ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

AM55 Recap — Crowdfunding
SPONSORED RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION: A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

The world of sponsored research administration is filled with a plethora of complexities and nuance. Expanding government regulations demand you to stay informed. In order to provide effective support for the research enterprise and be responsible stewards of federal funds, administrators need to be knowledgeable about multiple areas of research management. NCURA provides the comprehensive reference guide that helps you.

This two-volume compendium covers all major areas of sponsored research with more than 20 chapters written by well-respected administrators known for their expertise. The 1800+ page publication walks through essential principles and practices, sample policies and procedures, practical tools and supplementary materials.

CHAPTERS INCLUDE:

- Overview of Sponsored Research
- Organizational Models
- Regulatory Environment
- Research Compliance
- Assessing the Sponsored Research Office
- Facilities and Administrative Costs
- Pre-Award Services
- Data Rights and Intellectual Property
- Subawards
- Special Issues for Medical Schools
- Special Issues for PUIs
- Administering Research Contracts
- Interactions with Auditors
- Post-Award Administration
- Export Controls
- Legal Considerations
- Information Systems
- International Research Collaborations
- Training and Education
- Leadership Development
- Communication

The guide is a valuable publication for a range of individuals, including sponsored programs personnel, departmental/college administrators, and business officers at smaller institutions who manage sponsored research “on the side.” It is also an excellent training tool for newcomers to sponsored research.

The Annual Subscription Includes:

- Two-volume compendium
- Quarterly updates
- Annually issued searchable CD

NCURA Members: $345.00 (plus shipping)
Non-Members: $445.00 (plus shipping)

ORDER YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TODAY AT WWW.NCURA.EDU/BOOKSTORE!
CONTENTS

FEATURES

Message from Your President  By Patricia Hawk ................................................................. 3
Capitol View  By Carol Blum .................................................................................................. 4
A Reflection One Year Into Implementation of the Final Rule By Julia M. Campbell ......... 7
Servant Leadership  By Greg Luttrel and David Ngo ............................................................ 10
Your Journey to a Research Administration Portal  By David Gindhart ......................... 18
PHS FCOI Regulations – One Year Later  By Marisa Zuskar ............................................. 20
Cool Research Projects Spotlight ............................................................................................ 23
Conflict of Interest: Making it Work  By Colleen M. Loew ................................................ 24
COI: Plus One Year  By Suzanne M. Rivera ........................................................................ 27
Exercise Can Come in Many Forms  By Rick Smiley.......................................................... 30
Crowdfunding: Navigating the New Frontier in Research Funding and Administration  By Natasha Chopp, Patience Graybill Condellone, and Jerry B. Weinberg ............ 32
FCOI a Year Later – Challenges, Lessons Learned, and the Road to Come  By Adrienne Larmett, David Clark, and Kimberly Gin ............................................................. 35
FCOI – Are We There Yet?  By Marj Townsend, Vicki Krell, and Sunny Thompson ......... 39
Implementing FCOI Regulations: Challenges & Lessons Learned  By Kris Monahan, Denise Moody, and Melissa Anderson ................................................................. 43
Those Pesky Deadlines! How We Communicate May Make All The Difference  By Gai Doran ..................................................................................................................... 47
ARRA is Ending, But is Reporting?  By Tami Sadusky ......................................................... 53
NCURA Research Management Review Highlight .................................................................. 53

IN THIS ISSUE

On the Cover ................................................................. 2
Education Scholarship Fund Launches ................................................................................ 12
AM55 Recap .......................................................................................................................... 13
Research Administration By the Numbers ........................................................................... 19
NCURAbly Pedantic ............................................................................................................ 22
What’s on My Desk ............................................................. 25, 33
NCURA Pathways .............................................................................................................. 28, 40
2014 Financial Research Administration Conference ...................................................... 29
Audit Watch .......................................................................................................................... 38
2014 Pre-Award Research Administration Conference ................................................... 41
Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award .......................................... 42
Ask Ann Granters ............................................................................................................... 46
2013 Regional Leadership Workshop .................................................................................. 49
NCURA Executive Leadership Program ............................................................................. 50
On Campus Profile ............................................................................................................. 51
Milestones .................................................................................................................................. 54
Collaborate Conversations .................................................................................................. 54
Regional Corner .................................................................................................................. 55
NCURA YouTube Tuesdays ............................................................................................... 61
Calendar of Events ............................................................................................................. Back Cover

facebook.com/ncura1959  twitter.com/#!NCURA  youtube.com/ncura1959
On the Cover

Top O’ the Magazine to You! I am Tom Wilson from Rush University Medical Center and I am wearing “the green” to introduce the green edition of NCURA Magazine. In this edition of the Magazine we are taking a retrospective look at the implementation of the new Public Health Services regulations governing conflicts of interest over the past year. Highlights from a sampling of some of the conflict of interest articles are:

Carol Blum’s Capital View: Carol from the Council on Governmental Relations has performed an informal survey of research administrators and gives us insight into their experiences concerning the implementation of the new Final Rule. Carol measures the value of this federally mandated exercise from a particular Southern viewpoint.

Julia Campbell and Marisa Zuskar are in the mood to celebrate the First Anniversary of the Public Health Service Final Rule (or maybe not).

Deborah Smith’s Commentary: Deborah has a more global viewpoint from her position at Huron Consulting Group and takes stock of what institutions have done over the past year and what action will need to be taken in the future to improve and further develop the Conflict of Interest process.

I was very pleased to read the article on Servant Leadership by Greg Luttrell and David Ngo. Greg and David are graduates of the NCURA Executive Leadership Program and have produced an insightful article on a leadership style that I have studied, practiced and lectured on, over the course of my professional career.

David Gindhart from Penn State University wants to take you on a journey through a research administration portal. Pack your bags, because this journey offers countless benefits to you and your research faculty!

I particularly enjoyed Gai Doran’s article on facilitating proposal development through effective communication for multiple reasons: her practical steps to being the “best communicator”, her suggestion that I might be an “intellectual athlete” and the fact that Gai, from Yale University, is one of the students in Rush University’s Master of Science in Research Administration Program.

I have always felt that the primary mission of NCURA is education and, therefore, was very pleased to learn that NCURA had received a challenge grant from my colleague at Vanderbilt University, Jerry Fife, to establish an Education Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Task Force had fundraising activities at AM55 and Kathleen Larmett, Executive Director of NCURA, provides an update on that initiative in her article in this edition of the Magazine.

It really doesn’t take a village! What is does take is a team of dedicated professionals, and we got it! Many thanks to all the authors, the Contributing Editors, Co-Editors, the Senior Editor and the staff at the NCURA National Office for their efforts in producing this green edition.

Tom Wilson, Co-Editor
Normally at this time of the year, we would be getting ready for our Annual Meeting. We have already experienced a fantastic kick-off to the new August venue for our Annual Meetings and I’m still remembering what a great meeting it was! Not only did Vivian Holmes and her Program Committee put together an outstanding program, we had two very special events associated with AM55 that I want to talk about a little more—especially for those of you who weren’t able to join us. Those two special events are our first Workshop related to NCURA’s participation in the BILAT USA 2.0 project, and the start of fund raising for NCURA’s Education Scholarship Fund.

You might remember that I wrote a little about the BILAT USA 2.0 project before. It is a multi-year award from the European Commission to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) that will provide grants management and training opportunities. NCURA is one of the US partners assisting in this endeavor. Dan Nordquist participated in a “BILAT session” at this year’s European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA). However, the very first Practical Workshop in the U.S. occurred at the end of AM55. I am proud to say that I participated in this workshop event, and I’d like to tell you more about it.

The workshop was held on the afternoon of August 7, and was offered at no cost to participants. We had more than 50 attendees from U.S. and international institutions. The workshop began with an introduction and opening remarks by Rebecca Friedman (Co-Director, Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence), Errol Levy (First Secretary, Research and Innovation Delegation of the European Union to the United States of America), and Olaf Heilmayer (Project Lead, BILAT USA 2.0 and BMBF). After opening remarks, three concurrent sessions took place.

In session 1, Errol talked about the outlook on legal and financial aspects regarding Horizon 2020, and possibilities for U.S. researchers. You might ask “why is this important to me”? Here’s why I think it’s important.

I think of the European Union as one big funding agency, and they create different funding programs (previously called “FPs”) that are in effect for a given number of years. Each year of the funding program has an annual budget, and all participating countries agree to a uniform set of terms and conditions. The BILAT was funded out of FP7, and it is interesting to note that the US is second only to Russia in “third country participation” in FP7. Horizon 2020 will be the next EU funding program.

Errol was able to give an update on the latest development in Horizon 2020 and EU countries finalize their negotiations on terms and conditions. There are administrative challenges with U.S. participants, but global research cooperation is well developed, and we want to do more.

Annika Glauner (University of Zurich) and I led the second concurrent session on two types of fellowship programs supported by the European Commission—the European Research Council (ERC) Fellowships and the Marie Curie Fellowships. I consider the ERC Fellowship Program to be a more institutional training grant and the Marie Curie Fellowships more of an individual training grant. I’ll bet many of us have hosted Marie Curie Fellows at our respective institutions.

Olaf Heilmayer led the third concurrent session on locating European partners for research cooperation. This session gave attendees good ideas on how our faculty can partner.

What was really nice about these three concurrent sessions is that each session had a “rapporteur” which sounds much better than “the person who records important points of a session and reports back”. The rapporteurs did their jobs very well, and all concurrent-session attendees reconvened so that the rapporteurs could provide summaries of their respective concurrent sessions. So even though Annika and I co-presented a concurrent session, we were able to hear the high points of the other two concurrent sessions. I really enjoyed it and look forward to the next BILAT workshop!

Now, let me talk about what happened at AM55 related to our Education Scholarship Fund. You might recall that I spoke about this in one of my earlier columns. This Education Fund got started by a donation from Jerry Fife, a Past President and a recipient of NCURA’s Outstanding Research Administrator Award. When Jerry made the gift, he talked about how he wanted to give back to NCURA since it had made such a difference for him—not only in the subject-matter education, but also what he called “leadership lessons.” Based on Jerry’s gift and a bequest from another NCURA member, NCURA’s Educational Scholarship Fund has been created. This fund is designed to provide access to funds, through the generosity of NCURA members, which would otherwise be unavailable.

It’s a very exciting prospect to put together such a program. I was inspired by the program, and I have also donated to this program because I know I would not be the research administrator I am today without NCURA. If my donation can help support someone to get the same kind of pro-
Juice ain’t worth the squeeze! When I was in my very early teens, my father had to close his hardware store [competition from K-Mart and grocery stores selling grass seed] and re-invent himself as a locksmith. As he started out, an old fellow from the neighborhood joined him in his shop as a key cutter, scheduler, and general shop worker while Dad went out on calls. When my sisters and I took the bus to the shop for a ride home in the late afternoons, Willie would tend to us and keep us occupied with stories of growing up in the hills of Kentucky. During those hours with Willie, I came to appreciate what I consider a uniquely Southern construction of analogies: totally unrelated but ultimately a perfect observation on life.

In an informal, non-scientific survey of folks at several universities about the impact of the implementation of the Public Health Service (PHS) regulations governing financial conflicts of interest, I heard from one Southern school. At the end of the message, the author offered the analogy between compliance and juice that serves as the title of this piece and, as confirmed by other correspondents, the general reaction to the new regulatory regime. I thought of Willie and saw the ever-present toothpick lift at the corner of his mouth as he grinned and nodded knowingly.

A year later, research institutions have met the challenge of implementation despite real trepidation and a tenous sense of confidence at the outset. All the predictable events occurred: some investigators complained, vowing to stop submitting applications; faculty senate, cabinets, and committees debated the fine points of the Federal regulatory and concomitant university policy requirements in a vain search for rationality; investigators over-disclosed to avoid mistakes; and web sites remain virtually idle. I’d never claim to be clairvoyant but it comes as no surprise that the few, much-reported squanderer of time and resources related to the implementation. In the administration one year in.

Asked in that informal, non-scientific survey of a few research administrators what the worst or most difficult aspect of implementation was, the reoccurring theme is time: time spent rewriting policies and procedures, retraining investigators sometimes one-on-one, and reviewing a much larger volume of disclosures including travel disclosures. In virtually all cases, the institution hired or needed to but was not permitted to hire at least one new employee to manage the process. In addition to a new employee, current employees – institutional officials, compliance training staff, etc. – spent additional time meeting the regulatory requirements.

The on-going time burden is the disclosure process and resulting review. The expanded disclosure requirements linked to institutional responsibilities with a lowered disclosure threshold of $5,000 increased the number of disclosures by research personnel exponentially. Some investigators struggled to make the leap from disclosing financial relationships related to their research—easily more transparent—to relationships related to their “institutional responsibilities.” While the distinction between work-life and personal-life may seem simple and obvious to most workers, academic investigators’ lives are not so easily apportioned. Academic investigators engage in a variety of professional relationships not just to advance their own careers but often to assist their students and fellows, the institution’s reputation, and resources, and the communities in which they live. It’s often because of their academic credentials that they are asked to serve on business or community-based boards and they agree if it will serve to provide internships for their students or help ensure clean drinking water in their community. There may be an honorarium or travel reimbursement, but these investigators are not driven by the financial incentive. Now this service is officially a part of their institutional responsibilities. The investigator discloses and each of these events must be reviewed to determine the significance and “relatedness” of the activity to the PHS-supported research. The lowered threshold increased the volume of disclosures as well. One institution reported that of the 650+ National Institutes of Health (NIH) investigators reporting under all the new requirements—redefined institutional responsibilities, travel, etc. – it received only four (4) previously undeclared financial conflicts of interest, all a result of lowering the threshold.

It is the travel disclosure requirement that is always cited as the biggest squanderer of time and resources related to the implementation. In the admittedly very small sample of institutions, there has been no single case of travel that met the definition of a financial conflict of interest and/or required a management plan. None. Despite NIH’s efforts to refine and explain the meaning and scope of the disclosure of travel, it is the principal area where investigators over-disclose to avoid mistakes. A growing familiarity with the definitions will likely ease the over-disclosure eventually, but the slow learning curve has consumed substantial time in review and training.

The use of electronic systems has been critical in easing the disclosure process. For those institutions that still used a paper-based process, the investment in an electronic and/or web-based system for investigators has been a significant cost in implementation. Institutions report spending from $250,000 to $300,000 on purchase and implementation costs. Those institutions with electronic systems expended funds in rebuilding or redesigning systems to capture financial interests and relationships under the revised definitions. But in virtually all cases, administrators recognize the equally significant long-term value of the systems—the cost/benefit ratio falls to the benefit side.

The other time-consuming task is the review of the disclosures to determine whether the interest or relationship is a conflict that is significant and related to PHS-supported research. It’s often a tiered process; initial screening by administrative staff, referral to a committee and/or official for further review and determination, and, if appropriate, the development of management plans. These steps are usually an iterative process with the investigator and just take time. Using time for administrative purposes is frustrating but most
institutions reported a much appreciated cooperation by the research staff. It’s no surprise really; most staff members want to do the right thing.

As to the other much-debated new aspect of the regulations – public access to information related to significant financial conflicts of interest related to PHS-supported research – most institutions surveyed opted to respond to written requests. In all cases, there have been no requests to date. Of those using a web-based source, the institutions haven’t tracked “hits” to the site but are unaware of any significant interest in the information as measured by follow-up inquiries. The attention to the public postings may increase shortly with the posting of payments by companies to physicians and hospitals required in the Physician’s Payment Sunshine Act passed as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Section 6002. Starting in March 2014, gifts, compensation, equity, and investment interests of at least $10 (or $100 aggregated annually) given to physicians by manufacturers of drugs, devices, biologicals, and medical supplies that are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or the Children’s Health Insurance Program will be posted to a publicly accessible website by September, 2014, hosted by the US Department of Health and Human Services’ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS, 2013). It is not difficult to imagine an interested individual’s scanning the company reports of payments and comparing those reports to the financial interests posted on an institution’s website. The fact that each regulation has a different purpose, uses differing definitions and, in the case of the companies, reports information that includes all payments – grants as well as honoraria, etc. – won’t dissuade those interested individuals from spinning a tale of non-compliance.

There are some complaints from institutions; e.g., the late development of the NIH reporting templates required local reworking of software to meet the new structure, and some useful community-developed resources, notably the Federal Demonstration Partnership’s posting of institutional policies to ease the tracking of subrecipient information. When asked what was easier than expected, the general response was that the worst-case fears at the outset generally didn’t occur.

In September, 2012, NIH informed the research community that it would launch a new Proactive Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) Compliance Program to assess institutional implementation and compliance, and it began that program through a review of policies posted on institutional websites – another new requirement. NIH’s expectation that institutional policies would include detailed procedural information has been the source of many of the comments received by institutions from NIH. It is not entirely surprising that NIH found elements missing from many if not most policies posted online and even acknowledged the likely cause of the apparent discrepancy when it noted in most letters that, “If any of the items noted as a correction are addressed in a separate or other related policy and/or procedure document, then corrections need not to be made to [the] policy.” NIH is not alone in holding the expectation that institutional policies would incorporate the granular detail of Federal regulations; it’s a general point of challenge between Federal agencies and research institutions. This expectation reflects an inexperience with institutional policies designed to meet a variety of regulatory schemes for a range of employees. Policies make broad statements of principal and map the general factors or elements for implementation. Procedural documents provide details that address the variety of regulatory requirements that must be met depending on a funding source. It is why the research community longs for uniform Federal regulations. NIH did not ask institutions to change their policies “at this time” and most analysts would agree.

In this case, the best course is to avoid unnecessary policy revisions by notifying NIH where the procedural information is housed – whether in a standard operating procedure (SOP) or posted as a list of FAQs for the institutional community.

The final question posed to that limited number of institutions in my informal non-scientific survey was what the institution’s overarching reaction to implementation is after the first year. Most people have settled into the prescribed procedural patterns of compliance, which reflects less the wisdom of the regulations and more the incredible resiliency of research administrators and Federally funded investigators. One responder noted, “It’s not totally horrible,” while others welcomed the electronic systems. All noted the increased costs in time and resources and little gained in terms of financial conflicts of interest oversight or enhancements to scientific integrity. And all would agree – the juice just ain’t worth the squeeze.

Carol J. Blum is Director for Research Compliance and Administration at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR). Before joining COGR in 2001, Carol served Ohio University for ten years as associate vice president. Before assuming her current position, she served for nearly a decade as president of Ohio Board of Regents as director of graduate and special programs. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Cincinnati. She has recently begun exercising the right side of her brain in art classes and continues to volunteer at the Washington Literacy Council and Washington Area (Reproductive Health) Clinic Defense Task Force. Carol can be reached at cblum@cogr.edu

Expand and enhance your job knowledge! Learn from well-respected senior research administrators and meet others who share similar job challenges. Choose from:

**Financial Research Administration Workshop**
- The inter-relationship between pre and post-award financial research administration
- Costing elements in OMB Circular A-21
- Cash management issues
- Issues relating to service centers
- Close-out requirements
- Audits

**Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop**
- For the newcomer (less than 2 years experience) or for the individual who has worked primarily in only one area of sponsored projects administration
- Provides participants with a broad overview of the various aspects involved in sponsored projects administration
- Compliance Issues
- Preparation and review of proposals
- Negotiation and acceptance of awards
- Financial and administrative management
- Close-out and audit

**Level II: Sponsored Projects Administration Workshop – Critical Issues in Research Administration**
- For more experienced research administrators
- Institutional compliance responsibilities
- Proposal creation, budgeting and award administration
- Contract and subaward review
- Export controls
- Post award financial administration

Registration and hotel information is available at [www.ncura.edu](http://www.ncura.edu)
One year into implementation of the Final Rule, we, research compliance professionals, may certainly feel calmer than we did one year ago, six months ago, or even three months ago. A sense of exhausted acceptance seems to have set in as the dust settles from the urgent and complex implementation efforts that began prior to August 24, 2012 and continued well beyond that date.

Now that we have had a year of implementing the new conflict of interest (COI) requirements under our belts and some of the frenzy around initial implementation has diminished, it is an appropriate time to reflect upon what went well, what was more difficult than expected, and what happens now.

**What Went Well**

**Operational Stakeholder Engagement**

When it gets to the operational business process details of the Final Rule implementation, sponsored projects administrators, both pre-award and post-award, are key. At Northwestern University, setting up standard operating procedures in the pre-award and post-award offices relative to COI was a top priority, as critical operational compliance points occur at proposal submission and award set up (Figure 1). The central Northwestern COI Office (NCOI) controls neither of these process points operationally, so partnering with leaders and staff in these areas was essential to ensuring institutional compliance.

