



CSS Research Small Committee Minutes

January 11, 2023

8:30 a.m.

Via Zoom

Present: Kurt Rademaker (ANP), Jay Wilson (EC), Jeremy Wilson (CJ), Ahnalee Brincks (HDFS), Jason Moser (PSY), Angie Kennedy (SW), Mevan Jayasinghe (HRLR), Emine Evered (HST), Christian Houle (PLS), Peilei Fan (SPDC), Arianna Pikus (Graduate Student Representative), Jessica Davis (Undergraduate Student Representative), Anna Maria Santiago (CSS Dean's Office), Barbara Cernadas (CSS Dean's Office) Doug Hissong (CSS Dean's Office)

Absent: Xuefei Ren (Sociology); new representative from Geography has not been identified

Minutes taken by Douglas Hissong (CSS Dean's Office)

1. Approval of the agenda: Agenda was approved 1/11/2022

2. New members serving on the committee during Spring 2023

Geography has not yet identified their replacement for Sharon Zhong. Jeremy Wilson is serving for Criminal Justice. Ahnalee Brincks is the new HDFS representative.

3. Election of Research Committee chair

The new chair for Spring 2023 is Dr. Jason Moser replacing Sharon Zhong who is on sabbatical.

4. College level review of third-party agreements – update to existing policies

Dr. Santiago provided an overview of the existing MSU policies on third-party agreements and reminded members. The only update that has occurred is the lowering the review threshold from \$25,000 (required by MSU) to \$10,000 at the College level.

Jeremy Wilson noted that the policy is new to him, and this seems to be more of an educational issue than anything.

Santiago reported that there has been an uptick in the number of unit personnel who were signing third-party agreements or other contracts on behalf of MSU and do not have the authority to do so. The impact on researchers is that if these agreements or contracts are not identified on their grant budgets OR if PIs do not have written

sponsor permission to utilize funds in ways or for amounts that have not been pre-approved, such agreements, contracts or other types of spending can and will be disallowed by either the sponsor and/or Contracts and Grants Administration (CGA). The Dean's Office wanted to compile the materials into a single document as well as provide education/training to those who handle these third-party agreements in our units (e.g., chairs/directors, fiscal officers, research administrators).

Jeremy Wilson asked if the unit and college will be looking at all third party agreements that meet the threshold. Santiago says yes, but quickly just to verify that the requests meet the terms of the grant. If these third party agreements are not part of existing grant terms or do not have sponsor written approval, the University would expect that PIs and their units absorb research expenditures that were disallowed. This could have serious consequences for units if they were to be blindsided by unexpected or unplanned expenses.

Jeremy Wilson is worried this will create a big administrative burden or will cause faculty to not seek these third-party agreements. Santiago reiterated that these agreements are established during the pre-award phase of grant development and submission; that part of the process isn't affected. Barbara Cernadas added that when PIs build their proposal budgets, they must follow MSU policies and that includes identifying these third-party agreements at time of proposal development. At post award, the agreements are executed according to what was approved and agreed upon at time of award.

Jason Moser asked if there were any issues with the verbiage used in the College's document. Santiago indicated that the College's chairs and directors provided input to the document and that the Dean's Office could not change the verbiage associated with existing University policies and procedures.

5. Results of mini-SPG and FIF grant competitions

One SPG was awarded to Criminal Justice and three FIF grants were awarded to researchers from Geography, History, Psychology, Social Work and Sociology. All FIF endowment funds for this current fiscal year have been expended. The FIF applicant pool remained small even though we increased the award amount. Evered asks if we know why the pool was small. Dr. Santiago doesn't know but the College attempted to make the awards more attractive with higher awards and we moved to a Fall submission deadline to see if this would encourage more researchers to apply.

6. Rising Star Award – Subcommittee review during February meeting

The Rising Star nomination dossiers are due to the College on January 27, 2023. The maximum number of nominees is 12 -- one for each academic unit. A research subcommittee to review the nominations will be created quickly after the deadline. They will meet during the regularly scheduled time for the February 2023 Research Committee.

7. Climate Justice and Environmental Ethics Seed Grants – CFP and March review

Social Science is a co-sponsoring unit for this CFP. The October 2022 convening on climate justice and environmental ethics was very successful and this is a follow-up seed grant initiative. The primary goal of these seed grants is to encourage working with other units and building collaborations in this domain of climate research. Call going out this week. Applications will be reviewed at the March 2023 meeting of the Research Committee using a panel of reviewers from the co-sponsoring colleges.

8. Upcoming events

Upcoming training sessions facilitated by the Office of Research and Innovation, or the Office of University Engagement were announced via our College listserv. Please share with your unit researchers.

The College is planning some upcoming research convenings. such as the future of work this spring an another one bringing in a world-renowned environmental justice scholar/activist. Stay tuned.

9. Matters arising None were identified

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am.