



FACULTY SENATE

Research, Scholarship & the Creative Arts Committee
December 10, 2020
12:30-2:00
Microsoft Teams

Present: Mildred Beltre (CAS, Fine Arts Rep), Brandon Bensel (Postdoctoral Association), Vicki Brennan (CAS), Thomas Chittenden (Faculty Senate President), Mary Cushman (LCOM), Rachelle Gould (RSENR), Britt Holmén (CEMS), Dimitry Kremmentsov (CNHS), Erik Monsen (GSB), Jill Preston (CALs), Christie Silkotch (LIB), Daniel Weiss (LCOM)

Absent: Katie Gough (CAS), Tammy Kolbe (CESS), Vacant (GSS), Vacant (SGA)

Guests: Ann Kroll Learner

Chair Cushman called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm via Microsoft Teams.

1. Approval of the Minutes. The minutes of November 12, 2020 were approved as written.

2. Future Agenda Items / Calendar Review.

- January: Kris Koliba from the Office of Engagement
- February: Ann Kroll Learner from FOUR
- April: Cindy Forehand, Graduate College

The Faculty Senate Office will continue to invite guests for the spring semester.

3. Post Doc Association Update, Brandon Bensel. Most Post Doc students are from LCOM and currently their board is made up of LCOM students. They are trying to recruit more non LCOM students. The RSCA could help make sure the PDA has the most accurate e-mail list to help get the word out. The RSCA could also be helpful in helping coordinate faculty expertise.

Postdoctoral Association Spring 2020 Survey

- 25 of about 60 postdocs responded to this survey
- 24 of 25 responders were aware of the postdoctoral association

- About 25% of responders had attended PDA events, about 35% were not aware of event
- Postdocs were interested in grant-writing workshops, non-academic career workshops
- Postdocs also wanted opportunities for teaching, management, science communication
- Postdocs expressed concerns over benefits difference between fellows and associates.

Postdoctoral Employee Recategorization

- Becomes effective January 2021
- Spearheaded by Dr. Cindy Forehand, Dean of the Graduate College
- Postdoctoral Fellows and Associates reclassified as Postdoctoral Employee
 - Single benefit group-all postdocs receive the benefits currently exclusive to associates
 - Postdocs now cost a lower fringe rate due to being single benefits group.
- Should encourage more postdocs to seek external (i.e., NIH F32) and internal (i.e., NIH T32) fellowships

Postdoctoral Event Planning 2021

- February Fellowship writing workshop
- Continued virtual monthly social gatherings
- Build partnership with LCOM GSC
- Further planning is challenging due to COVID-19

Postdoctoral Association Goals for 2021

- Postdoctoral Mentorship Program
- Expanding PDA reach and visibility
- Building partnership with OVPR and RSCA
- Returning to normal levels of professional development planning
- Provide more resources to postdocs coping with COVID-19 changes

4. FOUR Update. Ann Kroll Learner.

- The student research conference had 30 days to go from a live event to a virtual event. It was pretty amazing how well this happened in such a short time. There were over 400 students involved and over 20 awards were given. You can see more about this conference on the FOUR website <https://www.uvm.edu/four>. The conference will also be virtual in 2021.
- The Office has hired a new undergraduate research coordinator and Ann would like to come back to a meeting in early 2020 to introduce them to the committee.
- Despite small budget cuts, FOUR awarded 30 undergraduate fellow scholarships (Surfs) last summer. The work around these was a little different because of COVID and all but one student was able to start remotely with the help of faculty.
- There are funds to help students go to virtual conferences, as travel is not currently permitted.
- They plan to fund about 35 Surfs for this coming summer.
- UVM had 9 Fulbright winners and 6 finalists for the past year, the most ever. Unfortunately, they were not able to travel due to the pandemic. They are still waiting on how these will be handled. There were 29 applicants for 2021, a good number considering uncertainty of COVID-19.
- Brandon will work with Ann on some ideas that the Postdoc Association can use with their conference.

The RSCA would like to see more FOUR involvement and resources in:

- Grant writing and feedback.

- Trained writing center tutors with a 3-hour workshop to help with grant writing.
- Have mini grants that allow for repeated submissions as a learning process.

- How can we get information out to students more effectively?
 - FOUR website
 - e-mail to deans and chairs.
 - FOUR student Listserv.
 - The most effective method is when a faculty member taps a student and gives them the information.
 - Students can go directly to FOUR to help find funding money.
 - They are working on a centralized location to gather all the information for the university.

5. Old or New Business. Dan Weiss will serve on the 5-year review committee for Cynthia Forehand, Dean of Graduate College.

6. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 1:56 pm.

The next meeting of the RSCA will take place on Thursday 14th at 12:30 on Microsoft Teams.