Lobel (Psychology), Brittain Mahaffey (Psychiatry), Tzu-Chieh Wei (Physics and Astronomy), Wei Zhu (Applied Mathematics and Statistics), Jose Moscoso (GSO secretary substituting for Graduate Student representative)

Invited guest: Eric Wertheimer – Dean of the Graduate School

Discussion with Dean Eric Wertheimer

We invited the new dean of the Graduate School to meet with the committee for a mutual introduction and discussion about how the committee and the Graduate School may intersect and interact. The committee has historically worked with the deans of the Graduate School due to the core role of research in graduate education.

The dean outlined three points of connection between research and graduate education: (1) graduate education as part of the research mission; (2) commitment to transparency in research as part of the graduate experience; and (3) having graduate curriculum tied to research.

The dean provided information on certain degrees on campus, including the Masters/PhD in Data Science, and the degree in Accelerator Studies (based off of Brookhaven Laboratory). He indicated there is attention to opening programs that can do truly interdisciplinary research. This is a big challenge. It was noted that in some instances when students may want to take courses in other disciplines, they do not have the necessary background knowledge to take the courses.

There was discussion about online learning; there are SUNY wide initiatives, and there are tensions between the SUNY system and the campuses.

The committee invited the dean to mention topics about which the committee may be able to assist. The dean noted improving processes for how ToRG funds are accessed in interdepartmental programs.

Discussion of Open Access Policy

The committee was involved in the original process of developing the Open Access Policy for the university. The policy is up for renewal, and the committee was asked to indicate its position about the renewal. General discussion about the policy noted the following:

- We need a better way to help faculty comply with the policy, to collect the articles;
- Reinforcement is needed regarding the presence of faculty support from the library on issues such as navigating the copyright issues for posting open access (depending on the publisher, different pre-published versions may be posted on open access);
- An annual reminder to faculty to post to open access would be helpful, with more infrastructure to support it.

Suggestions from members on topics for the committee to address

- (1) Online graduate programs – we should watch (as a committee) – what are the research ramifications? How will the revenue be allocated? How will that revenue contribute to the research mission? Implications for TA allocations?
- (2) Policy of medical school (or HSC) limiting the percent of effort that faculty can be on grants unremunerated. Problematic because of high salary rates of medical faculty. Cannot list them as consultants. 5% across all grants is the limit currently. Very limiting.
- (3) Technology infrastructure – across campus issues; Google vs. non-Google; system-level communication for research across the campus (across Nicolls Road)