

Research Council Meeting

September 18, 2025 via Zoom

Attendees: Amy Keirstead, Bob Kennedy, Cameron Wake, Derek Molliver, Golshan Madraki, Ian Meng, Jamie Vaughn, Julie Peterson, Karen Eck, Karen Houseknecht, Lisa Herschbach, Markus Frederich, Michele Polacsek, Mohamed ElSalhy, Nick Gere, Russ Ferland, Sonya Durney, Scott Wood, Susan McHugh.

Absentees: Amy Deveau,

Announcements

VPR Houseknecht

Welcomed Matt Havrda, AD Research and Scholarship, COM and Markus Frederich, SMEP CAS.

Updates (since RC – May'25)

VPR Houseknecht

- MITC's "Sector Spotlights: Blue Economy" Lunch & Learn event was held at UNE Biddeford Campus in July, culminating with a tour of the **Girard Marine Science Center**, including the new Sustainable Innovation Center, highlighting the innovative research efforts of UNE faculty and students with application to and impact on Maine's Blue Economy.
- Reorganization: In August, the Office of Innovation was renamed the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) and was moved within the Office of Research and Scholarship, renamed the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI), under the leadership of Karen Houseknecht, Ph.D. The CIE is under continued leadership of Lisa Herschbach, PhD, who was also appointed Assistant Dean within the UNE College of Business. This new organization creates a more unified framework for supporting faculty and student research, innovation projects, and external partnerships across the University.
- Onboarding of new faculty/professional staff in research was conducted in August in collaboration EHS, Library, and Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Forty-seven faculty and professional staff participated (hybrid event).
- The first Faculty Research Mentoring Program (MENTOR) launched in September. The inaugural cohort consists of 17 faculty members from COM, CAS, CDM, COB.
- The Shaw Innovation Fellowship program also launched in September, with nearly 20 new opportunities for students to collaborate with UNE faculty, community partners, and local industry leaders on projects developing real-world solutions to a broad array of challenges to planetary and human health in Maine and beyond. After receiving more than 50 applications, CIE staff selected a cohort of 28 students from across several programs in COB, CAS, and WCHP. Deliverables from last year's program include published scholarship, conference presentations, research awards, and new commercial products (e.g., the SeaMade Kelp Bar).
- Faculty Mini-grant awards: In this round 16 applications were received from across the university (\$100,318 requested). A total of 8 grants were awarded, representing \$48,180 investment in faculty scholarly endeavors.

- UNE/GMRI Accelerator Mini-Grant Program launched. In the inaugural we received five joint applications, totaling \$49,893. Grants were reviewed by reviewers from GMRI and UNE. A total of four awards were made (\$39,948 investment) in new research partnerships.

Presentations:

Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship ([link to PDF](#))

Director Herschbach