NCOI met weekly with sponsored projects leadership and staff throughout the first year of implementation. We hammered out procedures, continuously modifying them based on evolving guidance and experience, and we trained and retrained front-line research administrators. Adjusting to nuanced situations is par for the course in research administration, and COI is no different. It has been the open and positive dynamic among NCOI and research administrators that has allowed us to establish and follow sound standard procedures, while at the same time being adaptable to changes along the way. We are able to routinely discuss and determine the logical handling for those odd, one-off COI issues involving subrecipients, investigators, awards, or contracts.

COI has become another area of compliance with which research administrators must familiarize themselves. Verifying COI compliance at proposal, award, and other times is yet another task for busy staff. However, the engagement and dedication of the research administrators at Northwestern to acquire this knowledge and take on these tasks contributed significantly to the successful operational implementation at our institution.

**Collaboration in a Mixed Centralized and Decentralized Environment**

At Northwestern, what had traditionally been a decentralized COI process has shifted to become a hybrid operation. While NCOI was established in central administration to implement and administer the Final Rule, the process for actual research-related COI reviews and management remains somewhat decentralized among the academic units (Schools). Establishing and maintaining a compliant blend of centralization and decentralization can be difficult operationally, but finding the balance was critical for the culture and structure of Northwestern. Over the past year, this balance has been successfully maintained, primarily due to the consistent and open channels of communication and collaboration among stakeholders, including NCOI, investigators, School-based COI reviewers and committees, and the COI Oversight Committee. NCOI genuinely believes...
and communicates its mission to facilitate and serve the various stakeholders in meeting COI requirements in a manner least onerous to them.

The importance of centralization relative to COI requirements is found in the administrative activities of compiling, reviewing, reporting, and managing COI disclosure information as consistently as possible. The compliance aspects of the COI requirements that best lend themselves to centralized oversight include:

- Ensuring the required training and disclosures occur at the required times
- Ensuring the COI reviews occur in the required timeframe
- Ensuring initial and ongoing sponsor reporting occur as required and in the required timeframe
- Ensuring the consistent handling and monitoring of subrecipient COI issues, as needed
- Ensuring management plans are documented and monitored appropriately

The importance of decentralization relative to COI requirements becomes clear when one considers the intent behind the COI requirements. When does a significant financial interest (SFI) become a financial conflict of interest (FCOI)? When could an SFI be related to research and directly and significantly impact a specific body of research? The scientific review needed to thoughtfully consider these questions is not merely an administrative exercise. This aspect of the COI requirements is where School-based reviewers and committees are critical. They hold the scientific and discipline-specific expertise necessary to analyze whether or not particular financial interests could in any way actually, or be perceived to, impact or bias research objectivity.

NUCOI does the “leg work” in a sense, gathering from various systems the appropriate disclosure information, company information, proposal information, and protocol information. This compiled profile is routed to the appropriate School reviewer or committee in our COI system, and COI determinations are made on a project basis. Thus, the preparatory work and triggers for project-specific reviews occur centrally, and the scientific COI reviews occur de-centrally in the Schools. Designated COI reviewers in each School’s Dean’s Office review and make determinations or refer to the School COI Committee or University-wide COI Oversight Committee for review if needed. NUCOI and other administrators participate in these committees and discussions from a compliance perspective. If an FCOI is determined by the School COI reviewers or committees, NUCOI is involved as a resource as needed in management plan development and is the responsible party for sponsor FCOI reporting.

This loop of centralized to decentralized and back is a lot to manage, but it has ended up working quite well for us. When it comes to compliance in a decentralized University environment, a common denominator (in Northwestern’s case, NUCOI) has proved a good thing.

**What Was More Difficult Than Expected**

**Volume**

Well, we knew reviewing SFIs related to institutional responsibilities for every investigator on every award subject to the requirements was going to cause an influx of new activity. However, the volume of transactional COI reviews was still a shock to the system. While new awards subsequent to the 8/24/12 implementation date were simpler (i.e. an easily identifiable hard compliance “stop” in that no accounts could be established pending full COI compliance), noncompeting continuations were more difficult to operationalize. We generated manual lists of “holds” (for both new accounts and federal account draw-downs) over many months as we grappled with the volume of transactional COI reviews needed for in-house as well as new awards. Now that we have gotten through one full year of the Final Rule, we have performed a COI review for every investigator on every award with an award period start date or budget period start date of August 24, 2012 or later. We can now relax in “just” handling transactional reviews for new awards, new investigators, new SFI disclosures, and annual disclosures.

**Subrecipients**

Handling of subrecipients has been one of the messier aspects of implementation. The number of organizations (international, hospital, nonprofit, and community) with whom we collaborate that do not have PHS-compliant COI policies has been much higher than anticipated. What are our options for these institutions? There are only two. The collaborator can agree to fall under our COI policy for the particular research project, or we decide to not move forward with the collabo-
ration. There is the third option to allow an institution to develop a PHS-compliant policy; however, this is not a comforting option for the prime institution with responsibility for ensuring compliance relative to the training and disclosure that must occur prior to proposal submission, nor is it particularly practical for the subrecipient institution aiming to create a compliant policy in the 48 hours prior to proposal submission, which is often the timeframe we are dealing with when these issues arise. Thus, we have taken the stance that at proposal time, the subrecipient either has a compliant COI policy or they do not, in which case they agree to abide by our policy (unless they wish to withdraw from the proposal and collaboration). We have evolved from requiring certification forms of all subrecipients to relying on the FDP Clearinghouse and/or allowing certification language in Letters of Intent to suffice at proposal time. For those institutions not in the Clearinghouse that claim to have a compliant policy, we trust but verify. For those who agree to fall under our policy, we have a manual (paper) training and disclosure process for subrecipient investigators at proposal time, and a more systematic process at award time that brings subrecipient investigators into our COI system to allow for ongoing disclosure and monitoring. The establishment and coordination of these processes for non-University investigators has proven much more voluminous and onerous than anticipated.

Determining when an SFI is an FCOI

There’s a magical formula for determining when an SFI is an FCOI, right? Wrong. Assessing whether or not an SFI could relate to and directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of a specific body of research activity remains a struggle. Some SFIs are easily relatable and impactful for specific research activity, such as when an entity in which an investigator has an SFI sponsors or manufactures the product under investigation in the research. Others, such as intellectual property early in the pipeline that could (but may not) utilize a faculty start-up at some point in the future for commercialization, can be less clear-cut. While we have created some general guidance for COI reviewers as to what to consider in research-related COI reviews and COI management determinations (Figure 2), making FCOI determinations truly does depend on the particulars of each situation.

One of the key School COI reviewers told me when I started in my NU COI role that the thing he wanted most was a “decision map” to aid in determining when an SFI rose to the level of FCOI. Six months in, he said that he realized it was not likely possible, because, in reality, things truly have to be evaluated on a case by case basis. Each case is different.

What Happens Now

My sense from peers in institutions around the country is that things are settling down a bit, with processes and systems being adjusted for those inevitable bumps in the road that occur once you get into the weeds of implementing new processes and systems. While some institutions had a head-start or testing period with new systems, many institutions just pressed “go” with new systems on August 24, 2012. Colleagues continue to share experiences and interpretations, and we await and pay attention to additional clarifying guidance from government sponsors and adjust practices accordingly. Sharing of aggregate data through the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) COI Metrics Project and similar efforts is of great interest to many in order to assess and compare the true volume of activity and resources dedicated to Final Rule implementation. So, while I hesitate to say “we’ve made it!”, I can certainly say “congratulations for making it to this one-year point!” It has been a tremendous achievement for all involved.

Julia Campbell is the Director of Conflict of Interest at Northwestern University, where she leads the implementation and administration of conflict of interest requirements university-wide for faculty, researchers, and staff. Julia has worked in the field of regulatory compliance for over 15 years, focusing on research compliance for the last ten years. She can be reached at JuliaCampbell@northwestern.edu
As a boy, David Ngo would hear a familiar saying over and over. The saying goes: “I humbly serve as a guardian to my fellow Americans, always ready to defend those who are unable to defend themselves”. The saying is the Navy SEAL creed and describes the essence of servant leadership. David heard this saying often from his father, a Lieutenant in the Navy.

Servant leadership is becoming more popular in places like Universities and nonprofit sectors. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the “top of the pyramid”, the servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible.

Growing up, David would hear his father mention that leaders should not be afraid to share power. There were many lessons that outlined how servant leaders could lead and follow. There were lessons on how servant leaders wanted their teams to make independent decisions and keep moving forward until they feel they need assistance. As leaders, the servant leader’s job is to encourage and support team members in order to help them unleash their full potential.

Greg Luttrell had the opportunity to witness servant leadership during 22 years of military service. Greg retired in 2004 with the rank of Commander in the U.S. Navy. Greg’s experiences with servant leadership during that career included both opportunities for both leadership and followership.

Servant leadership training has benefitted Greg and David in their work as research administrators. There are many servant leadership principles that can be applied to the research administration workplace. Here are four specific servant leadership tips that have helped Greg and David become better research administrators:

**1. Listening.** Part of being a good communicator is to be an active lister. Servant leaders are successful at putting needs of others first. In order to do this, a servant leader will listen to what their team is saying to fully understand their needs.

**2. Awareness.** Situational awareness is essential to making good decisions. Servant leaders will understand the current reality and communicate it to their team, while also having great self-awareness. Servant leaders will also acknowledge their own faults in order to make adjustments and better serve their teams.

**3. Conceptualizing.** Maintaining focus on organizational goals instead of getting caught up in the day to day minutia helps servant leaders work more on the tasks instead of working in the tasks. A key part of this delegation — servant leaders allow their team to do their jobs so the servant leader can be freed up to focus on both short term and long term goals.

**4. True Steward.** Organizations develop quickly when teams develop even faster. Servant leaders provide their team members with support and development opportunities. This takes time, but if team members are encouraged through learning, they will be more engaged and will provide greater value to the organization. Employee retention will flourish, as well.

Intrigued? Want to find out exactly what is servant leadership? Want to understand what Greg and David have tried to implement into their day to day in the workplace? We recommend an excellent book on the topic of servant leadership entitled *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership: Practicing the Wisdom of Leading by Serving*, by James W. Sipe and Don M. Frick (2009). In this book, the authors claim to have used the same metrics as described in the popular business book by Jim Collins entitled *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don’t* (2001) to measure the performance of eleven publicly traded companies that are considered to be servant led. The companies that were servant led outperformed the eleven companies that were considered “good to great” (p 2).

Embedded in each Pillar are three core leadership traits or competencies that we can easily see demonstrated by those we consider to be servant leaders. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose. A Person of Character maintains integrity, demonstrates humility, and serves a higher purpose.
A Person of Character maintains integrity by returning phone calls, following up on details, keeping promises, and being willing to admit mistakes. He/she demonstrates humility by intentionally making themselves vulnerable to the possibility that they may not right all the time (p 27, 29). How many of us can truly say that we take that courageous step in our daily leadership journey?

A leader who Puts People First displays a servant’s heart by being willing to get his/her hands dirty helping the team, rather than just talking about it or standing back while others do the heavy lifting. Being mentor minded means letting the one being mentored take responsibility, take chances, and develop, rather than merely being the recipient of the mentor’s expertise. Putting people first requires the servant leader to show care and concern. One of the most vivid examples of this occurred during my first deployment in a Navy fighter squadron. We were operating in the Indian Ocean and the state of the sea was causing the flight deck to pitch quite a bit, and airplane landings were challenging to say the least. One of our younger pilots flew a particularly poor approach resulting in an aircraft mishap. Had he been just a couple of feet lower, the mishap could have resulted in multiple fatalities and certain destruction of the aircraft. All of the junior officers watched the mishap on closed circuit TV in the ready room along with the Commanding Officer (CO). Once we realized that the aircrew were okay, our attention and curiosity were focused on the CO. How would he react when the pilot came back to the ready room, since an aircraft mishap might reflect badly on the CO’s training programs? Would he be mad? On the contrary, when the young pilot showed up ashen faced, the CO went up to him, shook his hand, clapped him on the shoulder, and said “Welcome back, Bill (not his real name)! Your method of arrival leaves a little bit to be desired, but it’s good to have you back.” Rather than being angry at the young officer for a poor landing, he showed care and concern instead.

Skilled Communicators are first great listeners. They listen with empathy and seek first to understand, communicate respect, warmth, and unconditional positive regard (p 49). They also seek feedback by being open, responsive, thoughtful, and calm when receiving the invited feedback (p 65). They are very skilled at giving feedback as well. Lastly, the Skilled Communicator uses the power of persuasion, rather than the tools of coercion in leading.

The Compassionate Collaborator expresses appreciation and thus enables employees to feel valued by using varied and frequent forms of recognition in the workplace (p 85). Recognizing co-workers is not difficult, but I think many leaders do not take the time as their schedules are so full. We are not truly serving our co-workers, if we do not take the time to recognize them for their contributions. The Compassionate ColLABorator also demonstrates the ability to build teams and communities, all the while realizing that each team will have several leaders with different personality traits and methods of interaction (p 87). Lastly, he/she needs to be able to negotiate conflict by recognizing their own anger signs and those of others in order to come to a reasonable outcome. I find that in my own role as contract negotiator, taking the approach that the negotiation is collaboration, rather than a competition, invariably leads to better outcomes.

A servant leader demonstrating Foresight is visionary, displays creativity, and takes courageous, decisive action (p 104). We follow leaders because they always seem to be able to see a bit further ahead than the rest of us. When they share their vision, we are encouraged to join them on the path forward. How does one develop foresight? One must be able to analyze the past, gain complete understanding of the present, be patient in processing information, be open for breakthroughs, and share insights with trusted colleagues. This process cannot be rushed or the outcome will suffer (p 113-115).

A servant leader who is a Systems Thinker is comfortable with complexity and demonstrates adaptability. He/she is able to take a complex situation or environment and “zoom out” to grasp the bigger picture rather than focusing on the minute details (p 131). They demonstrate adaptability by realizing that reality is fluid, and new responses may be required in order to deal with that. Because the servant leader is a visionary, he/she can chart a course to the ultimate destination, but like a sailboat can tack back and forth on the destination based on the prevailing winds of reality (p 141).

A servant leader has Moral Authority that is demonstrated by accepting and delegating responsibility, sharing power and control, and creating a culture of accountability (p 155). A servant leader is granted moral authority by their followers because they put people first through acts of care and concern, mentoring, and serving. Accepting responsibility and delegating it is difficult for many managers. The former is reflected in an attitude that someone else is in charge and I can’t do anything about it. The latter is reflected in the manager that is convinced that they alone can handle the responsibility and do not delegate. As a young officer, one of the sailors with whom I worked told me that she appreciated that when I gave her a task to complete, I didn’t “look over her shoulder” to make sure it was completed in a particular way. I had never thought about it before, but I did know that I did not appreciate being micromanaged and tried very hard not to do that to the folks with whom I worked. Give your folks clear guidelines, and be available if they have questions along the way. Otherwise, get out of their way.

Servant leadership has helped us out a great deal in the professional and personal settings. As you interact with your teams and colleagues, try to listen and ask your people how you can help and follow-up on your promises quickly. We think this will yield great results while allowing team members to carry out their duties with your full support.

Education Scholarship Fund Launch at AM55 Meets with Success

The official launch of NCURA’s new Education Scholarship Fund was met with enthusiasm and success as members opened their hearts and wallets to help meet an initial goal of $10,000. By the last night of the meeting, members had purchased enough raffle tickets and made personal donations to make the goal a reality. As one member said, “I would not be where I am today without the tremendous learning opportunities and support I have received through NCURA.” Another member noted, “My first Annual Meeting was made possible through an NCURA travel award and it’s time to give back.”

We thank our members, below, for their personal donation during the 55th Annual Meeting to the NCURA Education Scholarship Fund:

NCURA President’s Circle ($1000 - $4,999)
- Patrick Green
- Dave Richardson
- Pam Whitlock

NCURA Leadership Circle ($500-$999)
- John Case
- Barbara Gray
- Pat Hawk*
- Kim Moreland
- Toni Shaklee

NCURA Education Council ($100-$499)
- Cheryl Birch
- Linda Bucy
- Jamie Caldwell
- Chris Hansen
- Kris Monahan
- Dan Nordquist
- Tom Wilson

*First quarter of a four-year pledge

We would also like to thank our vendor partners who contributed prizes for the fundraising raffle:
- Euclid Technology
- Hilton San Francisco
- Lisa Baehr Graphics/Global Printing
- Marriott Wardman Park
- Olcott Consulting
- Sans Serif Communications
- Sheraton New Orleans
- Sheraton San Diego
- Sir Speedy Printing & Marketing Services
- SysArc, Inc.
- Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin
- Washington Hilton

The NCURA volunteers responsible for the Fund are currently working to build a solid business plan including the process for awarding scholarships. Members are: Pam Whitlock, Chair; Bob Andresen; John Case; James Casey; Jerry Fife; Pat Hawk; Kathleen Larmett; Peggy Lowry; Kris Monahan; Kim Moreland; Suzanne Rivera.

A portal for donations to the Fund will be available, shortly, on NCURA’s web site. It only takes a little to make a big difference. We hope you will consider making a tax-deductible donation through the web site, or mail directly to the NCURA office at:

NCURA Education Scholarship Fund, 1015 18th Street, NW, Suite 901, Washington, DC 20036
The AM55 theme “Investment – Commitment – Rewards” is one we see in many important aspects of our lives. As the program chairs of this meeting, we made an investment in putting together a high quality program that would serve the needs of NCURA’s diverse membership; we committed our time, and enlisted the commitment of many others with hopes that the Program would be a huge success.

Now that the meeting is over, we are delighting in the rewards that have come from the fruits of our labors, and grateful to all those dedicated NCURA volunteers who contributed to make this 55th Annual Meeting, the first summer annual meeting, a memorable experience.

AM55 had an upbeat feel to it. That isn’t something we can easily insert into the Program, plan for, or simply deliver. We recognize that the timing had benefits we may not have anticipated. While it seemed to us that August would be an easier time for a getaway, summer also presented fewer demands following us from our offices. People seemed less stressed, and we suspect there weren’t quite as many urgent issues or emergency conference calls vying for our attention.

The AM55 theme “Investment – Commitment – Rewards” is one we see in many important aspects of our lives. As the program chairs of this meeting, we made an investment in putting together a high quality program that would serve the needs of NCURA’s diverse membership; we committed our time, and enlisted the commitment of many others with hopes that the Program would be a huge success.

Now that the meeting is over, we are delighting in the rewards that have come from the fruits of our labors, and grateful to all those dedicated NCURA volunteers who contributed to make this 55th Annual Meeting, the first summer annual meeting, a memorable experience.

AM55 had an upbeat feel to it. That isn’t something we can easily insert into the Program, plan for, or simply deliver. We recognize that the timing had benefits we may not have anticipated. While it seemed to us that August would be an easier time for a getaway, summer also presented fewer demands following us from our offices. People seemed less stressed, and we suspect there weren’t quite as many urgent issues or emergency conference calls vying for our attention.

The AM55 theme “Investment – Commitment – Rewards” is one we see in many important aspects of our lives. As the program chairs of this meeting, we made an investment in putting together a high quality program that would serve the needs of NCURA’s diverse membership; we committed our time, and enlisted the commitment of many others with hopes that the Program would be a huge success.

Now that the meeting is over, we are delighting in the rewards that have come from the fruits of our labors, and grateful to all those dedicated NCURA volunteers who contributed to make this 55th Annual Meeting, the first summer annual meeting, a memorable experience.

AM55 had an upbeat feel to it. That isn’t something we can easily insert into the Program, plan for, or simply deliver. We recognize that the timing had benefits we may not have anticipated. While it seemed to us that August would be an easier time for a getaway, summer also presented fewer demands following us from our offices. People seemed less stressed, and we suspect there weren’t quite as many urgent issues or emergency conference calls vying for our attention.

The AM55 theme “Investment – Commitment – Rewards” is one we see in many important aspects of our lives. As the program chairs of this meeting, we made an investment in putting together a high quality program that would serve the needs of NCURA’s diverse membership; we committed our time, and enlisted the commitment of many others with hopes that the Program would be a huge success.

Now that the meeting is over, we are delighting in the rewards that have come from the fruits of our labors, and grateful to all those dedicated NCURA volunteers who contributed to make this 55th Annual Meeting, the first summer annual meeting, a memorable experience.

AM55 had an upbeat feel to it. That isn’t something we can easily insert into the Program, plan for, or simply deliver. We recognize that the timing had benefits we may not have anticipated. While it seemed to us that August would be an easier time for a getaway, summer also presented fewer demands following us from our offices. People seemed less stressed, and we suspect there weren’t quite as many urgent issues or emergency conference calls vying for our attention.
Meeting attendees are the vital link between the vision and ideas shared at our conferences and the campuses and institutions where they will be realized. Upon returning from a meeting, attendees are encouraged, invited, and sometimes required, to share what they learned. In possession of the most current information, they are able to share the wealth and spread the knowledge. Often attendees not only have the information to deliver, but they are able to share the context, the questions, and those very helpful anecdotes the speakers used to make their point.

