

**Research & Scholarship Council
Annual Report, 2014-2015 Academic Year**

Membership:

Jorge Arevalo	College of Business (Co-Chair)
Annette Baron	Adjunct Faculty, College of Business
David Gilley	College of Science & Health (Co-Chair, Fall)
Lucia McMahon	College of HSS
Sue Sgro	Professional Staff
Pamela Theus	Library (Co-Chair, Spring)
Lisa Warner	College of Education
	College of Arts & Communication*
Martin Williams	Administrative Liaison

* No representative for Fall 2014-Spring 2015

Meeting Dates:

Fall	Spring
Sept. 23, 2014	Jan. 20, 2015
Oct. 16, 2014	Feb. 17, 2015
Nov. 6, 2014	March 10, 2015
Nov. 25, 2014	March 24, 2015
Dec. 9, 2014	April 21, 2015
Other Dates of Council Activity:	
Survey Instrument Presented to and Approved by Senate	October 14, 2014
Research & Scholarship Days	April 1 - April 2, 2015
Survey Results Report Presented to and Approved by Senate	April 14, 2015
Open Access Forum (COSH)	April 16, 2015

A brief summary of the Council's progress toward fulfilling each of the Senate charges follows. Details can be found in the Council's approved minutes submitted to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

SUMMARY OF CHARGES AND PROGRESS

Charges for 2014-2015:

- 1. Work with the administration to set a date for R&S Day at the beginning of the academic year and develop a long-term plan for a successful R&S Day.***
- 2. Continue efforts to improve R&S Day, and coordinate with the Provost's Office about the possibility of creating a broader program to highlight research on campus.***

The Council made significant progress toward both of these charges. We presented at a meeting with Provost Sandmann in November 2014 a compiled list of known research events sponsored by various groups across campus. The long term goal is to improve Research & Scholarship Day by integrating it into a series of events that involve presentation of both faculty and student research, while still maintaining a forum for faculty to showcase their scholarship. The Council believes keeping R&S Day as a standalone event for faculty scholarship limits its success and that such integration will promote faculty scholarship by increasing event buy-in from Deans and Chairs, addressing past problems with attaining sufficient audiences for talks, and highlighting the value added to the University's student-centered mission by faculty research and scholarship. We agreed, together with Susan Dinan of the Honor's College, on the short-term goal of coordinating Research & Scholarship Day with Honors College Research Week for next academic year 2015-2016. Martin Williams is coordinating and confirming those dates now, with the prospect that next year's R&S activities will take place during a week in early-mid April 2016. As of May 18, 2015 the projected date for Research & Scholarship Week is April 18 to 21.

This year, R&S Day took place over a two day period, with poster sessions offered on both Wednesday and Thursday. Anecdotal reports described good attendance at both poster sessions, along with lively discussions between presenters and attendees, indicating successful opportunities for inquiry and possible collaboration. College-sponsored sessions offered during Common Hour were again well attended, but individual sessions often counted the presenters themselves as the only audience. This ongoing problem again suggests that significant changes to the event need to be made (see Council records from last year for some ideas for radical change), and emphasizes the potential of the College-sponsored sessions. The success of a college-sponsored session depends critically on involvement and cooperative planning by each College's Dean, Council representative, and faculty leaders in scholarship.

R&S Day statistics for the past few years are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Talks</u>	<u>Posters</u>	<u>Total Presentations</u>	<u>Total Presenters</u>
2012	42	33	75	149
2013	61	37	98	>250
2014	86	45	131	186
2015	44	38	82	217

3. Continue to develop the Survey of Faculty Needs for RSCE.

4. Plan a process by which to distribute the Survey of Faculty needs for RSCE to faculty.

The Council exceeded these charges by not only completing the plan for conducting the survey but by 1) receiving a positive vote from the Senate floor to go ahead with the survey using the instrument we completed Spring 2014, 2) conducting the survey online via Qualtrics in December 2014 to all full-time tenure-track faculty members (423 f/t faculty), 3) compiling and analyzing the results in the form of a report plus data appendices, and 4) receiving on April 14th a positive vote on the Senate floor for accepting the report and its recommendations. These activities occupied much of our Council's time and attention this academic year. Success of these efforts, which the Council regards as very important to its standing charges, will depend on the degree to which the Council and Senate is able to promote dissemination and discussion of the survey's findings among faculty and University leadership over the next academic year. To date, parts of the survey have been presented by Council representatives to the College of Education and the Library, and discussed with the consulting firm Group I&I, which has been contracted by the University to increase capacity in regards to research funding at WPU. Interest in discussing the survey was expressed by Provost Sandmann and several Deans. Such dissemination and discussion should be a leading charge for next year's R&S Council (see below).

The final version of the survey report is too long to be included as part of this year-end report, but can be retrieved directly from the Senate website. The detailed report includes an Executive Summary, purpose of the study, and the Council's investigation on the overall effectiveness of existing programs, the faculty's reported limitations to research, scholarship and creative expression, and inquiry on the faculty's perception as to the current state of RSCE with respect to the University's strategic plan, and most effective ways to increase RSCE at WPU. The results of the survey are presented in two parts: a University wide portion, and College specific reports as to the needs our five Colleges and Library report in regards to RSCE. The following is the Executive Summary from the report.

Overall, responses to this survey indicate a faculty highly motivated to engage in RSCE who believe WPU is not maximizing its potential for RSCE to the detriment of its institutional mission. Highlights of chosen key findings and general recommendations for improving RSCE at the University level follow. We are making the recommendation that anyone interested in the continued improvement of our University's RSCE to read the entire report for a full discussion of these results, more detailed recommendations, and college-level analyses.

