



General Faculties Council  
**RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**  
Approved Minutes

Meeting 61  
March 17, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

By Zoom platform

***Voting Members***

Robert Thompson, Co-Chair Designate  
Dora Tam, Academic Co-Chair  
Lyndsay Campbell – left during Item 4  
Ariel Ducey  
David Eaton – left during Item 4  
Carolyn Emery  
Michael Hill – arrived during Item 2  
Tom Keenan  
Renzo Pereyra  
Campbell Rolian  
Mary-Jo Romaniuk  
Shelly Russell-Mayhew  
Shane Sinclair  
Piers Steel  
Martin Wagner

***Non-Voting Members***

Hamid Habibi  
Thomas Oldenburg  
Cristina Rai

***Secretary and Scribe***

Elizabeth Sjogren

***Regrets***

Raafat El-Hacha  
Claire Kamaliddin  
Alex Paquette  
Cathryn Ryan

***Guests***

Bruce Evelyn, Vice-Provost (Planning and Resource Allocation) – present for Item 4  
William Ghali, Vice-President (Research) – present for Item 4  
Marcelo Suarez, Research Analyst – Strategic, Research Services – present for Item 4

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The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the March 17, 2022 Research and Scholarship Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried**

## **2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair**

The Academic Co-Chair expressed concern at the current events in Ukraine.

The Co-Chair included the following in his remarks:

- Like other institutions around the world, the University is examining its current partnerships with Russian agencies in light of the attacks on Ukraine. Persons with concerns about this can contact the office of the Vice-President (Research).
- The University has submitted a Canada First Research Excellence Fund application, in the area of Child Health and Wellness
- The process for applying for a Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) has changed for this year's competition, in that now the application is simultaneously for the area and a specific candidate. The University can submit up to six applications, and these are due in the Fall.
- The deadline for Canada Foundation for Innovation - Innovation Fund proposals is June 15, 2022
- Amazon Web Services is establishing a team in Calgary and the University is engaging in hopes of developing research partnerships

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- It is a requirement of the CERC program that the candidate be an external hire, and it is preferred that the candidate be from outside Canada. If the candidate is already at a Canadian institution, it must be demonstrated that there is benefit to Canada to move the person.
- Conversations are ongoing regarding the University's cloud computing needs. Amazon Web Services is aware of the Tri-Council rules for the storage of research data and is potentially a solution if affordable.

## **3. Approval of the February 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Minutes of the Research and Scholarship Committee meeting held on February 17, 2022 be approved.

**Carried**

## **4. Understanding the QS and THE University Ranking Systems**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. William Ghali, Marcelo Suarez, and Bruce Evelyn presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter reported on the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and Times Higher Education (THE) university ranking systems, including that:
  - The University has conducted a study of the QS and THE ranking methodologies, as attention is paid to these rankings and it is important to understand them

- The THE system ranks research-intensive universities across five pillars: citations (research influence), research (volume, income, and reputation), teaching (learning environment), internationality (staff, students, and research), and industry income (knowledge transfer). The highest weighted ranking metrics include citations, research reputation, teaching reputation, research income, student/staff ratios, and papers published. The pillars are weighted differently across subject areas, for example 'citations' is weighted lower for the Arts and Humanities than for the Life and Physical Sciences.
- The QS system ranks universities across six pillars: academic reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, employer reputation, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio. These are also weighted differently across subject areas, for example 'academic reputation' is highly weighted for the Arts and Humanities and 'employer reputation' has relatively increased weight for Engineering and Technology.
- For 2022, the University is ranked in the 201-250 THE group, with its highest scores in the pillars of 'citations' and 'industry income', and is ranked #235 in the QS system. There are 2,500-3,000 institutions being ranked, so these rankings are not bad.
- A flaw in the SQ and THE systems is that they do not consider publications that are classified in the Scopus index under Multidisciplinary Research, which excludes a significant number of highly cited publications by the University's researchers
- Tools such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) indicate that the university is moving in a positive direction with respect to student satisfaction, and it can be shown that the University is improving in a number of the research measures
- It is believed that the University's reputation scores do not accurately reflect current achievement. The University will be utilizing advertising campaigns to raise awareness of the University's successes, in particular its recent ranking of #5 in ReSearch Infosource Inc.'s 2022 Top 50 Research Universities list.
- The QS and THE ranking systems are dominant, but the University is tracking its ranking in over 40 ranking systems including the Canadian Maclean's ranking system
- Many ranking systems, including the THE, rely at least partially on self-submitted data. The University does not want to manipulate the data, but it is important to put the institution's best foot forward.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - The University's reputation could be impacted by the fact that it is a younger institution
  - There is a lag between a university achieving a number of successes and its reputation improving
- Discussion included:
  - The scores for 'reputation' can be circular; a university with a good reputation will end up highly ranked, then this will result in it maintaining a good reputation
  - Awareness of awards received by faculty could improve the University's reputation
  - These ranking systems are important because they are considered in many situations, including when graduate students are applying for admission and when academics are considering employment
  - Scores such as the University's faculty/student ratio could be improved if the University received more funding from the provincial government. The presenters observed that the University has worked hard to mitigate recent funding cuts, such as by strategizing

priorities and increasing funding through other means.

- The University's primary role is to produce valuable research and provide quality education, and thus to have a positive impact on society. The presenters agreed but observed that the University cannot be blind to the impacts of these ranking systems however.
- If the University were to improve its scores in 'faculty/student ratio' and 'international faculty ratio' it could rise significantly in the overall rankings

**5. GFC and GFC Standing Committees Meeting Schedules for 2022-2023 (Revised) and 2023-2024**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

**6. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**7. Adjournment**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Research and Scholarship Committee adjourn the March 17, 2022 meeting.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

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Elizabeth Sjogren  
Meeting Secretary