Many slide presentations include speaker contact information. Presenters frequently hear back from meeting attendees and workshop participants for clarifications, details, or a nagging question they hesitated to ask publicly. Even more often, we dis-
cover another member, a co-attendee, with whom a bond is formed based on an issue or position we have in common. These interchanges foster the professional relationships on which NCURA is founded and frequently initiate connections beneficial to our institutions. These connections we make with our colleagues are some of the most valuable to us professionally as well as personally. There is nothing better than resolving an issue at your institution by contacting a colleague at another. Then, when that colleague reaches out to you with a question on an agreement, a late invoice, or a missing document...your friendship is sealed. Because the number of your NCURA friends grows easily with every email, with each meeting, reuniting once again at an Annual Meeting is absolutely rewarding.
6. Past Officers

7. (left) John Westensee, Danish Association for Research Managers (DARMA), NCURA President Patricia Hawk and (right) Martin Kirk, Canadian Association of Research Administrators (CAURA)

8. Keynote Speaker
Patricia Hawk, NCURA President; Kathleen Larmett, NCURA Executive Director; Dee Dee Myers, Vivian Holmes, NCURA Vice President
9. AM55 Program Committee
row 1: Judy Fredenberg, Barbara Cole, Tom Wilson, Vivian Holmes, Annika Glauner, Robyn Remotigue, Susan Zipkin, Jamie Caldwell
row 2: Heather Offhaus, Debbie Newton, John Garfora, Jim Casey, Kim Moreland
row 3: Samantha Westcott, Craig Reynolds, Pamela Napier, Michele Codd, Jean Feldman, Cathy Snyder
top row: Jerry Pogatshnik, Tommy Coggins, Toni Lawson, Cindy Hope, Alexandra McKeeven, Jim Wrenn, Bruce Morgan
not pictured: Célia Gospod, Joe Gindhart, Louise Griffin, Suzanne Rivera
By David Gindhart

**YOUR JOURNEY TO A RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION PORTAL**

**WHAT** A research administration portal provides integrated information from various sources across a portfolio of topics. These portals are often data-focused and can include information on proposals and awards, protocols, conflict of interest disclosures, effort reporting, training status, and financial reporting. Portals can also provide simple tools like a current and pending report or more complex tools like budget projections.

**WHO** This may be the most important question in your portal journey after you understand what a portal is. Most universities have focused their portal efforts on faculty members and for very good reason. Early research administration systems were built primarily for administrative offices to manage their internal processes as they automated formerly paper-based processes. Those systems were rarely built with researchers as customers. More modern commercial and home-grown systems have screens for researchers to input and view information, but that's resulted in faculty having to navigate multiple systems with different user interfaces and business rules.

Although faculty may be the primary customer for your portal, don’t leave out your research administrators in your design and marketing efforts. Administrators want integrated information also, and more importantly they’ll need to see the same information as your researchers to answer questions or diagnose problems. Although this need can present some confidentiality concerns for research faculty, at Penn State, we implemented a research administration portal that provides integrated access to information and applications that are often personalized (tailored for you) and customized (configured by you). There are public portals like My Yahoo or iGoogle to integrate news and information from multiple sources. Federal, state, and government portals offer online access to information and services. Employee portals provide to access to human resources and benefits information and self-service applications like time and attendance. When you bank online you’re often presented a portal with information from your different accounts and outside information such as stock prices or helpful articles.

As society has adapted to the utilization of web portals in daily life, not surprisingly our researchers and administrators want similar functions to manage their sponsored projects. Web portals have indeed been a hot topic in research administration for the last couple of years. In this article, I’ll lay out the 5 W’s (who, what, where, why, when) of research administration portals and some tips on H (how). In discussing with other universities, I’ve discovered that there are certain similarities across portal projects; however, each institution has its own unique research administration and IT landscapes.

Web portals were an Internet innovation of the late 1990’s and whether you realize it or not, you encounter them in your online life every day. A web portal is a destination that provides integrated access to information and applications that are often personalized (tailored for you) and customized (configured by you). There are public portals like My Yahoo or iGoogle to integrate news and information from multiple sources. Federal, state, and government portals offer online access to information and services. Employee portals provide to access to human resources and benefits information and self-service applications like time and attendance. When you bank online you’re often presented a portal with information from your different accounts and outside information such as stock prices or helpful articles.

As society has adapted to the utilization of web portals in daily life, not surprisingly our researchers and administrators want similar functions to manage their sponsored projects. Web portals have indeed been a hot topic in research administration for the last couple of years. In this article, I’ll lay out the 5 W’s (who, what, where, why, when) of research administration portals and some tips on H (how). In discussing with other universities, I’ve discovered that there are certain similarities across portal projects; however, each institution has its own unique research administration and IT landscapes.

**WHY** Some of the benefits of a portal are obvious – who doesn’t want up-to-date information in one convenient location? Let’s face it, we’ve come to expect that kind of around-the-clock access because we’re so used to it in our personal lives as we interact with various companies and their websites. Faculty are simultaneously facing greater competition for research dollars while federal compliance requirements expand and therefore need access to the best research administration data available. Faculty and administrators can benefit from reduced office visits for routine information which is now available in your portal. Sometimes periodic reports (e.g., monthly expenditure report) can be eliminated and replaced by real-time access. For administrators, it’s more difficult to hold someone accountable for information to which they don’t have immediate access. The converse is also true: with a portal you can no longer say you didn’t have access to the information.

There are some less obvious benefits to a portal that shouldn’t be overlooked. Your portal can hide the complexity and age of your source systems. At Penn State there are legacy systems that are so difficult to use and understand that giving

administration

ecosystem. If you have a more consolidated pre and post award system, it could be built there. Another option is to build it into an existing reporting or business intelligence tool, often connected to a data warehouse. At Penn State, we chose to build a separate application because our research administration data is spread across many systems and is not all available in our data warehouse. In fact, our portal doesn’t store any data but just retrieves data in real time from various source systems. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration your current IT infrastructure before determining where your portal should be located.

**WHEN** If you haven’t started a portal project, you may want to initiate conversations with your vendor and/or IT staff. It can be a separate project or you may want to bundle it into a new system rollout to offer goodwill to your faculty members and help them through the sometimes difficult transition to new systems or processes. When it comes to planning the project, don’t underestimate the “cost of agreement” on your data interfaces. Depending on the relationships you have with the various data and system owners, coming to a common understanding of the data and then documenting an agreement on what data can be passed and how it will be displayed and protected can be 50% of the project time (not effort). I would also highly recommend an iterative development process that can quickly incorporate feedback from testing and early releases.

**WHERE** Choosing the location of your portal will depend on your IT and research
access to faculty would be a bad idea. The portal can provide a platform to build faculty-friendly views of the legacy data that can be integrated with other relevant data. The portal can also do additional calculations or data manipulation that may not be built-in to your source systems. In assessing the needs of our faculty, it was apparent that there was an overwhelming need for a “checkbook” balance for their individual project accounts. We calculate an “estimated available balance” within the portal that accounts for fringe and overhead on encumbrances—a calculation that our accounting system doesn’t provide.

**HOW** I can’t prescribe your portal journey — each one is unique — but I can give you a three-step recipe for mapping out yours.

1. **Talk to others.** This seems obvious but can save you lots of time. Talk to your faculty to discover their pain points. Look for faculty who collaborate across department or college boundaries and may be receiving varying levels of service from different units. Also be aware of age and support biases. Adoption will be greater for more technology-friendly faculty (digital natives) and in units with less administrative support where faculty have to be more self-sufficient. Talk to other universities to see what they’re doing and what good ideas can be leveraged. Read good articles in reputable magazines… oops, you’re already doing that.

2. **Get executive sponsorship.** Inevitably you’ll run into turf battles over data or priorities and will need leadership to drive agreement and alignment. Whether your sponsor is an individual or a committee, you want as many organizations as possible feeling ownership in your portal’s success (and then share the praise widely). Your sponsor(s) should also be a key voice in your marketing to faculty and administrators. Don’t underestimate the value of getting out and demonstrating your portal — they don’t have to use it, so give them good reasons to use it.

3. **Think big, start small, scale fast.** Synthesize all the good ideas from talking to your customers and build a prototype. Embrace the user’s mantra of “I’ll know it when I see it” and gather feedback on something that looks real (and seems feasible). Since you’re not likely replacing an existing system, embrace the developer’s mantra of “build it and they will come” and add some innovative features that weren’t asked for. However, make sure you build usage metrics into your portal to inform your design iterations. Consider making real-time web service calls to get data to avoid the overhead of storing data that must be modeled, secured, and maintained. Finally, as you get some traction, look for opportunities to make the portal indispensable. For example, when we send out award notification emails to PI’s, we no longer attach the award and instead provide a link to access the portal.

Our portal experience has been very positive for all the reasons stated above. Most importantly, we’ve focused on faculty as primary customers, met a key need, and built their trust. Hopefully you’re doing that today, but can you ever have enough trust? For those already on the journey, let’s stay in touch and proudly share ideas. For those still planning their journey, good luck!

---

David Gindhart is the Director of the Office of Research Information Systems, which is responsible for pre-award and non-financial research compliance systems at Penn State. David can be reached at dcg102@psu.edu

---

**Research Administration...**

**By the NUMBERS**

**COI Throughout The Years**

**1995**

COI Regulations implemented by PHS and NSF.

**1994-2003**

Biomedical research funding increased from $37.1 billion to $94.3 billion.

Industry funding significant

**2007**

Relationships with academic researchers and industry increased from 28% in a 1996 survey to 52.8% in a 2007 survey.

**2008**

Report by AAMC/AAU - Foreseeing potential financial conflicts of interest.

**2009**

HHS OIG Report – “Vulnerabilities exist at grantee institutions regarding conflicts”.

**May 8, 2009**

HHS ANPRM.

**May 21, 2010**

NPRM Amends 1995 rules.

**July 21, 2010**

NPRM 30 day extension.

**August 25, 2011**

2011 Revised Regulations.

**August 24, 2012**

Regulation Compliance Date.

**Fall 2013**

COI: Plus One Year.

Want to share numbers? Email Derek Brown at derekbrown@wsu.edu

Source:

Federal Register Notice
Vol. 76, No. 165 (8/25/2011) (Final Rule)

---

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013**

19
Happy Anniversary!

PHS Financial Conflict of Interest Regulations - One Year Later

By Marisa Zuskar

Last summer, research institutions across the country focused on August 24, 2012 - the effective date for the new Public Health Service (PHS) regulations on Financial Conflict of Interest. Because these new regulations affected all National Institutes of Health (NIH) sponsored research, they prompted many research institutions to enact new and revised policies and procedures to identify, evaluate, and manage financial conflicts.

The new regulations updated the definition of a Significant Financial Interest (SFI) and when an SFI constitutes a Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI). The regulations also shift the responsibility for determining when an SFI constitutes an FCOI from investigators to their institutions, prompting the need for additional policies, reporting and training requirements, and formalize the requirement for annual disclosure and evaluation of SFI. Now that the regulations have been in place for a year, it is time for institutions to shift gears and focus on annual compliance and determining how best to stay on top of reporting and disclosure requirements.

One major requirement of the revised PHS regulations was for investigators to “disclose their Significant Financial Interests that reasonably appear to be related to the Investigator’s institutional responsibilities at least annually, in accordance with the specific time period prescribed by the Institution, during the period of award.” This regulation allowed institutions to determine how to implement this requirement:

By Award:
Investigators annually disclose interests reasonably related to institutional responsibilities for a specific project (possibly resulting in multiple disclosures by an individual annually).

By Investigator:
Investigators annually disclose interests reasonably related to institutional responsibilities for ALL active projects.

Regardless of the option selected, tracking and updating disclosure status are critical requirements:

By Award:
With the August COI anniversary, the 2012 Budget Period disclosures are outdated and new 2013 disclosures are required. How is your institution keeping track of the 2013 status?

By Investigator:
Individuals responsible for the design, conduct and reporting of research may start to have annual disclosures expire mid-award Budget Period. Now is the time for institutions to ensure procedures are in place to identify individuals with “expired” disclosures and determine how project work and spending can remain in compliance as the annual updates to the disclosures are submitted.

Controlling for Compliance

The award set-up process provides a logical control point for compliance assurance. For example, institutions can elect to not make incoming funding available for spending until all FCOI disclosure and management requirements are complete. Not only can institutions use the award set-up process to block spending of funds from the new budget period if disclosures or management plans are outstanding, this process can also be used to “freeze” or inhibit spending of previous or “old” PHS funding (if the annual requirement has lapsed) until the next round of funding is received and processed. This method requires institutions to monitor encumbrances and ongoing expenditures (e.g., salary and benefit costs) on PHS-sponsored awards since the regulations prohibit incurring expenses in support of the award until the review process is complete.

Disclosures submitted to meet the August 2012 deadline may have now lapsed or may be lapsing in the near future. Then what do institutions do? As a first step, institutions should identify any active awards affected by expiring disclosures and be proactive in alerting investigators about their continuing responsibilities and submission requirements. Begin the communication process early, before the disclosure “expiration” date, so that investigators have plenty of time to prepare and submit their annual disclosures before they are out of compliance.
Use the requirement of annual disclosures to an institution’s advantage. Maintaining a record of the prior disclosure and providing a copy to the investigator will allow the investigator to quickly review and update or confirm the disclosure of financial interests. The internal review can also leverage results of the previous submission.

In addition to the annual requirement for SFI disclosure and review, an institution’s processes should also account for the PHS requirement for annual reporting to the sponsor. Institutions should have provided details on all active Management Plans impacting PHS awards at the time the Management Plan was implemented. Under the new regulations, institutions must also provide annual updates on the status of Management Plans.

In order to meet this requirement, institutions should create a process that prompts this annual reporting requirement. Because the updates are due at the same time as the annual progress report—and for NIH-sponsored awards are provided using the same system (eRA Commons)—a good practice is to link the annual Management Plan reporting process to the Progress Report process. Organizations should capitalize on the same “reminders” and process trigger mechanisms currently in place to prompt Progress Reporting or other sponsor reporting (financial) and update these tools to flag awards where FCOI reporting is required.

Once your organization has all the process requirements for annual disclosure, review and reporting under control, take time to celebrate this one-year anniversary! Congratulations, you made it!

Time for Reflection – and Further Action

Like other important anniversaries in your life, this is a time to take stock in what the last year has meant to your institution and make plans for the upcoming year. Conduct a one-year self-evaluation of your institution and how the change in PHS FCOI regulations has impacted your operations. How did this year go? An anecdotal current state assessment of feedback and input from your stakeholders is a great way to get started.

• How do your central FCOI administrators feel about operations and compliance? Do they feel overwhelmed with work (more than the typical research administrator!) caused by increased disclosure volume?
• Is the central staff worried that your institution may have several cases of non-compliance, either because of investigator-related issues or because administrative support personnel are having a hard time keeping up with requirements?
• Do investigators feel they understand their role and are able to meet their obligations? Do they feel the implementation went smoothly and their project work has not been unduly impacted?
• Don’t forget the performance metrics! While stakeholder feedback is invaluable (i.e., the perception), quantitative metrics (i.e., the reality) provide the proof. Metrics are always “hot topics” in research administration, and FCOI is no exception. Start by gathering data such as:
  • How many disclosures were submitted in the past year?
  • How many were Annual Disclosures versus Disclosure Changes?
  • How many included SFI versus No SFI?
  • How many of the disclosed SFIs represented FCOIs?
  • How many Management Plans are in place?
  • How long does it take to review a disclosure with SFI to report?
  • How long does it take to develop a Management Plan?

Using the new found insight gained from your self-assessment, start looking forward to Year 2 and identify areas for improvement and further development. What opportunities does your institution have to improve operations going forward?

• If data indicates that investigators may not have a firm grasp on their FCOI responsibilities and staff are worried that this could lead to non-compliance, perhaps additional communications and updates to the FCOI training can help better inform investigators.
• If your institution finds that a very high proportion of disclosed SFI are determined to represent FCOI, it may want to take a closer look at the review and determination process. Is the institution taking an overly conservative approach to FCOI determination? Would updates to its institutional procedure documentation, such as positive and negative FCOI examples, provide additional guidance to help reviewers make appropriate determinations? Should institutions examine and revise the process for determining relatedness of SFIs to the investigators’ activities?
• If an organization finds that its cycle times for reviewing disclosures are longer than anticipated because there are several requests for additional information from the investigator, perhaps the organization should revise its disclosure form to request the additional data you need up front.
• If there is a pattern of high-level of non-compliance with the PHS training requirement, is there an opportunity to offer online training or integrate training into the disclosure process itself?
• If a major bottleneck in the process is communication across central offices (COI Compliance Office to Pre-Award Office to Award Set-up Unit), consider how technology and integrated systems could facilitate the cooperation of various units. Linking a COI system directly to a pre-Award system may be a major technology investment, but it will certainly make it easier to determine if all investigators are compliant with disclosure requirements prior to submitting a PHS proposal. System linkage is more of a long-term improvement, but in the short term, organizations can facilitate data and information sharing across offices by providing additional users access to systems and reports.

The next step in assuring compliance is likely to be audits. To date, there has not been much activity on the audit front, but as Year 2 begins, it is likely to increase. Once the first audits are made public, the industry will likely get more clarity on the compliance and process issues of concern to the PHS. Institutions would be wise to prepare themselves for further scrutiny. For now, share the lessons that were learned during the implementation process, and take some time to congratulate yourself and your team on a successful Year 1 – You made it through.

Happy Anniversary!

Marisa Zuskar, a Manager in Huron’s Higher Education practice, has spent the majority of her career focusing on operational and performance improvement at research institutions. She has designed operational, performance, and compliance management metrics and reports allowing institutional leadership to monitor operations. She has extensive experience using metrics to identify opportunities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of sponsored projects administration. Marisa can be reached at mzuskar@huronconsultinggroup.com
It’s been a bit more than a year since we implemented changes in our institutional conflict of interest procedures to better align with emerging federal regulations. For some, this transition may have simply added a new dimension to “political correctness” as they strove to develop controls to align correctly with politics of another unfunded mandate. Yet, on the sprawling campus of Livlenenprosser where the women are strong, the men beautiful, and it only rains at night, the most pronounced change is the increased number of disclosures.

One was recently communicated in a manner similar to a popular beer commercial, with the Most Interesting Man in the World: “Ty, I don’t always drink beer, but when I do, I drink Dos Equis (owned by Heineken International). I also own mutual funds with shares in Heineken, and I just bought two kegs for a graduation party (not a research project). Does this constitute a conflict of interest?”

While this particular PI may be benefitting from the sale of alcoholic beverages, it’s only a few shares and two kegs which means it’s well under the regulatory threshold.

But others run the gamut from the obvious to the absurd:

My wife gives me a weekly allowance, and I used part of it to pay for my mileage to the airport. Does this qualify as sponsored travel? Do I need to disclose within 60 days?

I earn over $5,000 per year moonlighting as a taxi driver. Does my car count as an “investment vehicle?”

Do I need to disclose gifts? I received a box of Swiss Chocolates from a good-looking vendor who wishes to do more business with the University. I must admit that the flight to Switzerland on his company’s jet was so comfortable it was almost better than the spa treatment at that exclusive alpine resort where we stayed. But back to the chocolate.

A high school buddy with a small company uses my University lab on weekends to run his experiments. It seems to be a perfect arrangement since I’m not using it on the weekends and it’s the only way he makes a profit.

Yes, I supervise my step-son’s wife. I’ve done it for 15 years and you’ve never asked or cared before. She’s excelled at her job and I’ve certainly made it worth her while. They’re finally able to hire babysitters instead of always relying on us.

I own a company that is sponsoring my research program. It’s win-win.

I usually get a different car from the motor pool on the first of each month and use it to commute the five-mile round trip to work every day. I always return it on time when I pick up next month’s car so that it’s easy to reconcile the departmental charges. I do like the sporty red one!

The departmental secretary has been so accommodating. She does all the bookkeeping for my spin-off company in the mornings when it’s quiet on campus.

As Grounds Director, I’ve always contracted with the same company for the University’s lawn maintenance. The lawns look terrific, don’t you agree? Yes, the company is technically owned by my son, but I’m not related to any of his employees who do the actual work.

I love serving on scientific review panels. It’s always so rewarding to defend my proposals in person when they’re being considered for funding.

I’m busy as a CEO of my spin-off company, but I assure you such responsibility in no way affects my full-time University employment. I do all of the private company work in the morning and am on campus by noon every day—well, at least three days each week.

Aren’t grad students marvelous? I have two in particular that are always so willing to do anything to help out. Maybe it’s a cultural thing since they’re both from Iran, but they pick up my laundry every Tuesday with nary a complaint.