Highlights of Findings and Recommendations to University Leadership

- University RSCE-support programs other than ART (i.e., RTI, SURP, and Career Development) are poorly known, especially among untenured faculty, and thus need increased promotion.
- Dissatisfaction with application procedures for University RSCE-support programs other than ART (i.e., RTI, SURP, and Career Development) suggests the need to review application procedures for these programs.

- Relative unimportance of the SURP program, despite the institution's focus on undergraduate students, suggests a need to consider how this program can be made more useful to faculty RSCE.
- Competing service duties were the top limitation to scholarly productivity, suggesting a need to review and rebalance incentives for service versus RSCE.
- Fragmented time was considered a top limitation of scholarly productivity, suggesting a need for added flexibility in ART and concentrated teaching schedules for active scholars.
- Limitations on scholarly productivity imposed by lack of support for summer RSCE and travel suggest the need for equitable and transparent systems for distributing support for these important activities.
- Most faculty disagree that WPU is meeting any of the elements of the University's strategic plan related to RSCE, suggesting structural issues that require policy changes and redirection of resources, but are unlikely to be solved with restricted one-time spending.
- Faculty rated summer RSCE as key for improving their production of recognized scholarly products, suggesting a need for mechanisms to support summer RSCE by active faculty scholars.
- Student involvement in faculty RSCE was considered least important for production of recognized scholarly products, suggesting potential tradeoffs between research productivity and student involvement that should be considered in policies that incentivize faculty RSCE productivity.
- Faculty considered all categories of support (teaching-load credit, student scholarships, publicity, and supplies) as very important for increasing undergraduate involvement in faculty RSCE, suggesting a need for programs to provide support in each of these areas.
- Some faculty expressed concern about lack of clear messages from University leadership about the relative importance of RSCE, suggesting that increased dialog between faculty and administrators about RSCE is necessary.
- Some faculty expressed concern that lack of ability to specialize in teaching, research, or service prevents career flexibility that impairs strategic advantages in research, suggesting that a less-rigid incentive system be considered.

5. Study guidelines for documenting research on curriculum vitae in various disciplines, and the best practices for documenting research (according to college or discipline)

The Council discussed this charge and takes it very seriously as it may have important impacts on issues such as retention and promotion. We decided that properly addressing this charge would require research efforts that were beyond our capability for the year without taking away from all the other charges we were given. Also, the discipline specificity of such best practices exceeds current Council representation (e.g., standards likely differ significantly among life sciences, physical sciences, nursing, public health, etc. yet we only have a single representative from the College of Science and Health), which may demand formation of ad-hoc committees with representation from individual departments.

6. Share more information with faculty on open access publishing. Make recommendations to the University about accepting open access publishing in retention and promotion decisions. Also suggest models for funding such publications.

The Research & Scholarship Council sponsored a forum with the College of Science and Health on April 16, 2015. Moderated by Council member, David Gilley (Biology), and informed by Richard Kearney (Library), a panel of COSH faculty relayed their various experiences with open access publishing and discussed topics such as the concerns about the quality of OA journals as well as barriers to funding article processing fees. As experience and attitudes about OA publishing vary widely both among and within colleges, the R&S Council believes that more education on the issues surrounding open access is necessary before making recommendations for evaluation of scholarship or funding models. It was also apparent from our discussions that collaboration with Library faculty is of key importance for these efforts.

Standing Charges:

- 1. Promote faculty, librarian, professional staff, and adjunct faculty scholarship; identify, on an ongoing basis, current and anticipated faculty, librarian, professional staff and adjunct faculty needs with regard to scholarship and research and recommend strategies designed to meet those needs.**
- 2. Support the continued efforts to build academic research networks on and beyond the William Paterson campus**
- 3. Review, yearly and as needed, the policies, procedures, and guidelines for each of the following:**
 - a) Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects**
 - b) Scientific and Academic Fraud and Misconduct**

Specific charges for R&S Council this year adequately covered standing charges #1 and #2, so we will not repeat these reports on those charges. Regarding standing charge #3, no review of the above mentioned policies was deemed necessary this year, as this has been done relatively recently.

Recommended Charges for FY16:

1. Disseminate and foster discussion of results and recommendations from 2015 Survey of Faculty Needs for RSCE in academic units across campus (university, college, and department levels). Long-term goal is for academic units to make changes in policies and/or programs to support faculty needs for RSCE consistent with their missions in light of the survey results and recommendations.
2. Participate and contribute to the efforts of Developing a Culture of Research and Research Funding Initiative being conducted by Group I&I Inc. in collaboration with the OSP.

3. Continue to improve the development and effectiveness of our new R&S Week which is intended to extend the promotion of faculty RSCE and the collaboration with other campus groups involved in student-faculty RSCE.
4. Work with the Library to continue to educate faculty about the issues related to open-access publication, including considerations for promotion decisions, funding models for article processing fees, and adoption of a university open-access policy.
5. Draft a Senate response to recent elimination of independent study at WPU. the R&S Council considers this issue to fall within our standing charges because of the close relationship between faculty scholarship and faculty mentoring of student scholarship. We, as a dedicated group worry that eliminating an important mechanism of integrating faculty and student scholarship drives a wedge between the two thus isolating faculty scholarship from the institution's primary mission of student education.

Respectfully submitted,
Jorge Arevalo, Co-Chair, College of Business
David Gilley, Co-Chair, College of Science and Health
Pamela Theus, Co-Chair, Library
May 2015