

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF MOTION**

PRESENTED BY: Marjorie Delbaere, Chair, Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee

DATE OF MEETING: January 28, 2021

SUBJECT: **Designation of Active/Inactive Researcher Designation in TABBS**

NOTICE OF MOTION:

It is recommended that University Council support in principle a) the rejection of the use of “active/inactive” designations for researchers and b) the request that the Integrated Planning and Assessment Office and all other administrative units abandon the concept of and metrics associated with the designation of individual faculty members as “active” or “inactive” researchers for all planning and budgetary allocation purposes.

PURPOSE:

University Council has statutory power to make recommendations to the President, the Board, or the Senate respecting matters that Council considers to be in the interests of the University. A matter may be referred to a Council committee by Council to develop recommendations to be presented to the President, the Board, or the Senate.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

At the October 15, 2020 meeting of University Council a member asked about the designation of active/inactive researcher in the TABBS budgeting model as compared with what constitutes research, scholarly, and artistic work for tri-council funding. The Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work (RSAW) committee was asked to look into this matter.

At its November 19, 2020 meeting, the RSAW committee met with Dr. Melissa Just, Interim Provost, and Dr. Dena McMartin, Associate Provost, Institutional Planning and Assessment and were provided an overview of TABBS and how the active/inactive research metric operates in the resource allocation model. The Provost and Associate Provost explained that the premise of the metric is to reward research activity within each revenue centre (college/school) and to incentivize eligible faculty to be involved in research, scholarly, and artistic work. Dr. Just and Dr. McMartin provided 11 metrics used to determine if faculty are research active, such as supervision of graduate students, publication in refereed

journal, being principle investigator or co-principle investigator on externally or internally funded projects, and so on. All 11 metrics are listed in the attached presentation. Faculty are deemed active researchers if they have activity in any one of the 11 metrics. This initial work is done by the Institutional Planning and Assessment (IPA) Office. They explained that faculty can also be deemed active by their dean based on the standards used within their college. It was made clear that there is no weighting used – a faculty member is either denoted as active or inactive for the purposes of resource allocation.

Prior to the December 10, 2020 meeting of RSAW, a group of committee members raised concerns about the implications of being denoted “inactive” through the resource allocation process and asked that RSAW consider bringing the following motion forward to University Council:

University Council rejects the use of “active/inactive” designations for researchers and requests that the University’s Integrated Planning Office and all other administrative units abandon the concept of and metrics associated with the designation of individual faculty members as “active” or “inactive” researchers for all planning and budgetary allocation purposes.

The members bringing forward the above motion raised concerns that faculty labelled as “inactive” through TABBS received heavier teaching loads when it was time for assignment of duties, and faced difficulty in becoming research active, as they did not have time for research (because of the heavier teaching load) or access to college resources (because of the designation). It was suggested that the designation of “inactive” is stigmatizing for faculty members and reduces their opportunities for research success.

The committee discussed this motion at its December 10, 2020 meeting. The committee did not have the opportunity to solicit information from deans or executive directors about how they utilize the active/inactive designation in processes like accreditation or assignment of duties, or whether the designation impacts a researcher’s ability to develop and grow research portfolios or their ability to access research support.

After this discussion about the role of the active/inactive research designation in resource allocation and the November 19 presentation on the said designation, the motion above was accepted by majority vote by members of RSAW and will now come to University Council for consideration.