I’ve already signed over all my IP rights to a local company for which I regularly consult. That new 1 GHZ NMR spectrometer that the department bought this year has sure been a joy to use on my work for them.

I’m sure that everyone has had similar experiences with disclosures in the last year. Such situational diversity is commonplace for our profession. Every day is different – drastically different. I know we all complain a bit, but the reality is that not knowing what the day will bring is what keeps the spring in our steps, the twinkle in our eyes, and Dos Equis foremost on our minds.

NCURAbly Pedantic is written by long-standing NCURA members, all under pseudonym protection.
Revealing Invisible Changes In The World

Our video that won an honorable mention in the NSF International Science & Engineering Visualization Challenge 2012, showcasing novel video processing algorithms to analyze and reveal small imperceptible changes in the world.


Potent Antibiotic Discovered in Ocean

A team led by William Fenical at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego has discovered a new chemical compound from an ocean microbe in a preliminary research finding that could one day set the stage for new treatments for anthrax and other ailments such as methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).


Poliovirus Vaccine Trial Shows Promise for Recurrent Glioblastoma

In 2010 Stephanie Lipscomb was diagnosed with glioblastoma, an aggressive type of brain cancer. She underwent surgery to remove the tumor, but it returned two years later. She agreed to take part in the first phase of a research trial at Duke where a modified poliovirus is injected directly into the tumor. That was in May of 2012. Fourteen months later the tumor continues to shrink without the use of chemotherapy or radiation.


Low-Intensity Vibration as Therapy

Stony Brook University Biomedical Engineering graduate student Danielle Green is an example of the University’s excellence in tech transfer. Green works in Professor Clinton Rubin’s Biomedical Engineering lab studying the effects of low-level stimulation on bone marrow stem cell rejuvenation in patients with poor bone quality due to chemotherapy and other causes. Rubin and Green are also collaborating with Marodyne Medical to bring Low Intensity Vibration to the clinic for non-drug therapies and injury.


3D printer and living “ink” create cartilage

Lawrence Bonassar, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering, describes a cutting-edge process he has developed in which he uses a 3D Printer and “ink” composed of living cells to create body parts such as ears.


If you want to share a “cool” project idea, please email Danielle Anthony at danthony@wsu.edu
Conflict of interest in research is not a novel concept by any means, but its relationship to proposals and awards has changed significantly over the past year. On August 24, 2012, the Public Health Service established new requirements in regards to conflict of interest and related financial activities (National Institutes of Health). With the new regulations in place, many research administrators faced new challenges in communicating these regulations to their investigators and other research staff members. As the first year of the regulation has now concluded, there is an increased level of responsibility and accountability associated with proposals and awards funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other select agencies. The rollout of these regulations at research institutions has been enacted, but internal systems and controls are unique and diverse within each institution. A brief examination of the challenges and considerations of conflict of interest from the research administrator’s perspective will now be explored.

Since financial conflict of interest management has significantly evolved over the past year, the level of compliance required prior to grant submission has become increasingly complex. Therefore, it has been a challenge for research administrators to enforce new policies that govern many grant submissions.

With the emergence of PHS conflict of interest regulations, additional requirements must be addressed prior to the submission of grants to sponsors. For organizations that receive funding from the NIH or from other participating agencies, the culture of grant submissions and award management has shifted towards a greater disclosure of financial activities. Principal Investigators must now examine their own financial activities with greater scrutiny and disclose those activities in a public fashion. With the submission of any grant where the PHS conflict of interest regulations are in effect, it is necessary for research administrators to ensure that all principal investigators and key personnel have disclosed their financial activities in a suitable manner. It is the responsibility of research institutions to establish internal compliance departments assigned to oversee adherence to the regulations through the appropriate disclosure activities.

In spite of the mandates associated with financial conflict of interest, some institutions are struggling to catch up in modifying their current processes and/or implementing new procedures strategies, perhaps with the intent to develop electronic systems at a later date. Some institutions developed hybrid systems in the interim until they were able to create a more comprehensive system for implementation. Electronic platforms do not always mirror existing resources for grant review and submissions, which may lead to confusion regarding the submission of disclosures that are required to ensure compliance with new regulations and policies. Also, systems that do not shadow existing programs may cause greater confusion for grants administration teams in determining whether or not the regulations have been satisfied. Regardless of the method that is chosen for fulfilling the institution’s obligations, it is essential that research administrators possess the knowledge that is required to address issues and to work collaboratively with those responsible for oversight of these systems on a consistent basis.

Some principal investigators have been slow in adapting to an additional compliance requirement prior to the submission of their grants or the administration of their awards. The ability to acclimate the research culture to another form of compliance should not be a difficult task in the-
ory, however, the delicate nature of financial conflict of interest has been challenging at best for investigators and key personnel who have developed relationships with outside entities. The disclosure of these financial activities is now a precursor in the submission of NIH grants and those offered by several other prominent agencies. This shift in policy and practice has been difficult to navigate for some faculty members, who might be unsure about the nature of their disclosures and how they are interpreted by funding organizations. Furthermore, it has been difficult for some faculty to use and be comfortable with another electronic system, and some are resistant to change. Nonetheless, the PHS conflict of interest regulations are here to stay.

Since some of the systems that have been implemented to manage financial conflict of interest have been established by compliance teams and other institutional representatives and are not managed by research administration, there is always a risk of confusion in carrying out these requirements and in confirming their completion prior to grant submission. The primary challenge for many research administrators has been in educating faculty and staff in completing financial conflict of interest disclosures correctly and in a timely manner. From a compliance perspective, proper disclosures are required to submit grants and receive awards; however, deadline-driven grant submissions often test the limits when disclosures are not submitted on time and could potentially delay a grant submission by an entire cycle.

All organizations are required to establish their own policies and to manage disclosed conflicts of interest that are deemed significant and to further disclose this information to the NIH (NIH). For subaward activities, institutional compliance with conflict of interest regulations has also become increasingly complex. Subawardees must provide their own assurances regarding the conflict of interest policies that govern their institutions. Research administrators are responsible for obtaining these assurances so that submitted proposals and awards received are fully compliant with the regulations. Regulations that govern grants and contracts are designed to protect research institutions and investigators from unnecessary risk or harm. Financial conflict of interest policies and procedures serve as a form of assurance that this issue is a top priority in the research community. Therefore, financial conflict of interest disclosures must be submitted through internal systems as required, and disclosed to the NIH on an as-needed basis.

A year has passed since expanded governance regarding conflict of interest was established; and during that period, organizational policies and procedures have undergone significant changes. The road to developing conflict of interest policies and procedures has been challenging in many ways, but compliance with these requirements is critical to the integrity of the research community. In spite of the obstacles, research administrators have made the best of a difficult situation and have adapted well to the changes over the past year. It has been important for research administrators to continue to recognize the importance of these regulations and their impact on research and related activities. Although cases of non-compliance are likely to be rare, they are nonetheless a potential threat to the strength and integrity of research dollars and the continued expansion of research portfolios. Research administrators play a critical role in this process and support research endeavors in a positive manner.

Reference

Colleen M. Loew, MBA, Senior Grant & Contract Officer at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, began her research administration career at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH in 1998. Her background includes proposal and award administration and management, as well as faculty and department education. She is a graduate of John Carroll University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Case Western Reserve University with a Masters of Business Administration. Colleen’s responsibilities at CSMC include proposal and award management, authorized organizational representative functions, and other pre-award and post-award non-financial activities. She may be reached at colleen.loew@cshs.org

Toni Lawson’s Desk
“What’s on my desk?”, you ask. Where do I begin? As research administrators there are many competing priorities on our desks. As I survey my desk to prioritize the myriad of tasks, the one that stands out above the rest is to identify and develop some metrics to demonstrate the outcomes of sponsored projects research and other scholarly activities at the University of Maryland. The objective is to develop information about the successes of externally funded activity. There are a number of internal and external resources available to explore in gathering this information. I’m working with internal staff to strategize on what data is available in our electronic system. In addition, I’m searching websites to gather additional data and information to use to build reports. I also have the expertise of colleagues from other universities to collaborate and gain insight from their experiences. That is the value of NCURA and having individuals to reach out to when one begins a new task or project such as this.

Toni Lawson is Director of the Office of Research Administration at the University of Maryland.
GRANT MANAGEMENT AND EFFORT CERTIFICATION SHOULD WORK TOGETHER. NOW THEY DO.

Errors. Inefficiencies. Hidden costs. IT Works eliminates them all with Grant Management and Effort Certification solutions that actually work together. And at a cost that is dramatically lower than competitive systems.

Our Grant Management solution provides easy access to essential pre and post award data including sponsor and budget information, committed effort, document management, compliance, deliverables tracking, subcontract monitoring and more. Our Effort Certification solution includes sponsored research and hard money, budget to actual comparisons, cost sharing and multi-level approvals and certifications.

These powerful, scalable, easy-to-use solutions come separately or together and include dashboards, e-mail alerts, reminders, reporting, data filters and sharing of relevant data. Visit itworks-inc.com now to learn more.
It has been more than a year since the new Public Health Service (PHS) rule at 42 C.F.R. Part 50 Subpart F took effect governing objectivity in research (otherwise known as conflict of interests or COI). The new rule, designed to reduce actual and perceived conflicts between investigators’ financial and scientific interests by adding disclosure and reporting obligations, required a multitude of policy changes at universities and research institutes across the United States.

The most consequential of these changes was the lowering of the threshold at which a researcher’s personal financial interests is considered sufficiently significant to warrant institutional oversight and, potentially, disclosure of the interest to study subjects and others. Previously $10,000 per entity, PHS lowered the threshold for significance to $5,000. Despite the absence of a clearly-articulated rationale for reducing by half the amount of consulting income, honoraria or stock that investigators could receive before triggering the need for institutional review and oversight, universities were instructed to adjust their policies and operating procedures accordingly. Many of us in the research compliance field worried that we might see our COI caseloads double because all the investigators who had become adept at keeping their financial interests under the previous $10,000 limit (and thus were not subject to management plans) would now require oversight.

Further changes included the addition of a new requirement that certain categories of reimbursed travel must be disclosed as an outside financial interest (as if travel, itself, were a form of compensation). This provision has been the most confounding and, I would argue, adds the least amount of value to an already rigorous COI disclosure and review requirement. While it is possible that the occasional researcher attends a boondoggle of a meeting in some glamorous tropical locale, the vast majority of reimbursed travel for researchers is to attend academic conferences, scientific meetings and programs organized by professional societies and non-profit organizations. For most of us now responsible for collecting this travel information, it is not clear that the effort required materially improves objectivity in research.

Another requirement in the new PHS rule obligates institutions to either post information about their financially-conflicted PHS-funded investigators on a public website or to respond meaningfully to requests for such information within five days. Although a few institutions immediately built elaborate websites to facilitate reporting of their investigators’ outside financial interests, the majority have gone the route of pledging to meaningfully respond to inquiries. One likely reason for the popularity of this approach is that a healthy, well-functioning COI oversight process likely will not tolerate very many PHS-funded investigators whose financial interests exceed the significance threshold. Accordingly, if the number of people in this circumstance at your institution is less than a few dozen, then the development of a website is not an efficient use of scarce institutional resources.

The logistical implications of implementing all these changes within the prescribed year were daunting. At a minimum, at least three types of changes were required: 1) in the data collection forms (whether paper or electronic) for financial interest disclosures, 2) in the algorithms for determining who needs oversight, and 3) in the training materials used to educate researchers about COI. Fortunately, my campus already had a home-grown database for collecting and sorting financial interest disclosure information. But retrofitting that system took valuable IT resources away from other important functions, like maintaining our effort certification system and the software programs that support the various regulatory committees like the IRB. Given that no additional funding came with the requirement to change our procedures, this mandate essentially amounted to F&A cost-share on the part of the institution.

Database changes may seem straightforward, but they can have material consequences. Consider this challenge: the new rule required that
I started attending the Regional meetings; got to meet my Regional colleagues, some of whom have become lifelong friends...and to my greatest pleasure the same thing happened at the National level. Not long after becoming a member of NCURA, I begin to clearly understand my NCURA pathway would be through “volunteerism” and “leadership”.

I found that consistently volunteering at both the Regional and National level gave me the experience and confidence I needed to seek out leadership positions. Now I’m ready to “pay it forward”. How can I do this? I can do this by encouraging all NCURA members to find their “Pathway”, whether it be through Volunteerism, Leadership, or being a Presenter. I guarantee it will greatly enhance your NCURA journey.

**Ben Prince** is the Administrator for the Division of Geriatric Medicine and The Meyers Primary Care Institute, University of Massachusetts Medical School. He can be reached at ben.prince@umassmed.edu

we review any instance in which a researcher receives an aggregate of $5,000 or more from a single entity, including cash, stock, and income from intellectual property (IP) interests. So-called “smartforms” work best when you use discrete choices, like mutually-exclusive dollar ranges, rather than open alpha-numeric fields. But it is not possible to put an exact value on stock from privately-held companies. So, if an investigator reports $2,000 in cash, a small amount of stock in a privately-held company, and any royalties due from licensed IP, all from the same entity, the form needs to sort that case into a “review” queue so further analysis can be performed to determine whether the aggregated value exceeds $5,000.

Seeing that this could dramatically increase the number of cases to be reviewed by a committee made up of volunteer faculty, we decided that we would have to create a subcommittee to perform a triage function. Once the new procedures went into effect, this subcommittee would review all cases where the disclosed interest was (or could turn out to be when aggregated) valued at $5,000 or more. This subcommittee would decide, using a decision-making algorithm we devised to assess risk, which cases required an airing in front of a convened meeting of the full committee and which ones could be decided by a smaller group. The model is similar to the procedures for “expedited review” and “designated review” in the IRB and IACUC arenas.

But, before any technical and procedural changes could be implemented on our campus, high-level philosophical and business-process decisions had to be made. Would all researchers be held to this new stricter PHS standard, or only those working on PHS-funded projects? If we were to treat researchers differentially based upon their funding source(s), how would we be certain to stay in compliance with PHS as investigators roll on and off grants? Would the new campus policy apply to adjunct and part-time faculty who are not researchers? What about consultants?

These questions and more were debated at length. We considered issues of fairness, efficiency, transparency, and we tried to honor what we imagine the public would expect of us. We also thought about how the changes might be received by potential study subjects, academic journals, and others who now would receive information about interests valued as low as $5,000. Once we reached consensus within the administrative circles responsible for compliance, we made the rounds with every relevant body on campus, including the faculty senate. Respecting the principle of shared governance, it took an entire academic year to win approval for our new policy and the associated procedures from every corner of the university.

After more than one year of living under the new rule, one thing I can say definitively is that awareness about COI issues has increased among our researchers at CWRU. I don’t know if this was due to media coverage of several high-profile COI cases nationally or because our faculty members were subjected to new training materials to inform them of the policy changes. Perhaps heightened awareness is, in itself, an accomplishment that will result in greater attention to the ethical dimensions of COI in research. But awareness is different than behavior. It remains to be seen whether the new PHS rule has moved the needle — on my campus or anywhere else — with regard to objectivity in science. Until empirical evidence is collected, we will not really know whether all the labor, expense and political capital spent changing our campus policies to comply with the new rules actually helped to reduce the potential for bias in research. It would be prudent for the other federal agencies to consider such analysis before jumping on the PHS bandwagon.

**BEN PRINCE** is the Administrator for the Division of Geriatric Medicine and The Meyers Primary Care Institute, University of Massachusetts Medical School. He can be reached at ben.prince@umassmed.edu

**Suzanne M. Rivera, PhD, MSW, Associate Vice President for Research and Assistant Professor of Bioethics at Case Western Reserve University, is a graduate of NCURA’s Leadership Development Institute. Sue’s responsibilities at CWRU include policy development, pre- and post-award management, and research compliance. She can be reached at suzanne.rivera@case.edu**
Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to report that planning for FRA 2014 was successfully kicked off in June! Thanks to the outstanding Program Committee, there will be over 100 sessions and more than 25 workshop offerings. There are 8 program tracks: Audit and Financial Compliance, Clinical/Hospital, Costing/F&A, Departmental Administration, Federal, Policy and Resource Management, Post Award Administration and PUI. Each track includes basic, intermediate and advanced sessions — something for everyone! For this meeting in San Francisco, there will be a strong international focus — especially on Asia.

The theme for FRA 2014 is “The Practical and The Possible.” While so much in the field of Research Administration remains the same (the practical), there are many changes that force us to re-examine, revise, and sometimes reinvent the way in which we do our jobs (the possible). We challenge each attendee to bring back one thing that will improve operations at your home institution … it’s possible!

The conference will be in beautiful San Francisco, California and hosted by the Hilton San Francisco Union Square, which is within walking distance of many dining and shopping opportunities. San Francisco is also home to popular attractions like the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz and nearby Napa Valley.

We are looking forward to seeing you there!
Lisa Mosley and Dave Lynch

PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Co-Chairs
David Lynch, Northwestern University
Lisa Mosley, Arizona State University

Audit/Financial Compliance
Jeremy Forsberg, The University of Texas at Arlington
David Ngo, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Clinical/Hospital
Brian Farmer, The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Karen Roz, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Costing/F&A
Timothy Reuter, Stanford University
Jennifer Wei, Northwestern University

Departmental Administration
Glenda Bullock, Washington University in St. Louis
Lisa Rulney, University of Arizona

Federal
Sue Paulson, University of Minnesota

International
Teruyuki Hayashi, University of Tokyo
Makiko Takahashi, RIKEN Institute

Policy and Resource Management
Kim Moreland, University of Wisconsin - Madison
Kerry Peluso, Emory University

Post-award Administration
Denise Clark, University of Maryland College Park
Mark Davis, Attain, LLC
W. Scott Erwin, Texas State University

Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions
Laura LeBbetter, Kennesaw State University
Pam Whitlock, University of North Carolina at Wilmington (Emeritus)

Spark/Early Bird Sessions/Roundtables
Aimee Howell, University of Maryland College Park

Workshops
Ann Holmes, University of Maryland College Park
Dennis Paffrath, University of Maryland Baltimore County

March 16, 2014

FRA Conference Keynote Address: Executive AURA with Professor Kimberly Pace

Kimberly teaches graduate courses in leadership communications at Vanderbilt and has extensive experience consulting with executive teams on identifying, modeling and developing leaders. Kimberly has also served as a trainer for NCURA's Executive Leadership Program.

The Keynote Address will be informative and interactive, offering practical handouts to drive home key takeaway and tools to use after the session. An optional “listening” pre-work exercise will be sent to all registrants in advance of the conference. Effective leadership starts with active, purposeful listening.

Participants will acquire skills and insights to inform and motivate staff and collaborate more effectively with other leaders across the University. Exception leaders are able to establish their own executive presence. We call this executive AURA – which involves communication that is authentic, unique, reality-based, and authoritative. Every leader can establish his or her own executive AURA through awareness, observation and practice. Participants will learn practical communication skills to achieve the possible outcomes they desire.

Learning Objectives:
• Communicating Authenticity through active, purposeful listening
• Establishing your unique role and expertise within the University
• Forming personal advisory teams for reality-based feedback and continuous learning
• Gaining the authority and skills to communicate the hard decisions and lead a motivating vision
• Evaluating your executive presence and communication style from current to desired reality
My previous method of talking myself into the office doesn’t work anymore. Until a few months ago, I would lie in bed and tell myself that on the other side of showering, dressing, and driving the kids to school (“get along little doggies”), a comfortable chair and a hot cup of coffee were waiting for me at the office. If I could just get there, I could settle in, relax a bit, and take a few deep breaths before people started asking me questions sometime around 8:13.

A few months ago I decided to convert to a stand-up desk. I had completed a couch to 5K program (34:06!), had lost 15 pounds, and wanted to either take my fitness to the next level or at least lock in some of the improvement. I was still running several times each week, but this was May here in eastern North Carolina. Before me stretched 100 days of 95 degree temperatures and 95% relative humidity. When the weather turns mega-muggy, I am under threat to abandon an exercise program. Trust me, I’ve seen me do it before. I was looking for an alternative approach.

What was needed was an exclusively indoor activity that fit conveniently into my existing schedule - something which would get me off my . . . ah, bottom . . . and make me move around a bit. About that time I stumbled across an article in the New York Times about the health impacts of extended sitting by office workers (yes, this was one morning at the office while I was sipping coffee in my comfortable office chair - I pause here nostalgically . . . . yep, those were good times).

It turns out that a brilliantly administered and highly compliant federally-funded research study had determined, largely as a result of outstanding grant management, that remaining on your . . . ah, bottom . . . during a long workday was quite bad for you. The research administrators were surprised, however, to find that the negative effects persisted even if you exercised intensively for an hour afterward. I had no intention of exercising intensely for an hour, of course, so at first I assumed I was in the clear. Upon closer examination, however, I learned that sitting on the couch at home (my intended remedy) simply compounded the problem. The IRB staff managing the study had anticipated this behavior from the research subjects and determined that it didn’t matter where you sit - the problem is the sitting itself!

