

**University Research Council  
Meeting of September 6, 2023**

**Attendees:** Meredith Bond, Chair  
Roman Kondratov (Ex-Officio Member)  
Benjamin Ward (Ex-Officio Member)

Valentin Börner	Eric Schearer
Maria Gibson	Adam Voight
Meshack Owino	Doug Wajda
Roland Pourdavood	Wei Zhang
Eran Rubin	

**Absent/Excused:** David Choi                      Kevin O’Neill  
Tatyana Guzman

Dr. Kondratov called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda for the September 6, 2023 Meeting  
Approved and seconded as written
2. Approval of the Minutes of the March 20, 2023 Meeting  
Approved and seconded as written
3. Introduction of URC Members
  - Drs. Eran Rubin and Eric Schearer were introduced as new URC members
4. Office of Research Updates
  - a. URC Policy Update
    - Faculty personnel policies were discussed at Faculty Senate
    - Policy changes were posted as required for the 30-day public comment period
    - The proposed changes will be presented to the Board of Trustees (BOT) for approval during the September 21 BOT meeting
    - The Office of Research should have the new policy in place in several weeks, and will begin to implement the new policy
    - The URC will continue with current representation through the fall semester, and will change representation for the spring semester
    - New representation for at-large members will be determined through a voting procedure

b. Budget

- Due to university-wide budget cuts, major changes will need to be made to the internal award programs run by the Office of Research

c. Internal Award Programs

- The Office of Research runs three internal programs on a rolling basis:
  1. Graduate Faculty Research Support Program (GFRSP)
    - This program is currently paused due to budgetary constraints
    - URC members were in agreement that the program should continue to be placed on hold until the Office of Research and URC members are able to develop stricter criteria and guidelines
  2. Graduate Tuition Program (GTP)
    - The GTP now has application deadlines for the fall (August 1) and spring (December 1) semesters
    - The program has been extremely successful, which has led to the program being overspent
    - The budget was fully committed by August, but the Office of Research was able to honor all prior requests
  3. Reduced Teaching Research Facilitation Program (RTRF)
    - This program is also currently paused due to budgetary constraints

5. Open Discussion

- URC members suggested the following changes to the internal award programs for 2024-2025:
  - The FSI and FRD programs should be continued, but the number of awards should be reduced
  - The total budget available for FSI awards should be \$25,000, which means there will be significantly less awards
  - Faculty summer salary should be cut or reduced for FSI awards
  - In order to make the FRD program more competitive, FRD awards should be increased to \$40,000 maximum per request, which will result in only 3-4 FRD awards per year
  - The FRD program must continue since it has the best return on investment
  - In order to emphasize student support, the USRA program will be a top priority
  - The number of USRA awards will be reduced in order to make the program more competitive
  - URC members should be prepared to evaluate USRA proposals during the next review cycle
  - Revisions to award amounts and guidelines must be finalized by November 1

6. Agenda for the Next Meeting

a. New Business

- URC members are strongly encouraged to attend the USRA Poster Session on Thursday, September 21 from 12-3 in the Student Center Atrium

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.