

**Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
February 2, 2024**

**CREATION OF THE
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE CONSTITUTION**

A Recommendation

1. **Divisions and Departments:** Academic Affairs and Eye Research Institute.
2. **Introduction:** The Board of Trustees (Board) has delegated full authority and responsibility for the governance of Oakland University (University) to the President, subject to Board limitations and policies. The Board has also recognized the University Senate as an organization to advise the President in regard to academic policies and programs. The University Senate is organized and functions in accordance with a constitution that has been approved by the Board (Senate Constitution).

The Senate Constitution provides that the University Senate must "approve, disapprove and make recommendations regarding the constitutions proposed by the various organized faculties of the University". "Organized faculties" refer to the various schools and colleges approved by the Board. The constitutions of the various schools and colleges require not only Senate approval, but also Board approval.

The proposed Eye Research Institute (ERI) constitution was approved at the November 16, 2023 meeting of the Senate.

3. **Previous Board Action:** None.
4. **Budget Implications:** None.
5. **Educational Implications:** The Eye Research Institute currently operates with a collection of administrative and Board of Trustees decisions spanning from 1968 to the present. This is cumbersome and creates unnecessary difficulties. This Constitution accurately reflects the current state of the Eye Research Institute and will streamline the governance process supporting our academic and administrative efficiency.
6. **Personnel Implications:** N/A.
7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** A proposed ERI Constitution was ratified by the faculty November 8, 2023; approved by the University Senate November 16, 2023; and is acceptable to the Provost and the President.

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8. Recommendation:

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Oakland University Senate, as authorized by the Board of Trustees, provides for organization and functions of the Senate with certain functions to be assigned to the organized faculties of the College and Schools; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has acted to approve internal constitutions in order to obtain the input and recommendations of faculty, staff, and students on matters relating to the programs of Oakland University, but has retained unto itself the full authority granted to it by law; now, therefore, be it

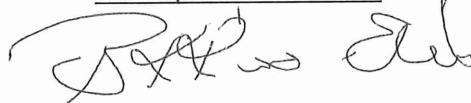
RESOLVED, that notwithstanding any provision of the proposed, Eye Research Institute Constitution, the Board of Trustees reconfirms its legal authority to grant, modify and rescind internal constitutions when the Board of Trustees determines such action to be in the interest of the institution or required to comply with its obligation; and, be if further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees, under the conditions set forth above, approves the Constitution of the Oakland University Eye Research Institute, attached hereto, effective February 2, 2024.

9. Attachments:

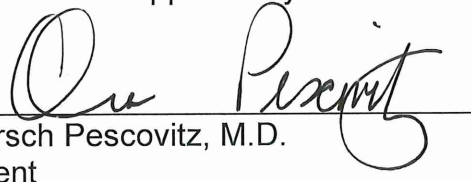
A. Final Version of the proposed Eye Research Institute Constitution.

Submitted to the President
on 1/29, 2024 by



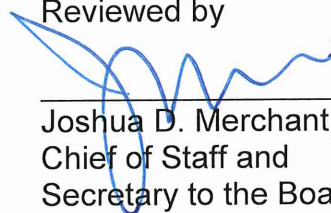
Britt Rios-Ellis, M.S., Ph.D.
Executive Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommended on 1/29, 2024
to the Board for approval by



Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

Reviewed by



Joshua D. Merchant, Ph.D.
Chief of Staff and
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

CONSTITUTION OF THE EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

PREAMBLE: In accordance with provisions of the Constitution of the Oakland University Senate and subject to the approval of the Oakland University Board of Trustees, the Eye Research Institute Faculty establishes this Constitution to conduct its business.

Article I. The Eye Research Institute

The Eye Research Institute, herein referred to as the ERI, encompasses the full-time tenure-track faculty, research professors (assistant and associate), visiting faculty, support staff, post-doctoral fellows, and students working within the Eye Research Institute. The ERI was first established as an institute associated with Biological Sciences in 1968 as the *Institute of Biological Sciences* (¹). The ERI evolved into an independent academic unit of Oakland University by 1979 with the ability to recommend its own primary appointments, and by 1989 had changed its name to the *Eye Research Institute*. With the goal of using the ERI's vision science expertise to benefit vision healthcare and medical training in Oakland County, a medical education agreement was established in 1989 between the ERI and the Ophthalmology Department of William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Michigan (currently part of the Corewell Health system), where OU-ERI faculty provide basic science lectures for Ophthalmology Residents' Grand Rounds.² An additional collaborative relationship was formed with the Eye Research Center (ERC) of the OUWB School of Medicine in 2021 to share resources with future ERC faculty. While the primary role of Oakland University's ERI is to generate original vision science research, the ERI's faculty also provide advanced independent academic and research training for Oakland University's undergraduate students, graduate students, and students of the OUWB School of Medicine, as part of their degree requirements, including but not limited to: Biological Sciences, Biochemistry, Bio-Engineering, and Medicine. The sole focus and expectation of ERI faculty is to establish innovative and independent research programs³. Within this context, it should be noted that ERI faculty deliver unique multidisciplinary Science of Vision courses within the Department of Biological Science's course catalog, in addition to the research mentorship of OU undergraduate and graduate students³.