The obvious overreaction to this not-yet-confirmed research finding was to simply stop sitting. I was still high on the dopamine dump re-
sulting from my successful “Couch to 5k in 50 Days” program (though I had been misled by the name, it is not a 100 meter per day plan) and was convinced I could dispense with my office chair. Standing wouldn’t be hard - I already stood up at the top of every hour to get coffee and at the bottom of every hour to visit the restroom. I just wouldn’t sit back down in between. What could be simpler?

As it happens, many things are simpler. Just getting rid of the chair proved easy enough. As the senior member of my office, I had over time managed to secure the best chair in the office as my own. This chair was far superior to the two milk crates our newest hire was using during his probationary period and he was happy to take the chair off my hands. That done, however, the complexity curve immediately steepened.

Unless you are short, quite short actually, it isn’t feasible to work at a standard 30 inch desk from the standing position (even though both standard and standing are very similar words). Rather, you need a desk that is much higher - approximately the height of your elbow when you are on your feet. In my case, that is about 43 inches - but it varies substantially from person to person. Standard 30 inch desks wouldn’t fit everyone either if office chairs didn’t adjust up and down, but if you remove the chair from the equation you have to adjust the desk itself (unless you prefer a Procrustean solution).

Most office-furniture manufacturers make adjustable standup desks - Steelcase makes a very nice one that goes up and down almost effort-lessly. The premise is that you raise it to standing height when you want to stand and move it back to sitting height when you want to sit. Since I suspected I would want to sit almost all the time, an easily adjustable model would simply be a very expensive substitute for the desk I already had.

Expense was definitely an object. The Steelcase “Airtouch” desk costs one thousand five hundred dollars, which is about fifteen hundred dollars over the furniture budget in our office. The North Carolina General Assembly has determined that office desks are general purpose equipment that can not be direct charged to state budget lines - we should pay for them using F&A. The North Carolina General Assembly has also set a 0% F&A rate on their funding. Fortunately, milk crates are cheap - and sitting upon them is an incentive to solve problems.

See my homemade and Ikea solutions - problem solved!

Rick Smiley, CRA is a Grant & Contract Officer for the Office of Sponsored Programs at East Carolina University. He can be reached at smileyr@ecu.edu

---

Attain is different.

With a legacy of more than 30 years helping colleges, universities, and academic medical centers better understand how to improve their strengths and capabilities and optimize operations, we’ve honed a successful approach and the proven solutions that enable your organization to transform.

We are skilled in achieving superior results and developing complex F&A proposals and rate negotiations.

The current economic climate requires research institutions to continuously look for ways to create greater efficiency and improve margins. In partnership with our clients, Attain delivers quality analyses, recommendations and costing services that drive accurate and effective cost recovery, compliance performance and the transformation vital to achieving your mission.

To learn more about how Attain is different, visit www.attain.com.

We’re eager to work with you.
As grant agencies’ budgets face reduction and proposal volumes increase, crowdfunding is becoming a viable alternative funding source for research, technology transfer, and support for the arts. Crowdfunding is the act of collectively raising funds by pooling together small donations from many individuals. Successful crowdfunding campaigns require the creation of awareness through social media and networks, such as alumni networks, institutional Facebook pages, or Internet communities (Wheat, Wang, Byrnes, and Rangathan, 2012). People across the world, through the Internet, donate to initiatives that are important to them or in their network. By harnessing the power of the crowd, funds are raised, and a goal is fulfilled in support of the proposed project.

Crowdfunding as an Alternative Funding Source

How does crowdfunding work? Projects are posted on a crowdfunding site that includes a description of the project (what the project is, why it is important, and how the funds will be used), a funding goal, and a time limit to raise the funds. Some project creators might even offer rewards to entice donors. The project leader then raises awareness about the project, attempting to raise the necessary funds within the timeframe. Depending on the policies of the crowdfunding site, after the time is expired, the project creator may receive all or none of the pledge contributions, depending on whether the funding goal was met.

A variety of websites specialize in facilitating crowdfunding by connecting the project organizer with potential donors. Crowdfunding websites also provide the financial services of collecting and delivering funds that have been raised. Each website has its own policies, fees, and regulations, and crowdfunding sites tend to specialize in the types of projects they post and promote. Sites such as Kickstarter.com and Crowdtilt.com appeal to a general audience and allow fundraising for social projects (such as parties and gifts), commercialization or start-up projects, as well as research or creative projects. Other websites specialize in research and creative activities; for example, Petridish.org and Scifundchallenge.org focus on science, while Artistshare.com is for musical endeavors. Such sites may be useful to research institutions and have already been discovered by some faculty members and the mainstream media (like NPR’s Science Friday) as a new frontier in today’s research climate.

When looking for an appropriate crowdfunding site it is important to know that three general crowdfunding models prevail: pre-sale, donation-based, and equity-based (Stanco, Popma, and Tottermann, 2013). Pre-sale crowdfunding raises money for commercialization of products. For institutions of higher education, this is an appropriate means for technology transfer. Typically people pledge funds with the expectation of receiving the end product. Equity-based crowdfunding is open only to accredited investors who are pledging for an equity stake in a start-up company. Donation-based crowdfunding sites allow people to donate to a project or cause. Typically these sites are registered non-profits that will issue receipt of a donation for tax purposes. Donation-based crowdfunding is most appropriate for research and creative projects.

Within these crowdfunding models, there are two main funding categories: all-or-nothing or all-donation. In all-or-nothing funding, a minimum pledge threshold is set, and it must be met in order to receive funds. If the goal is not met, donors are not charged and the project leader receives nothing. In some cases, the primary investigator has the option to either take none of the pledged contributions or pay a higher percentage fee in order to keep the pledges. In all-donation funding, the proposer may keep all donations.

It is easy to imagine how crowdfunding can potentially transform the research funding climate.
Diane Barrett's Desk

Of late, Dick Keogh and I, along with our team, have been interacting with PUI colleagues in the gathering of information useful in honing a cloud-based open-source grants management product that will be most effective for a greatly underserved population of institutions. In particular, I have been testing and providing demos with the compliance modules: IRB, COI and IACUC. I have never been directly involved with compliance and it's a lot of fun and uses my brain in ways I did not think possible, but, like everyone else in the field, we are working under some time constraints. One of my challenges is not only learning all of this new stuff, but learning it from a point-of-view I have not had before. Instead of working with the needs of just one institution, I am working with several. Each has its own flavor, its own business processes, its own strengths. It is looking at things in a more holistic way that is so refreshing, plus the cool opportunity of getting to know and work with so many research administrators across the country. The other challenge is simply the change of lifestyle from over 25 years at universities to that of a consultant. It is a bit like being body-slammed at first, but in a good way (mostly). It is a great new chapter in my life, but I'll be glad when it is not so new anymore. I'm very grateful to have Dick to guide me. We should all have such wonderful mentors, and NCURA is the place to find them.

Diane Barrett is a Senior Research Administration Consultant with rSmart.

Investigators, not solely dependent upon federal funding politics and peer review, can now access a broader, diverse, and perhaps more open-minded audience willing to support riskier projects. Artists may use the web's inherently visual base to better promote their work. Institutions can use their own crowdfunding sites to target their angels and alumni. At our respective universities, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Michigan Technological University, we have been exploring the possibilities for crowdfunding platforms to fill the funding gap for our projects while also developing individual approaches that navigate the particular challenges we face as universities and/or sponsored research offices.

The Challenges

Individuals wishing to raise funds via crowdfunding must do so with awareness to the particular challenges of this market. Thousands of projects are posted on websites, creating high competition. Strong marketing strategies are required to attract interested donors. Often, the all-or-nothing game challenges proposers to not only set reasonable thresholds but also to strategize the best way to raise funds necessary to complete the project. As crowdfunding becomes more popular in academia, questions are being raised about the regulation of projects funded through such open sources and the role of the institution administering crowd-funded projects. If a faculty member uses institutional resources, the institution has an interest in regulating the use of its resources, and in keeping the crowdfunding project in line with compliance matters. Federal regulations require that institutions maintain consistent practices in managing and ensuring the compliance of externally-sponsored projects. Posting a project on a crowdfunding site becomes particularly delicate if the researcher wants to conduct a project that, say, uses human subjects.

Intellectual property (IP) is also at stake: does the crowdfunding portal ask the applicant to relinquish claims to IP? By posting crucial information regarding ideas prior to provisional patent applications, the investigator's and the institution's IP may be at risk. An examination of a crowdfunding site's policies and close review of information being disclosed in the campaign will need to occur for the university to protect their IP rights.

Furthermore, donors often have high expectations for outcomes gained through the project, and institutions have the responsibility of ensuring funds are spent appropriately. Wise proposers manage the expectations of their audiences and keep the donors updated about progress, lest they face the wrath of the individual donor wanting a refund! Donors want the assurance of prudent financial management of a project that should be offered by an institutional accounting system. Meanwhile, universities will desire to protect their institutional brand by regulating the types of projects advertised in their name and with their facilities. At state institutions like ours, we are careful to avoid the use of public funds and facilities for private gain, and the potential outcomes of projects that must be closely monitored. These matters raise questions about how to best track and report on a project: How does one communicate with the donors “post-award”? What is involved in reporting?

Finally, what is the best way to classify these crowd-funded projects—as gifts or grants? While the donations may be best considered donations, how does an institution manage the compliance, intellectual property, financial, reporting, and institutional brand issues above if there is no monitoring of the project? Is this an issue for the foundation or for the sponsored research office? While some foundations may have the mechanisms and network to attract donors, they may not have the accounting or compliance tools available to the sponsored research office. Many of the answers to these questions lie in the existing framework of an institution and the capabilities of different offices to manage aspects of an externally-funded/crowd-funded project.

Our Two Models

At Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, we have established a hybrid model that employs the strengths of both the Foundation and the Office of Research and Projects
(ORP). Our Foundation has great community connections and marketing ability not available to the ORP, but unfortunately has none of the ORP’s accounting structure or compliance and IP monitoring abilities.

Faculty members hoping to use university resources for a project are asked to route a proposal for internal approval as they would other grants or contracts. Required materials include a description of the project, a budget, budget justification, and completion of our grant vs. gift checklist. The routing allows ORP and other administrators to stay abreast of the research activity occurring with their resources, as well as review of the project for important issues related to compliance, budgeting, and IP. The ORP can also be involved in budgeting and setting strategic funding threshold goals. Applicants are asked to include a small administrative fee of 10% for budgets of $10,000 or less and 15% for budgets greater than $10,000 to help cover administrative fees charged by the crowdfunding host and the University’s own F&A costs.

Once the project has received approval, the project director will receive assistance from University Marketing in finding an appropriate portal and in developing a marketing plan with the university brand. Donations will be collected and run through Foundation accounts. This allows the project director access to the networking power of the Foundation and flexibility of a 501(c)(3). Donors receive their tax benefit through the Foundation. However, financial management of the project will be handed over to a grant accountant in the ORP who has the tools and knowledge to keep the project consistent with institutional accounting and reporting practices. Project directors will be asked to provide a report on the project and proof of its distribution to the donors in order to keep them informed about the project.

Superior Ideas, our second model, is a crowdfunding platform, created and managed by Michigan Technological University, and open to any university to post projects on. Superior Ideas helps bring university research and public service projects that support science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to life. The mission is to increase external support for research, innovation, and creative work that promotes sustainable economic and social development.

Superior Ideas is an all-donation based model: every donation goes to the project regardless if the project funding goal is met or not. Projects are submitted online through the Superior Ideas website and then reviewed by the Superior Ideas team. The required materials include pictures, a description of the project, a budget breakdown, and an explanation of how the donations will be used. The team evaluates the proposed project based upon the type of research performed and whether or not it fits into Superior Ideas’ overall mission. If it does not meet the set requirements, the project will not be posted.

Once the project is approved by the Superior Ideas team, it is posted on the site and can accept donations. Since Superior Ideas is an entity of Michigan Tech, donations are processed through the Michigan Tech Fund, which is a not-for-profit, tax exempt corporation [501(c)(3)]. When a donation is made online, a receipt is generated and emailed to the donor acknowledging their contribution.

If the project creator is from Michigan Tech, the donated amount is transferred at the end of the crowdfunding period into a restricted spending account in the Office of the Vice President for Research. If the project creator is from another university, the donated amount is transferred to an appointed liaison at that university. That university will determine the appropriate means to disperse funds to the project creator since every university has their own procedures.

Superior Ideas does subtract 7.5% from the final donated amount to cover the credit card processing fee and administrative costs. Even though the donation is a gift, the money is only allowed to be applied to the project.

As we explore this new frontier in research support on our campuses, the needs of the researchers, the institution, and our donors are sure to catalyze change in our crowdfunding models. In the meantime, we continue to recruit faculty members willing to be pioneers in the practice of opening their research to the crowd.

References


Natasha Choppp received her BS in Business Administration in 2006 from Michigan Technological University. Natasha is the Research Development & Marketing Manager for the Vice President for Research at Michigan Technological University. She was the lead project manager on developing Superior Ideas crowdfunding platform, which she now manages. Natasha is currently working on her Master of Business Administration at Michigan Technological University. Natasha can be reached at nichopp@mtu.edu.

Patience Graybill Condellone is a Pre-Award Administrator in the Office of Research and Projects at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. She carries an MA in German Language and Literature from Washington University in St. Louis and a BA in English and German from Hope College. Ms. Graybill Condellone specializes in proposal development and outreach, manages internal funding and limited submission competitions, and edits the ORP’s publications, including the annual research magazine Research & Creative Activities. Patience can be reached at pgraybil@siue.edu.

Jerry B. Weinberg is Associate Provost for Research, Dean of the Graduate School and Professor of the Computer Science at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. He holds a BS in nursing from Indiana State University, a BS in computer science from the University of South Carolina, and MS and PhD degrees in computer science from Vanderbilt University. Dr. Weinberg administers pre- and post-award services as well as ethical compliance. He is responsible for promoting scholarship and external sponsorship across the university. He conducts research in Mobile Robotics, Human-Computer Interaction, and STEM Education. Jerry can be reached at jweinbe@siue.edu.
The Responsibility of Applicants for Promoting Objectivity in Research for which PHS Funding is Sought and Responsible Prospective Contractors, the Public Health Service (PHS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) revised regulations on Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI), went into effect a little over a year ago. Aimed at increasing accountability, adding transparency, and enhancing institutional compliance and management of investigators’ FCOI, the new and amended regulations imposed more stringent disclosure requirements and expanded the level of public transparency into researchers’ financial interests.

The good news is that much like Y2K we all survived! Though some of the requirements were challenging, cumbersome, and flat out confusing, institutions took the August 24, 2012 deadline head-on and implemented policies and practices to comply with the regulation. However, given a year to reflect on the effectiveness of these responses, research institutions are still identifying challenges or leading practices to consider in refining the FCOI enterprise. This article will discuss the challenges encountered by many institutions during initial implementation, lessons learned over the past year, and what is still on the horizon for FCOI as institutions continue to implement the new FCOI regulatory requirements.

The State of FCOI

The amended regulations have compelled institutions to further scrutinize potential conflicts than they had in the past. Rigor was added to the disclosure, evaluation, and management of financial interests to match the increased interest in financial conflicts. Institutions recognized that FCOI are not limited to one area of science (e.g., chemistry and drug development or engineering and biotechnology), but rather exist, or have the potential to exist, broadly across a variety of disciplines. Additionally, the added transparency has increased the belief that financial interests can exist and be successfully managed while maintaining the integrity of research (as they say “if there is no conflict, then there is no interest”).

Challenges

Creating or updating policies, procedures, and training materials can be a time consuming activity for any institution, even without the burden of a looming deadline. What made the FCOI implementation process especially cumbersome for many institutions was that they had to determine their desired definition or applicability of certain issues to fit their institutional structure:

- **Ownership:** who should own or manage the FCOI process? Should an existing office be responsible for management and oversight, or should resources be dedicated to creating a new business unit? For example, if the Office of Faculty Affairs owned the process over evaluating and monitoring conflict of commitment (dedicating time to personal activities in excess of the time permitted by institutional policy (Office of Research Integrity, HHS, 2013), should they now own the evaluation and monitoring of FCOI?
- **Investigators:** how are investigators being identified at the institutional level? While investigator is defined by the regulation as “the project director or principal investigator and any other person, regardless of title or position, who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research funded by the PHS” (Office of Extramural Research, NIH, 2012), institutions must determine which individuals actually fit this definition and how to apply related requirements to them.
- **Applicability:** to what extent will the institution apply the regulations more stringent requirements? Will the institution choose to only solicit the required information from PHS-funded Investigators or apply the standard to all research projects? What about requirements for non-research faculty?

**Thresholds**: does the institution wish to collect disclosures for financial interests below the regulation’s $5,000 threshold?

- **Subawards**: as a prime awardee, will the institution require subawardees to follow its FCOI policy, or will they require subrecipients to establish their own compliance practices?

- **Evaluation and Management:** who should be responsible for evaluating disclosures and developing and monitoring management plans? Will this responsibility be handled through a centralized office or at the Department level? Should there be a separate independent panel comprised of representatives from across the institution that evaluates and monitors disclosures and management plans?

- **Public Accessibility:** how will information be made available to the public? Will it be posted on a website or made available within five days of a written request?

We observed that institutions were best able to answer these questions through collaboration among individuals from Sponsored Programs, Internal Audit, Legal Counsel, Faculty Affairs, and Human resources. This approach allowed insti-
tions to consider the impact of decisions from multiple institutional viewpoints and establish practices that would be the most effective.

**Lessons Learned**

Implementing the updated FCOI regulations highlighted a few key lessons for some institutions. Beyond the enhanced visibility into the external financial interests of research personnel, institutions identified many process aspects to allow for the most effective administration of a FCOI program:

- **Multiple processes means more work:** though many institutions believed that only having to apply the more stringent disclosure requirements to a subset of PHS-funded researchers would create less administrative burden, in reality it has manifested itself as a more cumbersome approach. Segregating processes or creating “add-on” requirements specific to PHS research requires greater administrative oversight and increased potential for non-compliance. Further, the fear that non-PHS researchers within the community would balk at being held to a common, conservative policy seems to have not caused a great level of discontent at institutions which took this approach.

- **Determination of a FCOI is best handled as a group decision:** because the focus of the regulation is the impact, real or perceived, of financial interests on research activities, a collaborative review of disclosures provides the greatest level of confidence over the institution’s efforts. Whether this takes the form of a committee to evaluate disclosures or a collaboration between academic and research leadership, it is increasingly valuable to provide reviews and opinions from a variety of individuals.

- **When it comes to FCOI documentation, be specific but concise:** it seems only fitting that the traditional first anniversary gift is paper. Because much of the FCOI requirements are related to providing a new level of transparency, institutions are struggling with what level of detail needs to be maintained, in what form, and for how long. Institutions must consider the types of documentation needed to confirm compliance with regulations (e.g., proof of timely review for all disclosures made) and provide the information required to be reported to sponsoring agency, but are encouraged to not give more information than is necessary.

- **The initial disclosure is the easy part:** most institutions already had some form of annual disclosure requirement related to conflicts of interest, so the response to the new regulation was largely viewed as an adjustment to this process. However, some of the more pertinent aspects of the regulation relate to the ongoing disclosure of SFIs throughout the life of a PHS-funded award and the creation and oversight of management plans. Institutions are now confronted with how to identify and respond to “unknown unknowns” related to an Investigator’s financial interests and the need for closer monitoring of day-to-day research activities.

**The Road to Come**

Now that we have celebrated the first anniversary of administering and managing the amended FCOI regulations, what does the future hold? While the new regulation currently only applies to PHS agencies, it is likely that we will see other grant-making agencies adopt similar requirements for their award recipients. For those institutions that chose to only apply the requirements to their PHS-funded investigators, this may mean more administrative burden down the line as they will have to manage and monitor disclosures for a larger portion of their investigator population.

We should also expect to see audits of FCOI appear on the HHS Office of Inspector General’s (OIG) audit work plan in coming years. While the NIH has already begun performing “desk reviews” of some institutions’ published FCOI policies to determine whether they are responsive of the new requirements, precedents have not been established to understand the impact of potential noncompliance or what other audit activities may be performed. Institutions should be mindful of some of the common gaps identified through the NIH’s reviews, including maintenance of required records; ensuring that all personnel know and understand their roles and responsibilities related to disclosing, reviewing, or managing FCOI; and the level of detail collected and reported regarding identified conflicts.

Lastly, we will likely see an increase in the number of public requests for information related to identified conflicts in an institution’s research activities. This will increase both the level of effort involved in the administration of the FCOI program and the level of scrutiny over an institution’s determinations of what constitutes a conflict and how they are managed.

