Research Council Minutes

September 2nd, 2026
3:30pm – 5:00pm

Montana Room, NAH 359

VOTING:
Alison Harmon
Mary Miles
Mary Cloninger
Ron June
Robin Gerlach
Darin Boss
Kristen Intemann
Molly Secor Turner
Maritza Espina
Doralyn Rossmann
Monica Skewes
Anja Kunze
Sreekala Bajwa
Anna Tuttle
Nicole Tuss
Jeff Heys
Blake Wiedenheft
Eric Sproles
Tracy Gatlin
James Park
Mary Alice Carlson
David Nelson
Jack Weide

NON-VOTING:
Matthew Lovern
Steve Swinford/Michael Ouert
Terry Leist
Beth Burroughs
Durward Sobek
Ryan Knutson/
Coltran Hophan-Nichols
Becca Belou
Carl Yeoman
Dale Huls
Kirk Lubick
Quinton King
Aidan Peers

Welcome and Introductions

MSU Research Information Items:

- FY26 State of Research and Forecast—Alison Harmon
    - Research expenditures reached a new record $308.7 million in FY26. However, indirect costs are declining.
    - One major reason is that MSU spent about $53M on research equipment, and equipment purchases don't generate IDC.
    - Subawards also generate less IDC.
    - Federal Funding is the largest research funding source 91%; new awards are showing some improvements, but there is still some uncertainty around federal research funding in FY 27.

- MSU Strategic Plan Projects for Research—Alison Harmon
    - Several research-related projects are being considered for MSU's strategic plan.
    - MSU is currently gathering feedback on these projects before the final plan is completed. Faculty and staff will have an opportunity to vote on priorities in the MSU Library on September 8th- 11th.

Discussion Topic:

- Research Outreach for FY27
    - Center for the Communication of Science—Dean Adams
        - Originally established in 2015 and housed in the College of Arts and Architecture. It is now being revived after becoming inactive due to limited resources.
        - Partnering with people across campus will help researchers communicate science, not only in arts and films but also in writing and design.
        - Planning to connect to the Innovation Campus event in Spring and future science outreach events.

    - Research on the Road—Mike Veselik
        - Continuing to collect Research Impact Stories. These stories will support community outreach by helping people across Montana better understand MSU Research and see that MSU serves and cares about the state.
        - Bringing MSU research Home to Red Lodge on October 6th; three researchers and 10 students will be joining. Focusing on demonstrating research and making sure people know what we are doing at MSU.
        - The House passed the continuing resolution yesterday. It stops the implementation of the OMB rules around grants, not being able to use them for travel, and publications taking effect on October 1st. The delay lasts until December 11th.

    - MSU Innovation Campus Summit—Alison Harmon
        - Being planned for March to showcase MSU research being conducted in the buildings of Innovation Campus and future plans.

Research Policies and Procedures:

- Data Governance Policy – Luke Schalewski
        - The proposed Research Data Governance Policy is intended to clarify the responsibilities, security, storage, and ownership.
        - MSU owns the data as an Institution, but researchers would continue to manage and use their research data.

- Research Agreements Policy – Kirk Lubick
        - MSU is updating the Research Agreement Policy to work across all four campuses
        - Defining Signatory Authority for each Campus
        - Two new agreements are being added:
            1. Facility Use Agreement
            2. Service Agreement

        - Making it easier for researchers to work with the community and external partners
        - University Council review in November and final vote in December
        - Restricted Research Policy is also being developed to establish clear guidelines, and will go to Research Council in October, followed by Faculty Senate and University Council.

Announcements from RED:

- Research Development
    - 4th NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) workshop series now underway with 30 students from across campus
    - Accepting expressions of interest for faculty proposal writing groups through 9/16
    - Forthcoming NIH MIRA (R35) proposal development cohort opportunity, similar to InterFACE: NIH R01 (estimated start date March 2027)
- Sponsored Programs
    - New PI Training October 28th; planning to make the new training shorter and more focused on the basics. More advanced training could be offered later after PIs have been at MSU more than one year and have managing research projects.
- Research Integrity & Compliance
    - RED Research Asset Program is developing to improve how MSU manages research equipment and research assets.
    - Collaborating with property management to improve tracking and managing research equipment. It will help crate a more accurate inventory of equipment and will help better prepared for audits and compliance requirements.
    - Research Integrity & Compliance is solely in charge of the research asset.
    - U.S. Government Policy for Stopping High-Risk Life Sciences Research "Gain of Function"- the policy is still being implemented: federal agencies have 120 days to develop implementation guidance, so additional details for universities are expected.

