



UNIVERSITY  
of Prince Edward  
ISLAND

TO: UPEI Senate

FROM: Marva Sweeney-Nixon, Chair, Senate Research advisory Committee (RAC)

DATE: November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

RE: Annual report of RAC (2023-2024)

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The **composition** of the Senate Research Advisory Committee (RAC) consists mostly of faculty members actively engaged in scholarly activities and elected by Senate for 3-year terms. Other regular members are a graduate student nominated by the Graduate Student Association (GSA), a senior undergraduate student nominated by the Student Union (UPEISU), and 3 *ex officio* members: the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, AVC; the University Librarian; and the Associate VP Research & Dean of Graduate Studies (AVPR-DGS), who chairs the committee. The Administrative Assistant for the AVPR-DGS provides administrative support to RAC. The current members are listed below; many are new as of September 2024 and so the outgoing members are also listed since they participated for most of the report period:

- Arts: Joshua MacFadyen
- Education: Rachele Gauthier
- IKERAS: Erin Reid
- Library: Donald Moses
- Vet Med: Laurie McDuffee
- GSA: vacant (previously Sasha Nandlal)
- Business: Suzanne Rath (previously Xiao Chen)
- FSDE: Amy Hsiao (previously Aitazaz Farooque)
- Nursing: Brianna Hughes (previously Margie Burns)
- Science: Bill Whelan (previously Sami Khedhiri)
- UPEISU: vacant (previously Owen Brown)

There are many **Terms of Reference** for RAC, which are found on the website of the UPEI Senate (also see Activities 1-4 below). RAC's **mandate** is to **further the research and scholarly mission of UPEI in the pursuit of excellence**. This includes monitoring research policies, programs and Centres; adjudicating internal awards; and generally providing recommendations to Senate on matters related to research, reporting annually. From November 2023–October 2024, the full SRAC met bimonthly in person or as sub-committees outside of regular meetings, with **RAC activities** guided by fulfilling goals elaborated by the Strategic Research Plan and the Terms of Reference:

**1) *Developing, reviewing, and revising policies concerning research development & administration. Considering and responding to reports of granting bodies that impact university research.***

This was a busy year for policy reviews in RAC, with many UPEI research policies being out of date and several new policies coming down from the TriAgency.

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- 1.1 RAC reviewed the **Centres Policy** which was approved by the UPEI Senate at its meeting in January 2024, and then by the UPEI Board of Governors in February 2024. The Centres Policy “covers the defining principles, purpose, review and termination of academic research and scholarly Centres and Institutes of the University” and can be found [here](#).
  - 1.2 RAC provided feedback on the new **Research Contracts and Sponsored Research Policy**, which was approved by the UPEI Board of Governors in May 2024 (policy found [here](#)). This Policy ensures “oversight and proper administration of sponsored research”.
  - 1.3 RAC provided input at 3 separate meetings on revisions to the **Responsible Conduct of Research, Scholarly and Creative Work Policy** which was brought from RAC and approved at the UPEI Senate in October 2024. This Policy ensures high “standards for Research Integrity for all those involved in any capacity in research, scholarly and creative work at the University” (policy found [here](#)).
  - 1.4 RAC discussed a) new Federal Research Security dictates (**Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern/STRAC**); b) proposed changes to NSERC’s eligibility requirements to apply for or hold grant funds.
- 2) **Considering proposals to establish research centres/institutes for recommendation to Senate and conducting periodic reviews of these centres/institutes.**

RAC approved a new research Centre at its meeting March 26, 2004: Centre for Korean Studies. RAC also discussed a new structure of the Centre for Health and Community Research (CHCR), which moved from the McDougall Faculty of Business to report to the AVPR-DGS to become a pan-University Centre.
  - 3) **Advising on mechanisms to promote the research mission of the university, to recognize research excellence, and enhance overall research performance and competitiveness.**

RAC undertook brainstorming of the Strategic Research Plan. This led to the development of some Lunch & Learn sessions. RAC discussed ways to improve financial support for researchers. New funding programs that will fall under the *Fondation J-Louis Lévesque* were planned. RAC endorsed a new proposal from ORS for release of funds.
  - 4) **Overseeing the adjudication processes for internal and external research grants, fellowships, and scholarship competitions that require internal review and/or distribution.** Subcommittees of RAC deliberated on Internal Research Grants and SSHRC Explore Research Grants (IRGs, SERGs); self-funded sabbatical applications; proposals for the Robbins Olivier Award and Queen Elizabeth Scholars; and assisted with Levesque fellowships.

Respectfully submitted,

Mawa Sweeney Dixon

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