**Conclusion**

Implementing the amended FCOI requirements was a challenging process, but institutions were largely able to weather the worst of the regulatory storm. However, the challenges for operating an effective FCOI program did not expire on August 24, 2012. Managing and monitoring FCOI moving forward will continue to require strict attention and coordinated resources and will continue to evolve depending on how PHS (and other agencies) interpret and enforce the regulations. Regardless of the ultimate enforcement or external activities however, institutions have gained a better understanding of Investigators’ outside relationships and potential impacts to institutional research.

---

**References**


RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION: PROVIDING SERVICE TO FACULTY
KEEPING KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT SPONSORS
MANAGING IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES
RISK INFORMING LEADERSHIP
UPDATING IMPROVING SKILLS
POLICY ENHANCING CONNECTIVITY
PROVIDING BETWEEN FUNCTIONS
TRANSPARENCY REFINING BUSINESS
OVERSEEING PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS
A FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN RESEARCH
COMPLIANCE ADMINISTRATORS
PROGRAM
ENHANCING NCURA PEER REVIEW.
COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENTS
BETWEEN RESEARCH
ADMINISTRATORS
Assessing your sponsored programs operation to help you excel in the fast pace of research administration.

NCURA
supporting research...together

For questions or further information or to obtain a copy of the newly revised National Standards contact peerreview@ncura.edu or call (503) 364-1847. Learn more about the review process by visiting http://www.ncura.edu/content/peer_to-peer_review/
FRAUD ALLEGATIONS

University to Pay Nearly $3 Million Settlement related to False Claims

Allegations that a Doctor at a University Cancer Center allegedly billed federal grants for family trips, meals and hotels for himself and friends, and “consulting fees” for unqualified friends and family members, including his brother and cousin were made in a civil lawsuit filed by a former employee of the Cancer Center. The allegations were investigated by the DHHS OIG, the FBI, NIH, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office. The University fully cooperated during the investigation and did not admit liability as part of the settlement.

Professor Accused of Grant Money Kickback Scheme

Federal prosecutors allege in a court filing that the Director of a University’s Center for Advanced Transportation and Infrastructure Engineering Research, handed stipend checks to students at the University but demanded they pay part of the money back to him. One student approached the Professor and told him that he/she needed money to pay tuition, prosecutors wrote. He gave the student checks for $4,500 and $2,000. But he then asked the student to write him a personal check for $4,500, prosecutors said, in an effort to cover up his alleged misuse of the grant money.

University Professor Indicted in Scheme to Defraud NSF

According to an indictment, the professor fraudulently obtained $200,000 in grant funds from the (NSF) Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program to fund a highway project, and attempted to obtain another $500,000 though the same program. The indictment alleges that he converted the funds to his personal use, including making payments on his mortgage and personal credit card; authorizing approximately $11,000 in salary payments to his wife, who did not perform NSF-related work; and writing a $6,000 check to himself. The professor also falsely represented that he would secure “release time” or negotiate other leave options with his University to work on the project and that another professor would work as a Senior Scientific Advisor. The indictment alleges that none of the statements were true. He also allegedly misrepresented the involvement of another University in conducting research on the project and further misrepresented that he had obtained a $100,000 investment from a third party in order to qualify for matching funds from NSF.

NSF Contracted with DCAA to Perform an Incurred Cost Audit of a Large Project

Auditors questioned re-budgeting of sub-awards to service agreements without NSF approval. Auditors recommended establishing a procedure to document the determination of a sub-award and to obtain prior written approval from the contracting officer for any proposed classification change. The auditors also questioned accounting for contingency costs when the cost category used in the proposal differed from the cost category used when the expenses were incurred.

NIH Audit of Claimed Equipment Costs over $25,000

The HHS OIG FY 2013 Work Plan included a review of NIH grantees’ claims for equipment purchases. The reports issued to date have had no findings.
When we think of, or discuss the current compliance requirements to manage faculty financial conflict of interest (FCOI) regulations that were implemented over a year ago, it tends to remind us of a scene from an old western: everyone joined forces to wrangle in the new guidelines; the new FCOI requirements were the steer; flanking the wrangling administrators were the investigators; each side rode hard towards the steer on their horses, stirring up the dust in the hot desert landscape with their lassos in hand and aimed the lassos towards the running steer. Cliché, at best, but it illustrates some of the actions institutions have had to take before the new federal FCOI guidelines came into effect.

On August 24, 2012, new Public Health Service (PHS) FCOI requirements went into effect. Institutions began to quickly implement changes in their FCOI policies in order to implement the new requirements. New reporting systems were created, forms were developed and processed, meetings and training sessions were held to roll out the changes, and yet, one year later we ask the question, “Are we any closer to having investigators fully understand the importance of reporting all financial conflicts on sponsored projects?”

We’d like to introduce you now to the fictitious Professor Jones. Her five year National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded research project on paralysis has led to the creation of a special machine which gives paralyzed patients more mobility. The machine was the first of its kind, thus inspiring Dr. Jones to apply for and receive a patent. As a result of receiving this patent, Dr. Jones went on to launch her own company to manufacture the machine. Dr. Jones continued to work on her NIH-funded projects, incorporating the use of her newly patented machine and using her company as a subcontractor on those projects. When asked to complete financial conflict of interest paperwork within her institution, Dr. Jones finalized the initial questionnaire and submitted yearly updates as required. Although she felt that the process was a bit of a pain and extra bureaucratic paperwork, it was easy for her to complete and keep on file as she knew it was necessary in order to receive any additional funding. Dr. Jones continued with her NIH project and both the project and her company prospered. Fast forward to the present…

So What’s Changed?

With the new FCOI regulations, determining how much has changed depends on what Conflict of Interest (COI) policies individual institutions already had in place prior to the changes. Some may have found that not much had changed at all, while others may have completely redesigned their COI evaluation and reporting systems.

Building on the example used above, under the new FCOI policies at her institution, Dr. Jones would still have to report the ownership of her company to her research administrators. The difference lies in the evaluation of the submitted information. The administrators would now be looking more closely at the type of funding she received that resulted in the patent and would also evaluate her company ownership and the income generated from it to determine if this would be considered a “Significant Financial Interest” moving forward. If so, it would be reported as such to NIH, and the institution would be required to reduce or eliminate this potential conflict. If not considered significant, the institution would certify that the activity was evaluated and determined to be insignificant, and business as usual for Dr. Jones would proceed as usual.

Making it Easier

Having discussed the changes at our respective institutions with colleagues over the past year, whether at the department or central level, it appears that most of us in the research administration field are of the same mind set. Although the requirements are now in place, we are still experiencing a pushback from investigators. Communication is key in order to achieve investigator compliance. Understanding how the new institutional FCOI processes differ from what your institution previously required is a crucial part of that communication. Explaining the how, when, and why will help keep things flowing smoothly and moving forward. Otherwise, even a well-oiled machine can dramatically slow if all the operators fail to follow the operating instructions.

When PHS enacted the new FCOI requirements, it was over an increasing spotlight which hovered around investigators, and the appearance, whether real or perceived, of financial ties between them and their sponsored projects. Transparency is important when working with public funds. Many activities and interests disclosed actually do not fall under the FCOI definition of a Significant Financial Interest. But it’s important for institutions to evaluate ALL disclosures and certify they have done so to eliminate the concern of inappropriate financial ties. This was the goal of the new FCOI regulations, and this simple explanation could be enough to encourage Principal Investigator compliance.

Shoring up these regulations initially created confusion over who was required to submit FCOI information within their institutions. Did it stop at the investigator level? The quick answer is no, but as research administrators, we know that the response we give to many of the questions we receive is “well, it depends.” Deep discussions have taken place both within and between institutions, debating whether a person working on the project as a consultant need not complete a FCOI questionnaire, or whether they should be identified as an investigator and therefore required to complete a FCOI questionnaire. How do you decide?

Under the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 50.603, the definition of an investigator is not only the project director but any other person regardless of title who “is responsible for the design, conduct or reporting of the research including collaborators and/or consultants.” To go a step further beyond the CFR to clarify an investigator under the new regulation, NIH defined an investigator as someone who is planning to participate in, or is currently participating in, NIH-funded research (NIH, 2013).

As today’s research world evolves with sponsors promoting more partnerships between institutions, and as more federal and non-federal spon-
It’s All About the Flow

When explaining to an investigator the importance of filling out a yearly FCOI questionnaire, describing the flow can be a helpful tool in understanding the new requirements. As time continues on with Dr. Jones’ project, the relationship between the institution and her company can become blurred because of the ebb and flow of her continually using her company in her research. Think of it as sticking your feet in the ocean and letting the waves and sand cover them. It is very easy for things to become convoluted over time. However, under the new guidelines, institutions and investigators are required to disclose FCOI for all individuals working on the project that are responsible for the content, science, and reporting, not just the investigator. This allows the federally funded project to become more transparent to individuals who are not actively involved in the project (especially the public) and ensures all financial conflicts of interest are reported. Keeping the public’s trust is crucial, especially in today’s world of sequestration. Funding agencies continue to operate with dwindling budgets, and any perception of a lack of transparency only strengthens the argument to cut budgets even further.

Cooperation is Key

For a seamless and smooth process, all stakeholders need to be on the same page, communicate clearly, and work together. This includes all individuals with the role of investigator on a project, departmental and central research administrators, and compliance office administrators. By working together as a cohesive team, FCOI compliance can become an automatic process instead of viewed as a chore by the many stakeholders. Descriptions such as “stumbling blocks,” “delays,” and “frustration” describing FCOI questionnaires can be easily exchanged with new words to describe FCOI guidelines such as “flow,” “smooth,” “seamless,” and “not so bad!” It’s all in the mindset. So, instead of asking questions, describing the flow can be a helpful tool in understanding the new requirements. When explaining to an investigator the importance of filling out a yearly FCOI questionnaire, describing the flow can be a helpful tool in understanding the new requirements. The flow of information can be streamlined to reduce delays, and the process can become an automatic one instead of a chore by the many stakeholders.

References


Marj Townsend, MA, CRA, is the Research Advancement Manager for the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University where she supervises both pre and post award management. She has over 10 years’ experience in research and grants administration. She currently serves as Member at Large for NCURA Region VII. Marj can be reached at Marj.townsend@asu.edu

Vicki Krell, CRA, serves as the Research Advancement Supervisor of the Research Advancement Office at the Arizona State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences which was created in early 2009. Prior to that, Vicki worked for the Office for Research and Sponsored Projects Administration for 20 years as an authorized institutional official. Vicki has over 30 years of experience in research and grants administration. Her current role with NCURA is the regionally elected representative to the National Board for NCURA Region VII, and she is the immediate past chair of Region VII. Vicki can be reached at Vicki.Krell@asu.edu

E. Sunny Thompson, BIS, CRA, got her start in research administration at Arizona State University. She recently moved to Texas and is the Project Coordinator for grants in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. She provides both pre and post award management services for faculty, researchers and division administrators as well as Financial Conflict of Interest reporting coordination and effort reporting oversight for the department. Sunny can be reached at thompson3@uthscsa.edu

A Long and Wonderful Journey

It has been a long and wonderful journey with NCURA – and it continues to be so! My first foray was mentored and supported by my director who took me in hand and brought me to the national meeting. He opened that door! Others along the way encouraged me to engage and volunteer and I saw a Pathway to becoming a mentor and to serve the organization. I became involved at my regional level, with a natural progression to the national level, and then to the international arena. I see all of these arenas interconnected and now it is clearly a global research administration environment. These are exciting times for us - we now have so many opportunities for professional development, networking, collaborating and building new relationships across borders. I now have colleagues all over the world, from Austria to Australia and all ports in between!

Denise Wallen, Ph.D. is Research Officer, College of Education at the University of New Mexico and Senior Fellow at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy @UNM. She currently serves on the NCURA Board of Directors, chairs the International Collaborate Subcommittee and is a member of the NCURA Ambassador Corps. She can be reached at wallen@unm.edu
The 8th Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA) Conference will be held March 18-20, 2014, in San Francisco, California! Known for its beauty, culture, and diversity; San Francisco is bound to have something for everyone, just like the 8th PRA Conference.

New Connections

Join your NCURA colleagues as we gather on Tuesday, March 18, for a diverse line-up of workshops, including “Pre-award Basics,” “Sub-awards and Subrecipient Monitoring,” “Department Administrator’s Boot Camp,” “Succession Planning & Change Management,” “Effective Presentations,” and more. “Escape” with fellow attendees after the workshops for an opening reception!

The next two days are filled with ample learning and networking opportunities via breakfast roundtables, spark sessions, concurrent sessions, discussion groups, and dinner groups. Historically, participants come away from PRA with new ideas and information, but it’s the networking that keeps us learning long after everyone returns home. We encourage you to swap business cards and connect with colleagues from across the globe.

New Horizons

Whether you are new to research administration or you have reached the expert level, we invite you to share your enthusiasm and your experiences with your colleagues. We have lined up basic, intermediate, and advanced sessions to appeal to a broad range of professional backgrounds.

When you aren’t “conferencing,” we hope that you expand your horizons by exploring San Francisco’s famous attractions, including the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman’s Warf, and Alcatraz. Also consider riding a cable car or eating Rice-A-Roni! Our conference hotel, the Hilton San Francisco Union Square, is located in the heart of the city with easy access to world-famous dining, shopping and transportation options.

New Skills

Our hard-working program committee has a great line-up planned. This year’s tracks include: Compliance, Departmental, Federal, Funding Opportunities, Human Capital, International, Medical, and Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions.

Sample session topics include: Surviving an Audit, Managing Clinical Faculty, Preparing an Industry Proposal, Hiring and Training Department Administrators, and Understanding Intellectual Property Issues. Every attendee will be hard-pressed to leave the City by the Bay without new skills.

In closing, we invite you to attend the 8th Pre-Award Research Administration Conference. You will leave San Francisco with New Connections, New Horizons, and New Skills. Registration will be available from the NCURA homepage at http://www.ncura.edu later this fall.

See you there!

Tricia Callahan and Mary Louise Healy
PRA 2014 Co-chairs

Program Committee

Co-Chairs
Tricia Callahan, Miami University
Mary Louise Healy, Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University

Compliance
Suzanne Rivera, Case Western Reserve University
Toni Shaldee, Oklahoma State University

Departmental
Randi Wasik, University of Washington
Kirsten Yehl, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University

Federal
Jean Feldman, National Science Foundation
Susan Sedwick, University of Texas at Austin

Funding Opportunities/Proposal Development
Diane Meyer, Iowa State University
Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico

Human Capital
Robert Holm, Auburn University
Antoinette Lawson, University of Maryland, College Park

International
Ralf Koenig, Austrian Research Promotion Agency
Division of European and International Programmes (EIP)
Dan Nordquist, Washington State University

Medical
Lori Palfalvi, Northwestern University
Amanda Snyder, University of Maryland Baltimore

PUI
Carolyn Elliott-Farino, Kennesaw State University
Kris Monahan, Providence College

Spark/Early Bird Sessions/Roundtables
Richard Keogh, rSmart
Jeffrey Ritchie, Lewis University

Workshops
Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute
Robyn Remotigue, University of North Texas Health Science Center
Gunta Liders received the Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award at the 55th Annual Meeting on Monday, August 5, 2013. This is NCURA’s most prestigious award, given to a member who has made significant contribution to the profession and demonstrated noteworthy service to NCURA. The following is her acceptance speech.

Thank you for this honor and recognition. This is a very humbling experience for me, and honestly, difficult, as I do not like to be singled out in any way. My first NCURA meeting was in 1988. At that point, the Director of our office asked me to participate in a session with her. This was slightly terrifying. But my true terror occurred when I somehow became the finalist in NCURA’s first dance competition. There I was, partnered with Joe Waskvich from UM dancing to “Dirty Dancing” in front of 500 people. People started yelling “pick her up!” At that point, I knew my reputation in NCURA could only improve.

It was difficult for me to read my letters of support. It is a bit of an out-of-body experience to read these wonderful praises from mentors and peers. For instance, my former boss, who used to be the Provost at the University of Rochester wrote something akin to “when Gunta speaks, people listen avidly.” This was from a guy who used to tell me that most of the topics that I spoke about (conflict of interest, effort reporting, export control, etc.) were “numbing.” I have a hard time believing that I am outstanding, but I have been grateful to leverage this award to publicly acknowledge the outstanding contributions of my staff and the outstanding support that I receive from the University of Rochester academic and administrative leadership.

So, one thing that I do want to remind you of today is what is at the heart of our profession. Whether you are involved in research compliance, assisting in the submission of proposals or in the development of the F&A rate, you are supporting the success of the research conducted in your institution, and in some way, the scientific and economic success of your community. But we are, at times, challenged . . .

I recently became very entangled in a messy situation, and in trying to protect the interests of one of our investigators, I found myself often at odds with the person I was trying to assist. This is the challenge of our work. We are charged in our roles with both assisting our faculty and ensuring compliance, but these intelligent and creative scientists can drive you absolutely crazy. My husband, who is a successful researcher, told me once:

“You tell something to a faculty member once and he will tell you that is the stupidest idea he ever heard. You tell it to him a second time and he will continue to debate you, but begin to see some wisdom in your advice. You tell it to him the third time, and he will believe it was his idea in the first place.”

So, I met a faculty member at the reception last night who agreed to assist me in illustrating the plight of research administrators: (Faculty member walks on stage)

Dr. Moore, I am negotiating a research contract for you. I have encountered some issues. The first is that the sponsor insists upon owning all the IP that you create at the UR.

Faculty member: Don’t worry about it. There won’t be any IP.

The second issue is that the company refuses to pay the University’s full F&A rate; they insist that 10% is the most that they will pay.

Faculty member: Don’t worry about that either. 10% sounds like a good deal to me. Besides, we all know that F&A is only a tax and people here in Washington don’t like taxes.

I need to worry about it – this F&A waiver will require approval by the Dean. I also noticed that you will be subcontracting to two companies, but there is little information provided.

Faculty member: I’ll be subcontracting some of this work to my sister.

Who is your sister?

Faculty member: Jane Youngers

Jane Youngers?!!! What does she know about optical engineering?

Faculty member: Nothing. She is my sister.

And what about the second subcontract?

Faculty member: That is going to my start-up company.

Ob. That is problematic. Did you disclose this potential conflict of interest?

Faculty member: There isn’t a conflict of interest. The company has no value right now and no resources. In fact, I will be the PI on the subaward and will use University resources and space to manage the company’s research. But, the company will be providing a loaned piece of equipment to the University in order to accomplish the research.

What equipment?

Faculty member: A tank.

Ob. That sounds like it may be subject to export control — again, a huge problem.

Faculty member: Don’t worry about that. I’ll keep it locked up and make sure that my 3 Iranian and 2 North Korean graduate students don’t share the key with anyone else. I am so glad that we have such a collaborative relationship — you always help us get through any situation.

And on it goes. But without our stewardship and oversight, our faculty would not be successful. We are partners with them in our research institutions that sometime produce scientific miracles.

In closing, I do want to thank NCURA and the research administration community for its outstanding assistance and collegiality over the years. There are so many of you that pushed me to professional achievements that may have been difficult or, at first, uncomfortable — but resulted in achievements that caused me to grow and, hopefully, achievements that may have helped others in their careers. In particular, I do want to acknowledge my sissies, Ranta and Jane, who always have my back.

Gunta J. Liders is the Associate Vice President for Research Administration at the University of Rochester. She has been involved in research administration since 1987. Gunta is a past national secretary of NCURA and has served numerous volunteer roles and as a presenter countless times.
Introduction
On August 24, 2012, revised Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) regulations went into effect for institutions that apply for or receive Public Health Service (PHS) research grants or cooperative agreements. The main challenges in the revised FCOI regulations were posed by the following key changes: 1) A lower financial disclosure threshold; 2) A new conflict of interest training requirement; 3) A new requirement to disclose sponsored or reimbursed travel; and 4) New public accessibility requirements.

In March 2013, seven months into implementation of the new regulations, the authors conducted an anonymous nationwide survey of research administrators in order to assess how academic institutions identified and dealt with key challenges in implementing the revised FCOI regulations. One hundred and forty-five (145) individuals, recruited through NCURA Collaborate Communities and the Research Administrator’s Listserv, responded to the survey. General characteristics of the respondents’ institutions are presented in Table 1. This article describes certain survey responses related to FCOI implementation perceptions and practices.