Article II. The ERI Faculty

¹Documents referenced in footnotes are contained in Appendix-I ERI Mission Statement and Historical Authorities 6-6-2022.pdf.

Staff Bulletin, Oakland University, July 8-14, 1968 "OU's Newest Institute is Now Open for Business."

² Letters: to Director Venkat Reddy, Ph.D. from Michael T. Trese, M.D., Department of Surgery, Michigan State University November 10, 1982. Dr. Reddy to Dr. Trese, December 13, 1982, June 28 & 29, 1983. Dr. Trese to Dr. Reddy August 26, 1983

³ Letters: David J. Downing, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost to Faculty: ERI, May 28, 1999, and ERI Director Janet C. Blanks to Kathy Haig, Provost Office, April 20, 2000.

- i. The ERI faculty includes the Director of the ERI and all persons who hold primary appointments in the ERI as non-visiting tenure-track positions, and as research professors in the ERI. ERI faculty are defined in the currently approved "Review Statement, Eye Research Institute Oakland University".
- ii. The ERI is authorized to recommend primary faculty appointments in the ERI using the titles of "(Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor, Assistant Research Professor, and Associate Research Professor) of Biomedical Sciences" ⁴.
- iii. The ERI Faculty shall exercise all powers accorded to an organized faculty by the Constitution of the University Senate.
- iv. The ERI Faculty shall exercise all powers accorded to an academic unit within the Agreement between Oakland University and The Oakland University Chapter American Association of University Professors. Note that the rights of ERI Research Professors are subjected to the limitations found in the current Agreement.
- v. The Director of the ERI is the principal academic and administrative officer of the ERI.
1. The Director shall be a tenured vision scientist with a primary full-time faculty appointment in the ERI or the Eye Research Center of the OUWB School of Medicine, in addition to any other faculty appointments at Oakland University.
 2. The Director shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation by the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and the President. Before recommending the initial appointment of the Director, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and the President shall consult with the ERI Faculty.
 3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and the President may review the Director's appointment at any time, but they shall do so at least once every five years or upon the written request of a majority of the ERI Faculty who do not hold administrative titles.
- vi. The Director may establish ERI administrative positions consistent with university policy.
- vii. The ERI is authorized to recommend honorary ERI clinical professorships (Assistant, Associate, Full) to individuals in medical practice for the purpose of education and collaboration in vision science. The requirements for consideration shall be determined and voted on by the ERI Assembly on a case-by-case basis.
- viii. The ERI is authorized to recommend honorary adjunct professorships of Biomedical Sciences (Assistant, Associate, Full) to individuals with primary full-time faculty appointments in other Oakland University units for the purpose of education and collaboration in vision

⁴ OU Senate minutes, April 12, 1979, and Letter to Provost F.W. Obear from John De Carlo, Secretary Board of Trustees, June 21, 1979. Received by the Office of the Provost on June 25, 1979.

science. The requirements for consideration shall be determined and voted on by the ERI Assembly on a case-by-case basis.

Article III. The ERI Faculty Assembly

i. The ERI Faculty Assembly is the primary governance body of the ERI Faculty, and will meet regularly, chaired by the ERI Director. It shall have the following rights and responsibilities:

1. Initiate proposals on matters of importance to the ERI.
2. Be consulted on matters of significance to the ERI.
3. Advise the Director on matters they bring before it.
4. Request actions of other agencies of the University.
5. Take such actions as are necessary to exercise responsibilities stated elsewhere in this Constitution.

ii. Membership of the Assembly and Voting Rights:

1. Full-time tenure-track ERI Faculty are members of the ERI Faculty Assembly.
2. Other members of the university community, including the ERC, appointed for renewable terms, each not exceeding five years, by the Director upon a positive recommendation of a 2/3rd majority of the full-time tenure-track ERI faculty.
3. The Assembly may extend an invitation to faculty with primary appointments in other Oakland University units to serve on committees for the purpose of coordinating the use and management of shared resources used by the ERI and those units. These committee members need not be members of the ERI Assembly but they have voting privileges within the committee's business.
4. All active members of the Assembly have voting privileges on ERI Assembly motions.
5. Non-ERI faculty members appointed to ERI committees have voting privileges within that committee's direct business.
6. All full-time tenure-track members of the ERI Faculty shall have full voting rights and be eligible to serve on all ERI committees except when committee memberships are restricted.

iii. The Director shall call meetings of the ERI Faculty Assembly, usually once per month. The Director must call a meeting within fifteen days upon the written request of twenty (20) percent or more of the Assembly. The Director or their designee shall be the presiding officer of the Assembly.

