



Research Committee Meeting MINUTES

WEDNESDAY – February 12, 2025 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Attendees: Joseph Hefner (ANP), Steven Chermak (SCJ) Ben Bushong (EC), Sharon Zhong (GEO), Maite Tapia (HRLR), Emine Evered (HST), Nazita Lajevardi (PLS), Kaston Anderson-Carpenter (PSY), Stephen Gasteyer (SOC), Angie Kennedy (SSW), Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani (URP), Angelique Willis (Graduate Student Rep), Riley Michael (Undergraduate Student Rep) Anna Maria Santiago (CSS Dean’s Office).

Absent: Ahnalee Brincks (HDFS)

The meeting came to order at 8:30 am

- 1. Approval of the agenda. Approved by Stephen Gasteyer and seconded by Steven Chermak.**
- 2. Approval of the January 2025 minutes. Approved by Stephen Gasteyer and seconded by Nazita Lajevardi.**

3. Update on HRPP/IRB – Discussion

Santiago provided an update on MSU HRPP and questions that were raised since the January 2025 meeting.

- Most social science protocols are not reviewed by SIRB; exempt protocol decisions are made by HRPP staff members.
- Reluctance by HRPP to make decisions about protocols identified by staff as “sensitive.” Partially reflects issues that emerged with a 2021 survey administered by another college to MSU students.
- This 2021 incident in addition to Research Committee concerns about the HRPP review process and longstanding delays are what led to College involvement in the pre-review process.
- HRPP can ask anyone at MSU to serve as an ancillary reviewer. Most protocols have several ancillary reviewers assigned by HRPP.
- Santiago described the process used by ancillary reviewers.
- The College will no longer review social science protocols. HRPP will send the College monthly updates regarding protocol submissions. Santiago will still advocate for faculty experiencing concerns with HRPP.
- Santiago will be meeting with HRPP to discuss ongoing concerns about services to College researchers.

Lajevardi asked what is a reasonable timeframe to receive a response from the HRPP team. Santiago indicated that according to their handbook, this should be within 10 business days. That does not mean an approval within 10 business days. If longer than that, you can reach out to them; also reach out to the College if you are not getting a response from HRPP.

Bushong asked if HRPP's report will include information about times to disposition. Santiago indicated that will be requested.

Tapia asked about the use of the CLICK system to add comments or pose questions to HRPP staff.

Bushong noted that putting information into the CLICK system provides you with a full audit trail.

Research Committee members identified additional concerns including handling of "sensitive" topics, implicit bias in treatment by HRPP staff, mission creep, handling of issues and risks, denial of protocols.

4. Supporting CSS researchers during uncertain times

College is keeping abreast of unfolding situations that may impact research. We will provide information as we can knowing that the current situation is a moving target. We have developed a process to provide short-term support to affected projects, prioritizing support for vulnerable students and staff on funded grants. Focusing on what we can control regarding our work and keep publishing what is important.

Santiago asked for suggestions regarding support to College researchers at this time. Research Committee members identified the following:

- Workshops -- learning how to get creative about how we talk about our work.
- Retooling, reframing, pivoting.
- Balancing what is in policy (e.g., bylaws, handbooks) and what is expected to be followed moving forward given the uncertainty about backlash.
- Include a supplement in tenure review packet like what happened during COVID-19.
- Hearing support and stronger communication from Central Administration would be helpful.
- RPT and reappointment cases will be coming up in the fall and now there are concerns about grant acquisition in the current environment and how that will affect their cases.
- Need for multiple strategies to help our research community.
- Identifying alternative sources of funding.
- Diversify grants.

- College supports our use of data archives like ICPSR, MDRC.
- Small grants, seed grants on affected topical areas.
- Messaging from the College saying we're aware of this, we're assessing it closely as the situation unfolds, we will provide more guidance – make people feel at least it's not a vacuum.

5. Matters arising

Santiago will be reaching out to Committee members to review the Rising Star nomination dossiers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 am.