Respondent Perceptions
Overall, the majority of survey respondents indicated that institutional changes resulting from implementing the new regulations had impacted their institution “as expected” (62.8%), while 24.5% of respondents indicated that impact was “greater than anticipated.” Less than nine percent of respondents (8.5%) indicated that the perceived impact was “less than anticipated.” One respondent characterized her perception by indicating, “Since the implementation of the new policies, there has been an increased administrative burden for the entire research community.” Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs) also had much to say related to FCOI Implementation, revealing that the implementation was time-consuming and administratively burdensome given their relative lack of access to any economies of scale. Some of the responses from PUIs included the following: “It’s time consuming at the proposal phase and I don’t see value added;” “Any federal change at a small school is a big problem;” and “Time and effort required is not in proportion to the reported conflicts.” On the other hand, some research administrators pointed out that implementing the changes has been a positive experience, such as the following comment: “…to implement these new requirements as intended by PHS requires much cooperation and coordination by many university partners that are not used to working together. This regulation has forced all involved in research administration to take a hard look at our current business practices, which is ultimately a good thing.”

Implementation Challenges
Investigator Definition
Under the revised regulations, institutions must collect, from each investigator planning to participate in a PHS-funded research project, a listing of their significant financial interests (SFIs) (including those of his/her spouse and dependent children) that appear to be related to his/her institutional responsibilities. A major challenge is determining who qualifies as an investigator. The definition provided in the regulations states an investigator is a “Principal Investigator, Key Personnel, and any other individual, regardless of title, who is responsible for design, conduct or reporting of the research.” The definition is vague and open to interpretation, as emphasized...
in comments to our survey and open discussions with over 80 participants at NCURA’s Region I Research Administrator’s Discussion Group (RADG) held in Boston, MA on June 20, 2013. As a result, institutions are interpreting and implementing Investigator requirements in a number of different ways. Some institutions have considered using job title for a determination of who qualifies as an Investigator, while some smaller institutions are discussing with faculty on a case-by-case basis in order to determine who must report for a given project.

**Staffing and Structure**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has indicated that each institution may choose which office and organizational structure is responsible for administering its FCOI policy and the regulations. We asked our respondents to provide the name of the office responsible for administering the conflict of interest program at their institutions. Their answers included a wide variety. As indicated in Table 2, the most frequently identified offices were the Sponsored Research Office (40%) and the Research Compliance Office (34%). Fewer respondents identified other offices such as Faculty Affairs, dedicated COI offices, and the Office of the Vice Provost.

A number of national organizations, including the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR), the American Association of Universities (AAU), and the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC), voiced strong opposition to the revised requirements in the regulations on the grounds that the increased administrative burden was unnecessary to provide for objectivity in research. In its 2011 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) estimated that the burden for implementing the revised regulations would be 20% greater than implementing the 1995 regulations.²

The survey asked respondents about staffing dedicated to administering their institution’s FCOI policy, in particular staffing increases. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (61.4%) indicated that there was either "1 Full-Time Effort (FTE) employees dedicated to FCOI. One PUI respondent indicated that their "FTE is too small to even count...perhaps 0.10 FTE." As indicated in Chart 1, more than a quarter of respondents (27.4%) increased FTE employees administering FCOI programs since the August 2012 FCOI implementation requirements.

**Systems**

For many institutions, the revised regulations significantly increased the number of required disclosure submissions and resulted in the need to implement a system that would allow transparency between financial disclosures and the grants management database used for proposals and awards. Based on 62 respondents, the majority of institutions (32%) did not implement or enhance an existing system, 16% enhanced an existing system. The remaining respondents implemented some combination of existing and new systems or some other method. Comments made during the June 2013 Region I Research Administrator’s Discussion Group (RADG) meeting indicated that many institutions who utilized a systems approach did not find it to resolve all of the workload issues and, due to the rapid timeline required for implementation and the minimal amount of time allotted for user testing, there seemed to be no perfect system in place for most institutions.

**Public Accessibility**

The revised regulations require institutions to make information about the financial conflicts of interest of senior/key personnel publicly accessible. Institutions can do so by using a publicly available website or by providing the information upon request. Of the 62 respondents, 23% indicated that their institution posts financial conflicts on a publicly available website, while 77% provide information only upon request. During a polling of the audience during the June RADG meeting, not one participant had received a request for financial conflict information.

**Travel Disclosures**

Another challenge resulting from the revised regulations is the requirement for Investigators to disclose sponsored or reimbursed travel to their institutions. The challenges range from lack of understanding of the regulation by the Investigator and lack of systems or staff to support travel disclosure submissions and review. The survey asked how many occurrences of sponsored or reimbursed travel had been disclosed by PHS Investigators to institutions since August 2012. Only 39 individuals responded to this question: 41% of those responding stated they had received zero (0) travel disclosures, 13% received 1-10, 33% received >10, and 13% responded "unknown".

---

### TABLE 2: OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING FCOI PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office Name</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS/GRANTS ADMINISTRATION/GRANTS FINANCE</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE/RESEARCH INTEGRITY</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFLICT OF INTEREST OFFICE</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICE OF FACULTY AFFAIRS/ACADEMIC AFFAIRS</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT/PROVOST OF RESEARCH</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICE OF THE DEAN</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB/OFFICE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT PROTECTIONS</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
Conflict Management Plans and Retrospective Reviews

The increase of disclosures and reviews required for any PHS-funded awards has resulted in an increased level of conflict management plans and potentially in the requirement for a retrospective review. The survey asked respondents to indicate how many FCOI’s had been disclosed by an Investigator since the August 24, 2012. Of 42 respondents, the majority (85%) reported zero (0), 10% had reported a minimal number (1-5), and 5% reported >5 plans. All respondents (40 total) stated their institutions had not performed a retrospective review for biasness.

Summary and Conclusion

The results of the survey imply that the burden of regulatory compliance has increased without leading to a significant number of FCOIs being identified and reported. Of responding institutions, 85% indicated having made no FCOI findings since the revised rule. There are some indications that institutional budgets, especially at PUIs, have not been able to support the addition of sufficient personnel or systems to deal with the changes to the regulations. Only 25% of respondents reported adding personnel to deal with new obligations. The addition of sponsored or reimbursed travel as a “significant financial interest” seems to have had no impact on reporting; no institution reported making an FCOI report in connection with a travel disclosure.

More information on these questions should become available in the future. Both the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) and the AAMC are collecting nationwide data and plan to publish evaluations of the impact of the revised FCOI regulations. The first annual report from the AAMC COI Metrics Project is expected sometime after August 2013.

More information (including frequently asked questions) about implementing the Revised 2011 FCOI regulations is available at the NIH website, http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coi

References/Notes:

1 The survey conducted was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Providence College.
3 http://www.cogr.edu/Pubs_Conflicts.cfm
4 https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/research/coi/metricsproject/301010/hometsr.html

Kris A. Monahan, Ph.D. is the Director of Sponsored Research & Programs at Providence College. She is a member of the NCURA Board of Directors, NCURA Education Taskforce, NCURA PUI Community, and NCURA Region I Advisory Board. She can be reached at kmonah6@providence.edu

Denise Moody is the Director of Research Compliance in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Research Administration Services at Harvard University. She is the NCURA Collaborate Community Chair and serves on the NCURA Professional Development Committee and Region I Advisory Board. She can be reached at denisemoody@fas.harvard.edu

Melissa Anderson, J.D., is the Director, Conflicts and Industry Interactions, at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. She can be reached at mwanders@bidmc.harvard.edu

Research Administration Memes Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/ResearchAdministrationMemes
Research Administration Memes Twitter Page
https://twitter.com/ResAdmMemes
Ask Ann Granters

By Bob Lucas

DEAR MYS: What you’re describing is an explainable anomaly.

As you know, at major research universities, faculty members either get grants or get out. Motivating them to write proposals is about as necessary as convincing a lemming it needs a bath. It’s in the genes.

But at a significant subset of universities, the situation is different. These smaller institutions were often places of academic calm and serenity, undisturbed by pressures to win grants. But coming upon bad times financially, their trustees would often seek a new president, someone who could “bring the university into the 21st century (while balancing the budget).”

That new president would in turn call the faculty together and, after describing the university’s dire straits, pronounce the situation grim, and beam that, “You, the faculty, are our greatest resource.”

That he would identify the Professoriate as the key to solving a money crisis is a measure of how desperate the situation is. These faculty members have been so inured to teaching their classes and coaching their soccer teams that any thought of change is as disorienting as giving classes and coaching their soccer teams that any member has been so inured to teaching their how desperate the situation is. These faculty key to solving a money crisis is a measure of That he would identify the Professoriate as the activity of writing a proposal becomes identified as mundane, and less and less as intellectual, largely because these professors don’t see proposal writing as part of their professional responsibility. Rather they do it as a personal favor to the university, a magnanimous gesture and sacrifice of personal prerogatives to help the institution out in a time of stress.

With such a fragile sense of commitment, any impediment encountered, like filling out the proposal approval form or disclosing personal investments, causes them to hyperventilate and rail against such bureaucratic claptrap as an affront to academic freedom.

So the Research Development Office becomes the Grand Remover of Obstacles, a role that, carried to an extreme, will strike outsiders as absurd.

What happens is something analogous to curling, an ice sport we normally witness only once every four years during the Winter Olympics. In it, teams bowl heavy kettle-shaped stones across an ice arena towards a circular target. The idea is to get more of your stones within the circle than those of the opposing team.

If a player releases a stone and it looks like it might stop short of the target, team members rush in front of it with brooms and sweep the ice furiously. This action not only whisks away any debris that might impede its progress, but it also melts the ice slightly so that it becomes slicker and the stone slides a skosh further.

Any new viewer cannot but be impressed by the intensity with which team members furiously brush the ice simply to eke out another few inches or to induce a stone to veer an inch or two to the side to bump an opponent’s stone out of the circle.

The analogy applies well to these grants development offices. To outsiders, the actions of their staff members look strange, even preposterous. But that doesn’t keep them from working feverously to remove obstacles and warm the track ever so slightly so whatever momentum the proposal writers have mustered can be sustained until the deadline.

So don’t be outraged about the RA’s in these institutions. They might look silly to you, but they don’t to a Canadian. 

Robert A. Lucas, Ph.D., Director of the Institute for Scholarly Productivity, An Educational Consulting Corporation in San Luis Obispo, CA., is Emeritus Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research, and Faculty Development, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Author of over 100 articles on the subject of research administration and grants development, he is widely known for his faculty workshops on scholarly and research proposal writing. He can be reached at boblucas@aol.com

DEAR ANN: I heard about a pre-award office that has three times as many staff members as ours. It is so loaded with people, it has two full-timers just to help PI’s do proposal budgets.

What frosts me is they put out a measly 300 proposals a year. We do about 2000 and I barely have time to check addition.

What gives? MYSTIFIED

Other more enlightened newbies will figure that an enhanced pre-award office is the key. To jumpstart the faculty, they double its staff so it can handle the mundane parts of proposal development, leaving faculty members to focus their energies solely on the intellectual portion of the activity.

But, as time goes on, more and more of the activity of writing a proposal becomes identified as mundane, and less and less as intellectual, largely because these professors don’t see proposal writing as part of their professional responsibility. Rather they do it as a personal favor to the university, a magnanimous gesture and sacrifice of personal prerogatives to help the institution out in a time of stress.

With such a fragile sense of commitment, any impediment encountered, like filling out the proposal approval form or disclosing personal investments, causes them to hyperventilate and rail against such bureaucratic claptrap as an affront to academic freedom.

So the Research Development Office becomes the Grand Remover of Obstacles, a role that, carried to an extreme, will strike outsiders as absurd.

What happens is something analogous to curling, an ice sport we normally witness only once every four years during the Winter Olympics. In it, teams bowl heavy kettle-shaped stones across an ice arena towards a circular target. The idea is to get more of your stones within the circle than those of the opposing team.

If a player releases a stone and it looks like it might stop short of the target, team members rush in front of it with brooms and sweep the ice furiously. This action not only whisks away any debris that might impede its progress, but it also melts the ice slightly so that it becomes slicker and the stone slides a skosh further.

Any new viewer cannot but be impressed by the intensity with which team members furiously brush the ice simply to eke out another few inches or to induce a stone to veer an inch or two to the side to bump an opponent’s stone out of the circle.

The analogy applies well to these grants development offices. To outsiders, the actions of their staff members look strange, even preposterous. But that doesn’t keep them from working feverously to remove obstacles and warm the track ever so slightly so whatever momentum the proposal writers have mustered can be sustained until the deadline.

So don’t be outraged about the RA’s in these institutions. They might look silly to you, but they don’t to a Canadian.

DEAR ANN: I heard about a pre-award office that has three times as many staff members as ours. It is so loaded with people, it has two full-timers just to help PI’s do proposal budgets.

What frosts me is they put out a measly 300 proposals a year. We do about 2000 and I barely have time to check addition.

What gives? MYSTIFIED

Other more enlightened newbies will figure that an enhanced pre-award office is the key. To jumpstart the faculty, they double its staff so it can handle the mundane parts of proposal development, leaving faculty members to focus their energies solely on the intellectual portion of the activity.

But, as time goes on, more and more of the activity of writing a proposal becomes identified as mundane, and less and less as intellectual, largely because these professors don’t see proposal writing as part of their professional responsibility. Rather they do it as a personal favor to the university, a magnanimous gesture and sacrifice of personal prerogatives to help the institution out in a time of stress.

With such a fragile sense of commitment, any impediment encountered, like filling out the proposal approval form or disclosing personal investments, causes them to hyperventilate and rail against such bureaucratic claptrap as an affront to academic freedom.

So the Research Development Office becomes the Grand Remover of Obstacles, a role that, carried to an extreme, will strike outsiders as absurd.

What happens is something analogous to curling, an ice sport we normally witness only once every four years during the Winter Olympics. In it, teams bowl heavy kettle-shaped stones across an ice arena towards a circular target. The idea is to get more of your stones within the circle than those of the opposing team.

If a player releases a stone and it looks like it might stop short of the target, team members rush in front of it with brooms and sweep the ice furiously. This action not only whisks away any debris that might impede its progress, but it also melts the ice slightly so that it becomes slicker and the stone slides a skosh further.

Any new viewer cannot but be impressed by the intensity with which team members furiously brush the ice simply to eke out another few inches or to induce a stone to veer an inch or two to the side to bump an opponent’s stone out of the circle.

The analogy applies well to these grants development offices. To outsiders, the actions of their staff members look strange, even preposterous. But that doesn’t keep them from working feverously to remove obstacles and warm the track ever so slightly so whatever momentum the proposal writers have mustered can be sustained until the deadline.

So don’t be outraged about the RA’s in these institutions. They might look silly to you, but they don’t to a Canadian.

DEAR ANN: I heard about a pre-award office that has three times as many staff members as ours. It is so loaded with people, it has two full-timers just to help PI’s do proposal budgets.

What frosts me is they put out a measly 300 proposals a year. We do about 2000 and I barely have time to check addition.

What gives? MYSTIFIED

Editor’s Note: In addition to reprinting other favorite letters in future issues, Ann and an anonymous blue ribbon panel will be available to respond to current questions. If you have vexing problems still eluding solutions, please send them to NCURA Magazine Senior Editor, Dan Nordquist, at nordquist@wsu.edu

Robert A. Lucas, Ph.D., Director of the Institute for Scholarly Productivity, An Educational Consulting Corporation in San Luis Obispo, CA., is Emeritus Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research, and Faculty Development, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Author of over 100 articles on the subject of research administration and grants development, he is widely known for his faculty workshops on scholarly and research proposal writing. He can be reached at boblucas@aol.com

DEAR ANN: I heard about a pre-award office that has three times as many staff members as ours. It is so loaded with people, it has two full-timers just to help PI’s do proposal budgets.

What frosts me is they put out a measly 300 proposals a year. We do about 2000 and I barely have time to check addition.

What gives? MYSTIFIED
Intellectual Athletes and Organizational Wizards

Waller et al (2001) explored how time urgency and time perception influence individual and team behaviors associated with meeting deadlines. They define “time urgency” as the way “an individual is concerned with the passage of time and how to cope with it,” and “time perspective” as “an individual’s bias toward framing planning and decision-making tasks in present or future time” (p. 592). They proposed four time perception prototypes for team members: (1) “Visioners” focus on the future but pay little attention to time and deadlines; (2) “Relators” focus on present tasks and also pay little attention to the passage of time; (3) “Crammers” are highly focused on deadlines, need to exert control over deadlines, and tend to be rather impatient and irritable; and (4) “Organizers” are high achievers and highly aware of time. The authors found that people with a present time perspective tend to believe that planning for the future is futile, they take more risks, and they lose track of time more than those with other time perspectives. In contrast, having a future time perspective gives an individual a higher chance of actually attaining a goal.

It’s all about Communication

For some time I’ve been struggling to impress upon our faculty the benefits of submitting their grant applications to the Sponsored Research Office (SRO) with enough time (five days at my institution) for their proposals to receive the thorough review they deserve. No amount of explaining, sharing facts and figures, begging, or cajoling seems to make a difference. My efforts have highlighted the importance of how information is communicated, and the need to understand the communication preferences of our faculty. In addition to frequent communication with faculty, Kulage (2010) discusses several other tactics that may help enforce compliance with deadlines, including having strong institutional support of your internal deadline policy (preferably at the Dean level), making sure your new faculty are properly oriented to your policies, communicating to your faculty the benefits to them of meeting your internal deadlines, and, if all else fails, “play[ing] the fear factor” by sharing some of your deadline horror stories.

People tend to underestimate not only their own but others’ task completion times and make overly optimistic predictions of when they will complete a task. They tend to ignore relevant past experiences when predicting task completion times and focus instead on the project plan, blaming past failures on extraneous factors. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to show that setting pessimistic deadlines leads to faster task completion than setting optimistic deadlines (Buehler, Griffin, & Ross, 1994) (Newby-Clark, Ross, Buehler, Koehler, & Griffin, 2000).
and voice mail, or for the most recent generation, instant messages, blogs, text messages, and emails may be the preferred media. If we are to ensure that the messages we communicate are “heard” by our constituents, we must get to know our faculty as individuals and be prepared to adopt the appropriate communication style. With that in mind, I offer the following steps you might consider as you work with your faculty.

Practical Steps to being your best “communicator” self

✔ Consider your audience. Put yourself in their shoes before you consider how to communicate with faculty. What do they care about? Make sure that what you are communicating really is of interest to them. What language and tone will be most effective? Use words that will get their attention in a medium that best supports the message.

✔ Stop and think before you speak. I once gave my dad a plaque that still hangs in my mother’s kitchen, and it reads “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and re- move all doubt.” Take a few moments to organize your thoughts before you speak or dash off that email. Consider that sometimes no response may be the best response. Remember that a digital communication faux pas lives on forever!

✔ Be precise with your vocabulary. Don’t frustrate your audience. Faculty members don’t have time to figure out what you are trying to say.

✔ Interpret what you’re heard. Take the guesswork out of how you are interpreting your speaker’s meaning. Reflecting what your hear involves you having to listen carefully to what is important and encourages the speaker to further explore his or her plans.

✔ Exhibit positive body language. In face-to-face communications, be attentive through eye contact and body language (leaning forward, maintaining an appropriate distance, nodding your head showing your understanding), letting your speaker know you are hearing the message.

Be true to your principles. Know your own capabilities and limitations. Be genuine and authentic, warm and human. Project open-mindedness, understanding, and confidence. See the potential in others, and give others the benefit of the doubt. By being true to your principles, you will inspire trust, build rapport, and enhance communication.

✔ Practice verbal skills every day. One day, after a rehearsal that hadn’t pleased violinist Mischa Elman, he and his wife were leaving Carnegie Hall by the backstage entrance when they were approached by two tourists looking for the hall’s entrance. Seeing his violin case, they asked, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” Without looking up and continuing on his way, Elman simply replied, “Practice” (Carnegie Hall, 2013). Or so the story goes… If you want to get better at what you do, you have to practice—practice giving presentations, giving feedback, answering difficult questions, running a meeting, negotiating, and so on. Practice expressing yourself so your creative intelligence comes through and you will get better at solving problems.

Ultimately, we share the same goal—to facilitate development of successful grant applications that lead to increased productivity of our institutions. We believe that meeting internal grant deadlines will help lead to that success, and effective communication is key to conveying that message to our teams of visioners, relators, crammers, and organizers, allowing them to focus on the things that matter, take decisive action, and set realistic expectations.

References


Buehler, R., Griffin, D., & Ross, M. (1994). Exploring the “Planning Fallacy”: Why People Underestimate Their Ability to Build Trust. Check your grammar and punctuation. Would a diagram or graph be helpful in communicating clearly? At the same time, frame your messages in a personable manner. You will be more successful in building relationships with your constituents if you combine a clear purpose and straightforward organization with a warm, friendly tone.

✔ Listen to the other person. When you aren’t being a good listener, you are only partially paying attention and you won’t fully understand the information. Ask clarifying questions, avoid distractions, don’t interrupt, and try to be open to ideas that may be very different from your own. A diverse workforce brings a diversity of viewpoints, fresh ideas, and creative approaches.

