

**Report (2022/2023)**  
**Research, Scholarship and the Creative Arts Committee**  
UVM Faculty Senate  
May 11, 2023

Membership of the Committee:

Jill Preston (CALs; Co-chair), Mary Cushman (LCOM; Co-chair), Raju Badireddy (CEMS), Mildred Beltre (CAS, Fine Arts Rep), Thomas Borchert (Faculty Senate President), Marieka Brouwer Burg (CAS), Brendan Fisher (ENR), Jennifer Hurley (CESS), Christie Slikotch (LIB), , Bikki Trans-Smith, Daniel Weiss (LCOM), Chun Zhang (GSB).

The committee meet 8 times, the first being on September 8, 2022 and the last being May 11, 2023.

**CHARGE OF THE RSCA**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to research activities, scholarly work, and creative and performing arts carried out at the University, including graduate education and items referred to in Sections 1.1c, 1.2b, 1.2g, and 1.2k in the Faculty Senate bylaws. The RSCA reviews, recommends, and participates in the formulation of policy with respect to resources related to these activities, including physical facilities and allocation of appurtenant space, library resources and resources for graduate programs, and makes recommendations to assure effective use of these resources. The RSCA serves as liaison between the Senate and the administration on such matters as, but not limited to: the broad role of the University in advancing knowledge through research, scholarship, and the performing arts; external and internal support for encouraging these activities, including graduate and undergraduate research; intellectual property, and technology transfer; ethical issues and issues affecting the academic environment as these arise in research or scholarly work. The RSCA consults frequently with other University and collegiate committees that are charged to initiate, maintain, and monitor institutional support programs for research, scholarship, the creative arts, and graduate education, as well as maintains close liaison with appropriate administrative offices in its areas of responsibility.

**KEY RSCA ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

At its first meeting, the committee discussed its commission and member responsibilities. Major themes of proposed activities for the year were discussed in a brainstorming session, and prioritized and adjusted as the year progressed. The committee has strong interest in, and had several discussions about, developing an internal review protocol for UVM centers/institutes, libraries initiative for advertising and incentivizing open access research and data, the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), the graduate college, and the Academic Freedom policy for faculty.

- **Representation of the Committee to UVM entities.** Co-chairs Cushman and Preston, and Thomas Borchert, served on the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship (HELIOS) advisory committee convened by Dean Bryn Geffert (Libraries) and the Senate Executive Council, and the Gund Institute Faculty Senate Review Committee with Guillermo Rodriguez and Jane Knodell.

## **Meeting Topics**

### **Open Access Publishing and Data**

Bryn Geffert (Libraries), Carolyn Bonifield (PSC) and Meredith Niles visited the committee to discuss HELIOS and the topic of open access publishing more generally.

- The RSCA discussed the importance of open access publishing and data, incentives to participate, ways to publicize it, its various types, potential funding for it, and the possibility of the Executive Council making a resolution.
- A subcommittee was formed (Jill Preston, Mary Cushman, Jennifer Hurley, and Dan Weiss) to work on a resolution.
- A Powerpoint outlining the background for a resolution was presented to the committee from the subcommittee, as well as to the Professional Standards Committee (PSC), UVM Staff United (Thomas Borchert), and the Faculty Senate (Mary Cushman) for feedback. A panel discussion was also held open to the entire campus.
- A resolution was written and passed for a vote by the Faculty Senate.

### **Centers/Institutes Review**

Thomas Borchert outlined to the committee a possible new role in reviewing new and continuing centers/institutes at UVM, defined as those so-named entities that do not reside in a single college.

- The RSCA voted in favor of this new role.
- Ernesto Mendez (PSS) and Dan Harvey (OVPR) shared a proposal and gave a short presentation on the Institute for Agroecology. Ernesto, Dan and the committee discussed the two signature programs, opportunities for external funding, infrastructure, and faculty members involved.
- The RSCA approved the Institute for Agroecology and sent a memo of approval with suggestions to the Faculty Senate.
- The Gund Institute Faculty Senate Review Committee (Jill Preston and Mary Cushman representing RSCA) conducted a review of the Institute's Five Year Report. .
- Beverley Wemple gave a presentation on the proposed Water Institute for discussion by the committee.

### **Vermont Research Open Source (VERSO) Program**

Kendall Fortney (Verso Program Director) visited the committee to discuss the VERSO pilot project aimed at building open community. Major topics covered were advantages to open access and the scope of open access from publishing to research tools to ideas to project design.

### **OVPR**

Kirk Dombrowski visited the committee twice in November 2022 and April 2023. Several topics were covered, including:

- An update on R1 status.
- Upcoming SPA educational opportunities, recent/current initiatives, and research development including the Pivot-RP database.
- SPA 2.0 and Click v9.0 enhancements
- Recent metrics on award setups.
- Resources for research development, including grant writing templates, sessions on CAREER awards and GRFPs.

### **Fellowship, Opportunities, & Undergraduate Research (FOUR)**

Ann Kroll Learner visited the committee to give an overview. Major topics discussed were:

- The Student Research Conference.
- Summer funding opportunities.

### **Graduate College**

Dean Cynthia Forehand (GC) visited the committee to discuss the Dean's report on Transformative Growth in Graduate Education. Topics covered included:

- Projected growth of the graduate population.
- Opportunities and infrastructure for population growth.
- New graduate degree programs.
- Planned graduate degree programs.

### **Academic Freedom**

- The Academic Freedom subcommittee (Thomas Borchert, Jill Preston, Jennifer Hurley, Dan Weiss) met to discuss edits on the Academic Freedom statement for the Faculty Handbook.
- Trent Klingerman (Office of the General Council; Board of Trustees) visited the committee to discuss the General Council's position on the Academic Freedom document that the RSCA has been working on for approval by the Executive Council. He approved of the new language in the statement.
- Thomas Borchert proposed a final draft of the statement to the RSCA.
- The RSCA approved the new Academic Freedom statement for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Preston, Mary Cushman  
May 11, 2023