NEXT STEPS:

A request for decision to adopt this motion will be put before University Council at an upcoming meeting

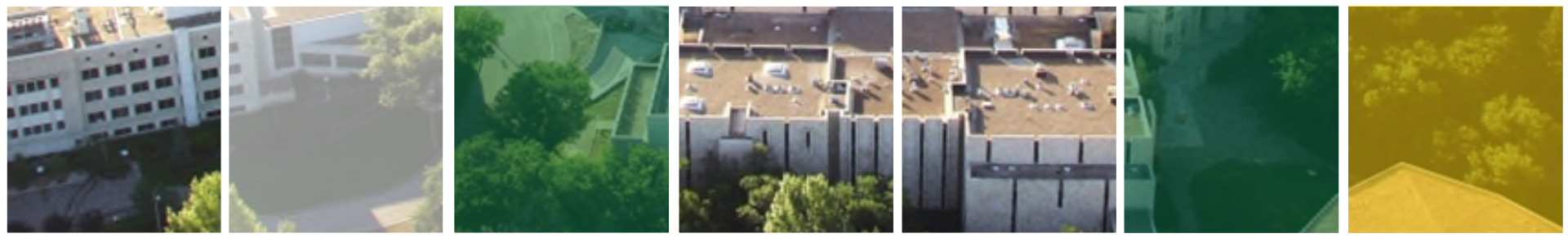
ATTACHMENT(S):

1. TABBS Active Researcher Metric – Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee – November 19, 2020



TABBS Active Researcher Metric

Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee: November 19, 2020

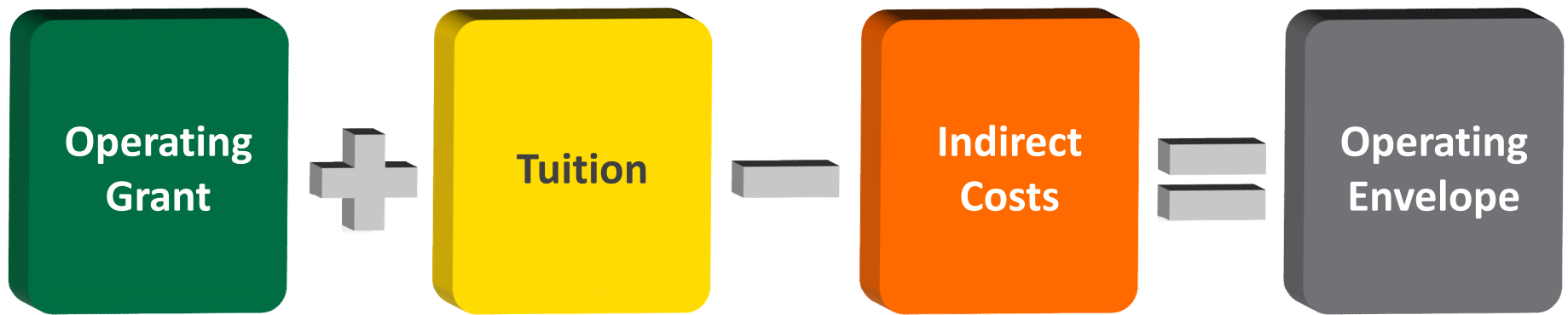


Purpose

- There is a great deal of interest in the concept of “active researcher” and how it is used in the TABBS model
- Intent of this presentation is to provide insight on the active researcher metric:
 - How it is determined
 - How it is approved by college leaders
 - How it is used in the model

TABBS Model

- TABBS = Transparent Activity-Based Budget System
- Utilizes a series of inputs (metrics) related to teaching, research, supervision, etc.
- Provides a result for each revenue centre based on the following components:



TABBS Model

The basic premise is:

- that research activity within each revenue centre should be rewarded/credited

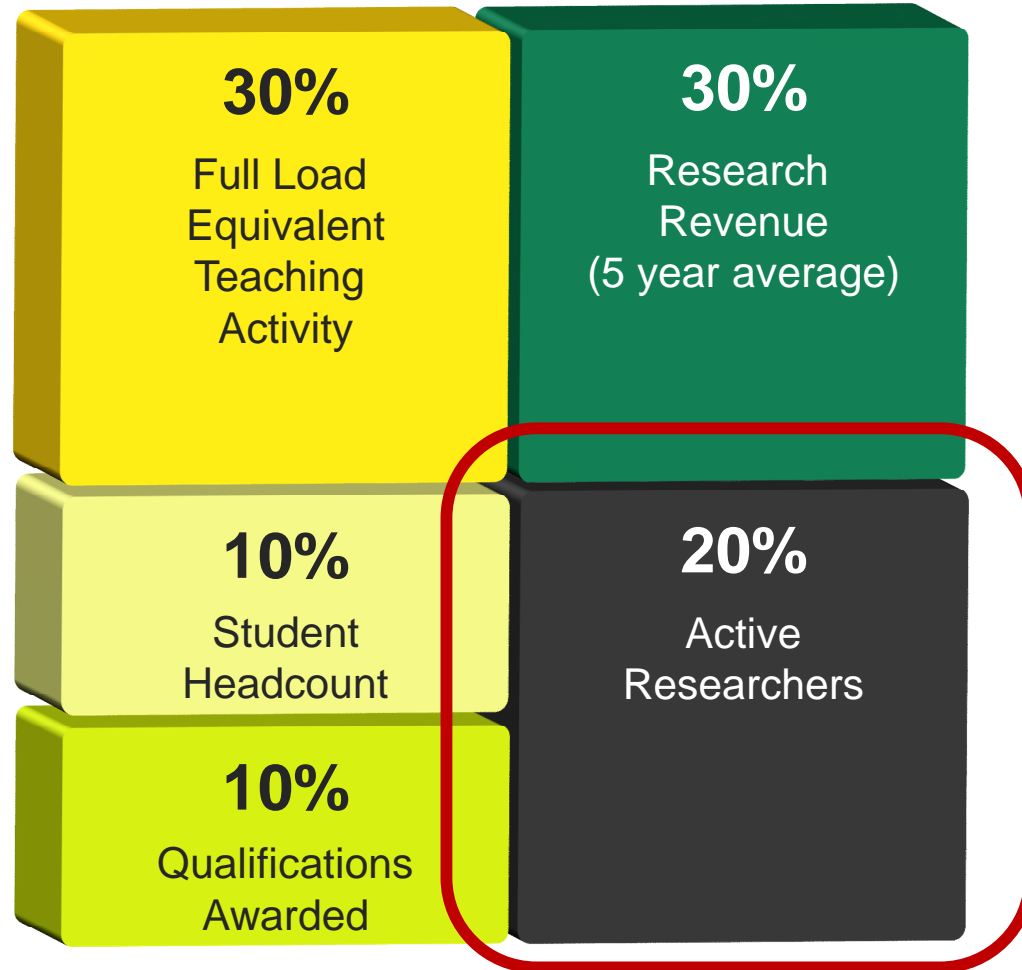
The objective/incentive is:

- that every eligible researcher would be actively involved in research, scholarly and artistic activity

Unrestricted Operating Grant

Teaching

Research, Scholarly
and Artistic Work



Active Researchers

Faculty are deemed research active if they have activity in any of the following metrics:

- Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on externally funded project
- Co-Investigator on externally funded project
- Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on submitted external funding application
- Co-Investigator on submitted external funding application
- Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, or Co-Investigator on internally funded project
- Supervision of Masters students
- Supervision of PhD students
- Papers in Refereed Journals
- Books and Chapters in Books
- Refereed Conference Publications
- Reports and Other Outputs

OR

- Faculty have been deemed active by their respective Dean based on the standards used within their college/school relating to tenure and promotion

No weightings are used with respect to active researchers

Process

- IPA sends out an annual listing of all eligible researchers to each revenue centre
- Included in the listing is an indication of activity in 11 areas based on what is recorded in USask or external data sources (e.g., UnivRS, Scopus)
- Dean/leadership team reviews the list to identify activity and submits back to IPA for input into TABBS

Summary

- Active researcher concept was established to ensure that all RSAW activity is credited, including that which does not generate external funding
- Deans have authority on active researcher designation based on their internal data sources, processes and standards (e.g., faculty CVs)
- Active research concept has been identified as a potential area of revision in TABBS (from binary designation to one that reflects magnitude of activity)