



UNIVERSITY
of Prince Edward
ISLAND

TO: UPEI Senate

FROM: Marva Sweeney-Nixon, Chair, Senate Research Advisory Committee (SRAC)

DATE: November 10th, 2023

RE: Annual report of the SRAC

The Senate Research Advisory Committee (SRAC) has a **composition** which is primarily Faculty Members who are actively engaged in research and scholarly activities. There is one Faculty Member from each faculty and therefore a range of disciplines is represented. Other regular elected members are a graduate student nominated by the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and a senior undergraduate student nominated by the Student Union (UPEISU). There are 3 *ex officio* members: the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, AVC; the University Librarian; and the Associate Vice President Research and Dean of Graduate Studies (AVP-R/DGS), who chairs the committee and presently is the EDI Champion. The Administrative Assistant for the Faculty of Graduate Studies provides administrative support, for which we are very grateful. All regular members are elected by, but not necessarily from, Senate, for 3 year terms. The current regular members are:

- Arts: Joshua MacFadyen
- Education: Rachele Gauthier
- IKERAS: Erin Reid
- Science: Sami Khedhiri
- UPEISU: Owen Brown
- Business: Xiao Chen (on sabbatical)
- FSDE: Aitazaz Farooque
- Nursing: Margie Burns
- GSA: Sasha Nandlal

There are many **Terms of Reference** for the SRAC, which are found on the website of the UPEI Senate (also see Activities 1-4 below). The SRAC has a **mandate** 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. To this end, we report that in 2022, the SRAC finalized a Strategic Research Plan for UPEI under the leadership of the former Interim AVP-R/DGS. In 2023, the full SRAC met regularly in person, or as sub-committees outside of regular meetings. The **SRAC Activities in 2023** were guided by fulfilling goals elaborated by the Strategic Research Plan and the Terms of Reference:

1) ***Developing, reviewing, revising policies concerning research development & administration.***

During the March 2023 meeting of Senate, a **revised Open Access and Dissemination of Research Output** policy from SRAC was approved (found [here](#)). This Policy facilitates “access to UPEI’s scholarly output and research” by creating a framework for free online access to the works from scholars,

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ensuring a vibrant and accessible scholarly landscape. Further to this, the **IslandScholar Annual Report** was submitted to SRAC in May 2023 (a requirement of the Open Access policy).

SRAC provided input on the **Institutional Research Data Management Strategy**, which is now published on the UPEI website [here](#). This is a compliance requirement of the [Tri-Agency Research Data Management \(RDM\) Policy](#), namely that institutions have a publicly-accessible RDM Strategy that will maximize the full potential of UPEI researchers' results and expertise, and UPEI's research impact. SRAC acknowledges the hard work of the Working Group that wrote this Strategy document.

SRAC also reviewed a proposal for a **UPEI Centre for Entrepreneurship**, subsequently determining that it was not a Research Centre and as such it did not fall under our purview. There are 2 policy reviews currently pending with the SRAC: Revisions of the **Centres Policy** (November 2023), and the **Responsible Conduct of Research and Creative Work Policy** (December RAC, after review by the Auditor and Risk Management Officer, then to APCC, then to UPEIFA, then to Senate).

2) **Advising on mechanisms to promote the research mission of the university, to recognize research excellence, and enhance overall research performance and competitiveness.**

The SRAC undertook brainstorming of the Strategic Research Plan. This led to reinstatement of the Research Breakfast and Research on Tap. Other ideas were to start a mentorship program, Lunch & Learn series, and SCOPUS training opportunities. The AVPR/DGS is in collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Centre to facilitate these activities. It was noted that Island Scholar, a repository of publications, is not being updated regularly. SRAC has some strategies to improve this.

3) **Overseeing the adjudication processes for internal and external research grants, fellowships, and scholarship competitions that require internal review and/or distribution.**

Subcommittees of SRAC deliberated on 11 Internal Research Grants and SSHRC Explore Research Grants (IRGs, SERGs); 2 proposals for the Robbins Olivier Award; one application for Queen Elizabeth Scholars; and assisted with 6 Levesque fellowships.

4) **Providing advice and recommendations to Senate matters related to research.**

SRAC discussed ways to improve financial support for researchers. New funding programs that will fall under the *Fondation J-Louis Lévesque* were discussed: University Research Chairs; IRGs in Health; Undergraduate research awards in Health; Faculty travel awards. In addition SRAC petitioned the VPAR for an increase in the value of Faculty travel awards.

Respectfully submitted,

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