

# Research Council Meeting

February 19, 2026 via Zoom

Attendees: Amy Keirstead, Bob Kennedy, Cameron Wake, Golshan Madraki, Ian Meng, Jamie Vaughn, Karen Houseknecht, Lisa Herschbach, Markus Frederich, Matt Havrda, Michele Polacsek, Mohamed ElSalhy, Russ Ferland, Nick Gere.

Absentees: Amy Deveau, Derek Molliver, Julie Peterson, Sonya Durney, Scott Wood, Susan McHugh.

## Updates

## VPR Houseknecht

- UNE has signed an agreement with Novelution, an eManagement system vendor for managing research operations, to integrate research compliance and administrative functions. Project kick-off scheduled for late February.
- Second Annual Research Colloquium with Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) was held on January 15 at GMRI. Researchers presented updates from the 2025 UNE/GMRI accelerator grant program and a round table discussion on the topic of cross-institutional, interdisciplinary collaboration was led by VP Houseknecht. Both institutions are partnering to continue the accelerator grant program for 2026.
- On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, VPR Houseknecht addressed the Maine State Legislature's Innovation and Growth Caucus on our research and workforce development initiatives in the life sciences/biomedical sectors. This gathering, organized by BiOME, brought together leaders from across Maine's innovation ecosystem—including academia, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private industry—to discuss the future of life sciences in Maine. UNE was honored to share the stage with colleagues from the University of Maine, the Department of Economic and Community Development, Maine Technology Institute, The Jackson Laboratory, and the Maine Cancer Genomics Initiative.
- Sixteen prospective PhD students for the UMaine Graduate School of Biomedical Science and Engineering (GSBSE) program visited UNE on February 3 for a tour, poster presentation session and admissions interviews sponsored by ORI. In AY25-26 UNE has six GSBSE students training in research labs and in addition hosting four first year rotating students. This is the largest group of GSBSE trainees at UNE, historically.
- Strategic collaborations: 1) Shaw institute Blue Hill Maine. Executed MOU for collaboration in research and workforce development (including student internships in Summer 2026) in the areas of analytical chemistry and environmental toxicology; 2) Quahog Bay Conservancy, Harpswell Maine. Meetings held on Harpswell and UNE Biddeford campuses to explore collaborative opportunities in areas of aquaculture, shared facilities and internships/workforce development.

## Presentation:

“*ORI - eManagement System*” ([link to presentation](#))

“*Research at UNE COM*” ([link to presentation](#))

**Zeynep Arslan, Co-PM**  
**Matt Havrda, Associate**  
**Dean, Research Scholarship**