- Research Security
    - On August 24, 2026, the Office of Foreign Assets Controls (OFAC), under authority to enforce the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations, indefinitely suspended General License G which allowed for academic exchanges/collaborations with, and online course offerings to, Iranian nationals based in Iran and other non-U.S. countries. OFAC has provided General License BB which provides a wind down period through midnight of September 7, 2026. After the wind down period expires, academic collaborations with Iranian nationals not resident within the U.S. with an applicable visa may be considered an unlawful provision of "services" per 31 CFR 560.410.
    - Research Security Training is required prior to proposal submissions for DoE, NSF, NASA, NIH, and USDA (other agencies to inevitably follow).

    - DoD, DoE, and other sponsors are reviewing key/senior personnel identified in proposals for collaborations and co-authorships with researchers affiliated with 1286 List institutions in China, Russia, and Iran; Research Security can perform restricted party screens on your potential collaborators to help avoid associated risks to funding.
- Economic Development
    - The Continuing Resolution pass the Senate and the House and is awaiting the US President's signature. The CR contains blocking language for the proposed OMB guidance revisions (Uniform Guidance).
- Undergraduate Research
    - New USP schedule and deadlines
    - Students needed for the Undergraduate Research Council and Curiositas journal. Have interested students contact Anna at anna.tuttle1@montana.edu
    - MUS-wide undergraduate research retreat at the Flathead Lake Biological Station Oct 9-11
        - Interested in attending? Contact Anna.
    - Faculty can find student researchers & workers at the Honors Research Symposium, Career Services, work-study, or Undergraduate Research Office.
    - We want more MSU students to apply for NSF REU programs across the county; see below

Other Announcements from Council members

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Research Events:

- **Navigating the Current Federal Funding Landscape Webinar** – September 9, 2026
- **Research On the Road (Red Lodge)** – October 6, 2026
- **NIH S10 Webinar feat. program officers and regional panel of awardees** – October 7, 2026 (event link forthcoming)
- **Centers, Institutes and Core Facilities Day** *"Helping All of Montana Thrive with MSU's Research Infrastructure"* – November 9, 2026, Inspiration Hall
- **New PI Training** – Wednesday October 28th 9:30am – 12:30pm in Byker Auditorium
- **MSU-UM Proposal Writing Retreat** – January 5–8, 2027, Homestake Lodge
- **994 Journeys** – Six MSU researchers will share their research stories at 4:00 pm in SUB 233
    - Sep 28th, Dr. David Miller, Mechanical & Industrial Engineering
    - Nov 2nd, Dr. Sweeney Windchief, Education (Location changed to AIH 102)
    - Jan 25th, Dr. Sharon Neufeldt, Chemistry & Biochemistry
    - Feb 8th, Dr. Diane Debinski, Ecology
    - Marc 29th, Dr. Dilpreet Bajwa, Mechanical & Industrial Engineering

        - Apr 26th, Dr. John Sheppard, Computer Science

- Learn more about each speaker https://www.montana.edu/research/events/994-journeys.html

- **Undergraduate Research-**

    - USP:
        - Sept 9th: USP Fall and AY proposals DUE
        - Nov 11—Dec 6: Spring USP portal open
        - Jan 8—Feb 14: Summer USP portal open
    - Sept 9—Dec 4: NCUR application portal
    - Oct 1—31: McNair Scholars application portal
    - Oct 3rd and Nov 7th: Honors Research Symposium (now open to ALL students)
    - Oct 9th—11th : MUS-wide Undergraduate Research Retreat
    - November: Most NSF REU programs open applications at this time
    - Jan 2nd: Duke STAR applications due