

Senate Research Committee (SRC)
April 13, 2020
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) COVID-19 Update; Foreign Influence Update; Scope of the Arts Research & Opportunities for the Arts and Sciences Research to Collaborate]

PRESENT: Julie Olson (chair), Bill Arnold, Chris Cramer, Gregory Cuomo, Kelsie Full, Sumanth Gopinath, Tasoulla Hadjiyanni, Lisa Johnston, Diane Karwan, Leslie Kennedy, Boyd Kumher, Katsumi Matsumoto, Dianne Neumark Sztainer, Matthew Pappas, Nicole Pilman, Shashi Shekhar, Susannah Smith, Kathleen Vohs, Carston Wagner, Pamela Webb, Philip Zelazo

REGRETS: Carol Carrier, John Freeman, Daniel Heemstra, Tucker LeBien, Nelson Rhodus, David Roberts, Teresa Rose-Hellekant, Ali Salavati, Vaybhav Shaw

OTHERS ATTENDING: Dan Gilchrist, Brianne Keeney

GUESTS: Diane Willow, associate professor, Department of Art

Chair Julie Olson welcomed the committee and the members introduced themselves.

1. Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) COVID-19 Update

Vice President Chris Cramer, OVPR, provided [slides](#) regarding COVID-19 and University planning, which included updates on the following:

- an overview of extended reduced operations status;
- COVID-19 guidance for the research community;
- rapid response grants, University testing and diagnostics research related to COVID-19;
- an overview of the University COVID Action Network (U-CAN).

Cramer speculated that if Governor Walz's shelter-in-place order is lifted as scheduled on May 4, there will likely be a range of businesses that will be allowed to re-open on a limited basis and subject to certain restrictions. He told members that if operations that are currently closed are allowed to open with restrictions, those changes will be good news for campus research operations as researchers will likely be some of the first individuals allowed back on campus.

Cramer also told members that research fieldwork has been challenged by the changes in University operations, however, the Governor did state that work related to food production and agriculture is essential, so that fieldwork has been allowed to continue.

Cramer also provided an update on research funding, telling members that the [Office of Management and Budget](#) has issued guidance to the federal funding agencies giving them considerable flexibility to continue paying researchers, even if they are unable to work. Cramer explained that researchers are currently not losing any grant funding if they are unable to work. He cautioned that in some cases the work is not getting done and the money is being spent, and he said the agencies have acknowledged this issue and they are responding as quickly as they can. He told members to expect that new researchers will not be allowed to be added to grants and paid from them during this time of uncertainty.

Cramer concluded by telling members that the research lobbying organizations are pushing hard for a federal stimulus package that will fund additional research and development opportunities in higher education.

2. Foreign Influence Update

Webb told members that the federal government and the funding agencies have largely shifted to focus efforts on COVID-19, which has momentarily sidelined attention for foreign influence issues. She provided the following updates:

- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has recently updated NIH just recently updated their [Other Support](#) form. There are some inconsistencies in the document, and NIH has been contacted to clarify.
- The National Science Foundation (NSF) will be publishing a terms and conditions document shortly that provides details about how to report foreign support that researchers have previously forgotten to disclose.

3. Scope of the arts research & opportunities for the arts and sciences research to collaborate

Diane Willow, associate professor, Department of Art, presented slides titled [ArTeS Initiative](#), and explained that she received seed funding to lead this new collaborative initiative among faculty, staff, and students towards the goal of securing prototyping and implementation funding. ArTeS is an emerging, intercollegiate initiative and catalyst linking research, teaching, and learning that centers the arts in **Art + Technology + Science** collaborations at the University of Minnesota. To address social justice issues relevant to all of these domains, ArTeS is committed to systematically creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive network and exchange among disciplines essential to the foundation of this initiative.

With no further business, Olson adjourned the meeting.

Bobbie Erichsen
University Senate Office