- iv. Fifty (50) percent of the Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
- v. The Director shall determine the placement and timing of all motions which come before the Assembly.
- vi. The Assembly shall provide for the preparation of its minutes. Support staff of the ERI may attend Assembly meetings for the purpose of minutes preparation and the coordination of ERI activities resulting from Unit decisions.
- vii. Substantive motions shall be circulated to members of the Assembly at least three days before their first reading. Committee recommendations and materials deemed appropriate by the respective committee shall accompany the text of motions.
- viii. Ordinary substantive motions are placed on the agenda by the Director with or without comment or endorsement. Such motions shall normally receive readings on two separate meeting days of the ERI Assembly with amendments in order during both readings. Final votes on a main motion and its amendments may be taken only during the second reading. At that time, a majority vote of those members present shall suffice for a decision.
- ix. By an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present, the Assembly may proceed directly from the first to the second reading and final action on a motion.
- x. When an agenda has been completed, the presiding officer shall call for and recognize motions from the floor of the ERI Assembly. They are extraordinary substantive motions.
- xi. By vote of two-thirds of the members present, the Assembly may authorize immediate debate on an extraordinary motion, in which case the motion shall be treated as an ordinary motion in its first reading. Otherwise, the Director shall place the motion on the agenda of the next meeting of the Assembly. When placed upon the agenda by either of those procedures, the motion shall be treated as an ordinary substantive motion in its first reading.
- xii. Procedural motions regarding ERI activity may be introduced by an ERI member of the ERI Assembly. Such motions shall be decided in the order of precedence and in accordance with the current Robert's Rules of Order. Procedural motions regarding joint ERI and ERC activity may be introduced by an ERI or ERC member of the Assembly. Such motions shall be decided in the order of precedence and in accordance with the current Robert's Rules of Order.
- xiii. Resolutions may be moved from the floor of the Assembly. By a vote of two-thirds of the members present, a resolution may be adopted on its first reading. An affirmative majority vote shall suffice to hold a resolution over for a second reading. A resolution may be adopted by an affirmative majority vote on its second reading.
- xiv. Proxy votes shall not be tallied except on amendment(s) to and revision of the Constitution.

Article IV. Standing Committees of the ERI Faculty Assembly

- i. The Director shall create such *ad hoc* and standing committees as it deems necessary, designating the charges, memberships, and terms of service.
- ii. Unless otherwise specified, committees shall be organized in the following manner:
 1. Committees shall consist of one to three ERI Faculty members, and at least one member must be full-time tenure-track ERI faculty.
 2. The ERI Faculty Assembly will receive reports and recommendations from ad hoc and standing committees to be placed on agendas of the Assembly. The Director shall have the right to request a committee to reconsider its recommendations once. A committee's second submission must be placed on the next agenda of the Assembly.
 3. Active committees will be permitted to originate substantive motions pertaining to their designated purpose.
 4. The Director can appoint replacements for vacancies occurring on ad hoc committees and standing committees.
 5. Committees can advise the Director on matters he/she brings before it, receive information from the Director, and place before the Director such matters as it deems appropriate.

Article V. The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee of the ERI

- i. The ERI Faculty shall have a Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee of the Eye Research Institute, consistent with the current Faculty Agreement.
- ii. The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee shall consist of three ERI Faculty members that are appointed by the Director, one member serving as chair.
- iii. The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee shall establish and make known the policies and procedures which govern its operation as well as the criteria and standards which guide its recommendations on all matters of faculty appointment, promotion and tenure. The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee shall also have the following duties:
 1. Gather information and make recommendations to the SHC/ERI CAP and/or ERI Director on all ERI Faculty appointment, promotion and tenure cases, in harmony with the current Faculty Agreement and the current Unit Criteria and Procedures on Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure for the ERI.
 2. Be informed by the Director of final decisions relating to all ERI Faculty employment decisions.

Article VI. The University Senate

The ERI Faculty shall be represented in the University Senate by a delegation consisting of the ERI Director and an additional senator/s from the ERI Faculty. The latter will be selected by the ERI bargaining unit Faculty. The number of elected senators will be determined in accordance with the procedures followed by the current Oakland University Senate.

Article VII. Amendment and Ratification of the ERI Constitution

i. Amendment(s) or revision of the ERI Constitution shall originate as substantive motions of the ERI faculty members of the ERI Assembly. They may be submitted to the ERI Director in writing, in which case they shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Assembly.

ii. On second reading, a secret ballot shall be conducted and an affirmative majority vote of the ERI faculty members of the ERI Assembly shall be required to ratify amendment(s) or revision of the Constitution.

iii. Amendment(s) or revision of the Constitution must be approved by the University Senate and the Board of Trustees.

iv. This Constitution shall remain in force until it is superseded by a Constitution approved by the Faculty Assembly, the University Senate and the Board of Trustees.

Article VIII. Review of the ERI Constitution

i. At least once every five years the ERI Director shall appoint an *ad hoc* committee to review the Constitution of the ERI. This committee must be composed of ERI faculty. The committee shall present its recommendations to the Assembly which may ratify the proposed Constitution with or without change, in accordance with Article VII.

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