✔ Interpret what you’re heard. Take the guesswork out of how you are interpreting your speaker’s meaning. Reflecting what your hear involves you having to listen carefully to what is important and encourages the speaker to further explore his or her plans.

The productivity of individuals and institutions is determined by the interaction of individual, leadership, and institutional characteristics

(Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2005)

Vague messages that hint at things lead to confusion or misunderstanding and undermine your ability to build trust. Check your grammar and punctuation. Would a diagram or graph be helpful in communicating clearly? At the same time, frame your messages in a personable manner. You will be more successful in building relationships with your constituents if you combine a clear purpose and straightforward organization with a warm, friendly tone.

✔ Listen to the other person. When you aren’t being a good listener, you are only partially paying attention and you won’t fully understand the information. Ask clarifying questions, avoid distractions, don’t interrupt, and try to be open to ideas that may be very different from your own. A diverse workforce brings a diversity of viewpoints, fresh ideas, and creative approaches.

✔ Interpret what you’re heard. Take the guesswork out of how you are interpreting your speaker’s meaning. Reflecting what your hear involves you having to listen carefully to what is important and encourages the speaker to further explore his or her plans.

✔ Exhibit positive body language. In face-to-face communications, be attentive through eye contact and body language (leaning forward, maintaining an appropriate distance, nodding your head showing your understanding), letting your speaker know you are hearing the message.

Be true to your principles. Know your own capabilities and limitations. Be genuine and authentic, warm and human. Project open-mindedness, understanding, and confidence. See the potential in others, and give others the benefit of the doubt. By being true to your principles, you will inspire trust, build rapport, and enhance communication.

✔ Practice verbal skills every day. One day, after a rehearsal that hadn’t pleased violinist Mischa Elman, he and his wife were leaving Carnegie Hall by the backstage entrance when they were approached by two tourists looking for the hall’s entrance. Seeing his violin case, they asked, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” Without looking up and continuing on his way, Elman simply replied, “Practice” (Carnegie Hall, 2013). Or so the story goes… If you want to get better at what you do, you have to practice—practice giving presentations, giving feedback, answering difficult questions, running a meeting, negotiating, and so on. Practice expressing yourself so your creative intelligence comes through and you will get better at solving problems.

Ultimately, we share the same goal—to facilitate development of successful grant applications that lead to increased productivity of our institutions. We believe that meeting internal grant deadlines will help lead to that success, and effective communication is key to conveying that message to our teams of visioners, relators, crammers, and organizers, allowing them to focus on the things that matter, take decisive action, and set realistic expectations.

References


Buehler, R., Griffin, D., & Ross, M. (1994). Exploring the “Planning Fallacy”: Why People Underestimate Their Ability to Build Trust. Check your grammar and punctuation. Would a diagram or graph be helpful in communicating clearly? At the same time, frame your messages in a personable manner. You will be more successful in building relationships with your constituents if you combine a clear purpose and straightforward organization with a warm, friendly tone.

✔ Listen to the other person. When you aren’t being a good listener, you are only partially paying attention and you won’t fully understand the information. Ask clarifying questions, avoid distractions, don’t interrupt, and try to be open to ideas that may be very different from your own. A diverse workforce brings a diversity of viewpoints, fresh ideas, and creative approaches.

✔ Interpret what you’re heard. Take the guesswork out of how you are interpreting your speaker’s meaning. Reflecting what your hear involves you having to listen carefully to what is important and encourages the speaker to further explore his or her plans.

✔ Exhibit positive body language. In face-to-face communications, be attentive through eye contact and body language (leaning forward, maintaining an appropriate distance, nodding your head showing your understanding), letting your speaker know you are hearing the message.

Be true to your principles. Know your own capabilities and limitations. Be genuine and authentic, warm and human. Project open-mindedness, understanding, and confidence. See the potential in others, and give others the benefit of the doubt. By being true to your principles, you will inspire trust, build rapport, and enhance communication.

✔ Practice verbal skills every day. One day, after a rehearsal that hadn’t pleased violinist Mischa Elman, he and his wife were leaving Carnegie Hall by the backstage entrance when they were approached by two tourists looking for the hall’s entrance. Seeing his violin case, they asked, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” Without looking up and continuing on his way, Elman simply replied, “Practice” (Carnegie Hall, 2013). Or so the story goes… If you want to get better at what you do, you have to practice—practice giving presentations, giving feedback, answering difficult questions, running a meeting, negotiating, and so on. Practice expressing yourself so your creative intelligence comes through and you will get better at solving problems.

Ultimately, we share the same goal—to facilitate development of successful grant applications that lead to increased productivity of our institutions. We believe that meeting internal grant deadlines will help lead to that success, and effective communication is key to conveying that message to our teams of visioners, relators, crammers, and organizers, allowing them to focus on the things that matter, take decisive action, and set realistic expectations.

References


What are the legal duties of regional officers? How do treasurers develop and manage a regional budget? What issues are important when planning regional meetings? On the Saturday prior to the 55th Annual Meeting, President Patricia Hawk kicked off a day-long Regional Leadership Workshop where NCURA regional officers and regional volunteer coordinators had an opportunity to hear from NCURA staff and outside experts on many of the issues facing them in the upcoming year.

The Regional Leadership Workshop offered breakout sessions in a Financial Track and a Regional Meetings Track, along with a general session for all attendees on the Legal Duties of Regional Volunteer Officers.

Those attending the Financial Track heard from Yung-Hee Galinaro, CPA, a Partner from NCURA’s audit firm, CliftonLarsonAllen, regarding the regional treasurers’ role in audits of NCURA records. NCURA Treasurer Bob Andresen and NCURA Director of Finance Ivone Wells led a second breakout session on regional budget preparation, forecasting and reporting.

The Regional Meeting Track began with a lively presentation on site selection and negotiations from a hotel perspective by Hilton staffers Juan Garcia, Washington DC Area Director of Sales and Marketing, and Stephanie Snapkoski, Director of Sales and Marketing, Hilton McLean. Tara Bishop, NCURA Associate Executive Director, led the second part breakout session on hotel contract negotiations where regional officers learned what they can and should ask for while negotiating with a hotel. And, Kati Barber, NCURA Director of Meetings, discussed estimating and controlling those other costs of the regional meeting, i.e., food and beverage, audio/visual costs.

In a separate breakout session, Executive Director Kathleen Larmett facilitated a hands-on look at regional bylaws in a discussion of Regional Governance and Chris Hansen, Regional Volunteer Assistance Coordinator, provided food for thought in a session on increasing Volunteers and grooming Future Leaders.

A Regional Idea Exchange at the end of the day brought everyone together to encourage questions and sharing of information on regional policies and activities. This annual workshop is one of the ways NCURA helps support and assist regional leaders. Additional resources including a regional officers Collaborate community as well as conference calls with the NCURA national Executive Committee also provide regional volunteers with the tools necessary for a successful regional leadership experience.
This past year in the NCURA Executive Leadership Program (ELP), I was introduced to five fellow research administrators from across the nation with one thing in common: a similar set of values to support the vision and goals of NCURA through Integrity, Excellence, Inclusiveness, and Collegiality. The program was a journey; to first learn about ourselves, and who we are, and then second, to learn how we as a collective team of eclectic leaders can partner to help NCURA reach its goals.

We had a lot in common. We are all very people focused, with lots of creativity, and we have our sights set on an inspired vision; a vision that’s constantly moving forward. We like to dive right in and figure out the details along the way. We are excellent at flying the airplane while building it. We like to surround ourselves with an eclectic group of energized and intelligent colleagues, all bringing a different perspective to the table.

Along the way we learned that leaders aren’t the inventors as much as they are the early adopters – we are risk takers and experimenters; that the quality of relationships matters most when getting extraordinary things done; and that we can’t achieve the goal without a team.

Our journey had a lot of twists and turns as we learned that we can’t be perfect or expect perfection from our teams, we need to acknowledge emotions to help manage our relationships, and we need to acknowledge stylistic differences in colleagues and adapt our style to get results. Most importantly, we need to listen more. After a few late nights of music and conversation that went on into the wee hours of the morning, we got it. We each ended up with a personal, very unique, brand. As leaders, we inspire through our understanding and connections with people. We have developed a sense of self that allows each of us to reach out and lead.

My ELP colleague, Rick Smiley has mentioned, “A significant finding about leadership programs is that a significant (perhaps the most significant) factor in their success… has to do with selecting likely young talent and putting them in contact with one another. What happens seems to be these folks get connections from around the organization that alone are enough to accelerate their careers. They are perceived (perhaps are in fact) as more capable by their peers and supervisors as a result of this network. They organize their projects and their career moves with more contextual awareness. They succeed.”

I agree with Rick, and look forward to my continuing journey with NCURA. Whether, or not, you become part of an NCURA ELP cohort, NCURA has many volunteer opportunities. I encourage everyone to get involved and start making connections. We all have heart and compassion, and we are willing to roll-up our sleeves and take an active role in continuing NCURA’s excellent track record of supporting research administrators across the nation and globe. We are committed to working with the NCURA team, in the most needed capacity, to help develop, pursue and reach the vision for the future of research administration.

Kirsten Yehl, MLIS, is the Administrative Director for The Institute for Public Health and Medicine at the Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University, is a graduate of NCURA’s Executive Leadership Program and The Kellogg School of Management Executive Leadership Program. Kirsten’s responsibilities at Northwestern University include strategic planning and administrative leadership for all research and education programs in The Institute for Public Health and Medicine. She can be reached at k-yehl@northwestern.edu
What obstacles or surprises did you experience during the implementation process?

Rupinder Grewal, MIT: The largest surprise was how quickly investigators adapted to the new requirements and to the new systems put in place to meet the requirements. To illustrate that investigators understood the disclosure requirements under the new regulations, we saw an increase in the volume and complexity of information disclosed. That, coupled with a more involved review process, led to the realization that much more time was required to thoroughly review and process the COI disclosures. This was not seen as an obstacle but an opportunity to further streamline our internal processes.

Melissa Anderson, BIDMC: Academic medical centers (AMCs) often see less “pushback” from investigators over regulatory requirements because most of them are also clinicians who are more accustomed to living with a myriad of regulations (clinical protocols, Medicare regulations, DEA licensing, to name just a few) than their university counterparts. Medicine is one of the most highly regulated industries in the world, second only to the airline industry. These individuals are used to being regulated in almost every aspect of their professional lives. By and large, our investigators have met the challenge without complaint.

Kris Monahan, Providence College: For all types of institutions, one of the most burdensome aspects of implementing the new regulations was the time needed to build systems, whether electronic or paper, to accommodate the new requirements. For many PUIs, this represented a good deal of work for a very small number of FCOI cases. And, because the volume of FCOI cases is so low at most small schools, PUIs rarely need to write and submit FCOI management plans, nor have they received many public access requests. In short, from the PUI perspective, the first year after the new regulations took effect was somewhat anticlimactic, given the work to build an infrastructure to comply with the new regulations.

Diane Dean, NIH: Our grantees’ comments during the rulemaking process were a vital part of shaping the proposed revisions to the 1995 FCOI regulation (42 CFR Part 50 Subpart F). By working with our grantees and engaging in extensive outreach efforts to discuss the proposed changes and their impact, we avoided many obstacles. Of course, there were some unanticipated bumps in the road as we began implementing the new requirements, but it was especially helpful having a full year to implement and be fully compliant with the new regulatory requirements. This provided time for grantees to develop new policies and systems, and, as any unexpected issues arose, gave us time to come together with our grantee community to address concerns, answer questions, and discuss challenges. We also revised the eRA Commons FCOI module to accommodate new reporting requirements and posted resources, among other things. What may be surprising is that our grantees were in good company—NIH was also busy implementing the provisions of the revised regulation for our extramural staff: providing training, developing internal resources, and enhancing electronic systems.

How has your institution benefitted from the implementation of the revised policy?

Rupinder Grewal, MIT: It’s all about transparency and fairness. MIT put together an advisory committee of several faculty members to help design processes to meet the new FCOI disclosure requirements and to get buy-in from the larger faculty community. This advisory committee also reminded their peers that NIH awards are publicly funded and that
accountability concerning potential conflicts of interest was of paramount importance. The work of the committee went a long way toward convincing faculty at MIT that everyone would be treated fairly under the new regulations; it also mitigated faculty feelings that the new FCOI regulations were “just another example of administrative overreach.” MIT’s entrepreneurial ‘eco-system’ is built on creativity, integrity, and intellectual curiosity, coming together to solve practical problems. To manage all the external relationships required to accomplish this is a great challenge. The message of the new regulations is clear in that if you are a PHS funded investigator, greater scrutiny and care must be given to building and defining those relationships.

**Melissa Anderson, BIDMC:** BIDMC will continue to use an online disclosure system and keeps an electronic database of every disclosure an investigator makes. We rely a lot on the magic of electronics. BIDMC has an electronic system, developed internally, that automatically delivers a COI questionnaire to each investigator named to receive salary from, or devote time and effort to, the project. Those questionnaires must be electronically signed and received before a proposal can be submitted to the NIH. If a research administrator receives a Just-In-time notice, or any other notice of funding, the administrator electronically notifies the Office of Sponsored Programs, who reviews the disclosure. If the disclosure is significant, the Office of Sponsored Programs forwards it to the COI Unit, who investigates. The COI Unit may refer the disclosure to a Scientific Reviewer, who makes a recommendation regarding whether there is an FCOI with the project. FCOI findings are taken to the Conflict of Interest Committee, who approves an FCOI management plan. Upon the investigator signing the management plan, the Office of Sponsored Programs files an FCOI report.

**Diane Dean, NIH:** We are currently focused on compliance with the requirements of the revised regulation. My office, the Division of Grants Compliance and Oversight, launched a new proactive initiative in September 2012 to assess institutional implementation and compliance related to grants and cooperative agreements. Initially, we are evaluating publicly accessible FCOI policies. While this Compliance Program is a component of NIH’s oversight responsibilities, it will also assist grantees in fully developing and implementing their FCOI policies by providing constructive feedback and technical assistance. We plan to continue and expand the Compliance Program during FY2014.

**Rupinder Grewal, MIT:** The regulations are here to stay and so is the journey to compliance. MIT will continue to refine its electronic COI disclosure system in response to Investigator comments and questions. The goal is to make the system as easy to use as possible. We will continue our efforts to engage with our faculty and staff on the COI disclosure process, working together to further reduce administrative burden posed by the new regulations (of particular note are the travel disclosure requirements for PHS funded investigators). Keeping the doors of communication open will be key to continued understanding and compliance with FCOI policies. When in doubt — disclose.

**What’s down the road for FCOI compliance?**

**Interviewee bios:**

**Diane Dean** is the Director of the Division of Grants Compliance and Oversight (DGCO) at the National Institutes of Health, Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration. The DGCO is the focal point to advance external compliance with policy and legislative mandates and enhance compliance oversight by recipient institutions. Diane can be reached at dd12a@nih.gov

**Rupinder Grewal** is the Conflict of Interest Officer at MIT. Rupinder can be reached at rgrewal@mit.edu

**Kris Monahan, Ph.D.** is the Director of Sponsored Research & Programs at Providence College. Kris can be reached at Kmonahan@providence.edu

**Melissa Anderson, J.D.** is the Director, Conflicts and Industry Interactions, at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Melissa can be reached at mwanders@bidmc.harvard.edu

**Anastacia Feldman** is a Financial Officer at the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at MIT. Anastacia can be reached at afeldman@csail.mit.edu
During the past four and a half years, the University of Washington (UW) has greatly benefitted from the funds made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) (the UW received 666 grants worth $376,790,943). This funding has allowed PIs to begin new research projects and/or continue with current ones; provided students with educational funds; the installation of a high bandwidth, high-power cabled network that will form the submarine framework throughout many portions of the ocean basins; and the development of a modern building energy management system that will include a common communication platform and facility manager-user interface.

The establishment of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board (RATB) ensured that Recovery Act dollars were distributed efficiently and effectively across the country. The board’s main focus has been to maintain ongoing prevention and detection of waste, fraud and abuse and to provide transparency, accountability and a new vision of openness that allows the public to track how federal tax dollars are being spent. Available at Recovery.gov

At the request of RATB, the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) conducted a Pre-Pilot Demonstration in early 2013 for a new reporting initiative — the Grants Information Reporting Project (GRIP). Representatives from one federal agency, 10 academic institutions, one state government, and one municipality participated in this project (the UW was one of the academic participants). The focus of GRIP was to use the Recovery Act reporting model to test the ability of FederalReporting.gov to expand reporting requirements to all grants (i.e., centrally collect grant data, standardize the information collected, and publish concise data definitions for financial reporting), while measuring time and cost savings that might result from centralized data and warehousing. Although the focus of this project was to test if FederalReporting.gov could accommodate the increased volume, the participants expressed concern how this level of reporting might affect the reporting institutions financially and resource allocation.

In May 2013, OMB and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a directive for the Open Data Policy (M-13-13). This directive would require federal agencies to identify, collect and centrally post data related to all federal dollars invested in research.

Although GRIP did determine that centralized reporting can be met at the federal level, if directive M-13-13 is implemented, how will it affect reporting institutions? Are all in a position to submit regular reports for all the federal funds received? How might this change affect the actual research being conducted? Will the reporting requirement become a task for researchers, their colleagues and administrators (which will take them away from their research)? Or, would each institution try to capture the information and submit the reports from a central location? Although ARRA is winding down, there is little doubt we will all be ramping up again soon!

NCURA Research Management Review Highlight

Andrea Adkins, Tammie McClellan and John Miner from the University of Central Florida (UCF) penned a great article in the NCURA Research Management Review issue Volume 19, Number 2 titled “The Final Rule: Implementing New Policies for Financial Conflict of Interest at the University of Central Florida.” This piece highlights all of the changes UCF went through to remain compliant with the revised PHS FCOI regulations; from creating new conflict of interest policies and institutional procedures to on-line system implementation, this article captures, in detail, one institution’s response to these changing federal regulations.

You can read the article on-line here: http://www.ncura.edu/content/news/rmr/docs/v19n2_Adkins.pdf
Barbara Gray was appointed Director of Sponsored Projects at East Carolina University in Greenville, NC effective September 16, 2013. Previously, Barbara was the Director, Office of Sponsored Projects & Research Administration at Valdosta State University.

Derick Jones recently became Program Manager for the Pediatrics Division Genetic Outcomes and the Institute for Translational Genomics and Population Sciences at Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA. Derick had been the Financial Manager for the Medical Genetics Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center before scientific operations were relocated.

Robyn Remotigue, CRA, is now Research Manager for the Dean of the School of Public Health, University of North Texas Health Science Center. Robyn was the Assistant Director in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Mississippi State University for 19 years.

Sally J. Southwick accepted a new position in August and is now Director of Sponsored Programs and Foundation Relations at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. Previously, she was Associate Director of Sponsored Projects and Research at Keene State College, New Hampshire.

Laura Wade, NCURA President in 2006 and Associate Director of Research Center Administration at the University of Houston, retired as of August 1. She is looking forward to new pursuits and “lots of free time.”

“Collaborate Conversations”

We are back with some of our favorite recent Collaborate Community conversation topics! Make sure to login to Collaborate and see what else is being discussed! Popular recent topics include:

**PUI Community** – “NSF Conflict of Interest”, posted by Linda Crocker of Worcester State University. Linda is looking to decipher some recent NSF Grant Proposal Guide COI changes.

In the **Subcontracting Community**, Derek Brown from Washington State University inquired about working with a subrecipient who doesn’t want to provide full access to the Prime-Recipient in the event of a DCAA audit due to proprietary concerns.

Linda Demeritt from Children’s Hospital Los Angeles asked the **Pre-Award and Electronic Research Communities** about issues people are having with the new Grants.gov application package.

“Foreign Fixed Price Agreement” - Finally, in the **Financial Research Community**, Anne Pascucci from Christopher Newport University was on the hunt for some examples of foreign fixed price agreements.
Regional Meeting 2014: Save the Date!
April 27-30, 2014
(Sun. Workshops, Mon.-Weds. meeting)
Marriott Mystic Hotel and Spa, Mystic, Connecticut

Upcoming Research Administrator Discussion Groups: The September 25th (RADG): “Research Misconduct on the Rise: Combating Institutional Risk” looks to be very well attended as I write this and the December 11th RADG details are shaping up nicely. The working title is “IRB, IACUC, and Biohazards for the Research Administrator;” and the three speakers will be Kathryn Holthaus, Director of Animal Welfare, Brigham and Women’s Hospital; Michael Centola, IRB Manager, University of Massachusetts Medical, and Ted Myatt, Director of the Office of Research Integrity, University of Rhode Island. The speakers will have some information on regulations but will try to focus on ways in which research administrators can work with their faculty to support their research and protocols and manage grants which include these types of research.

The elections are now closed and the 2014 “elected’s” are:
- Chair-Elect: Michelle Auerbach, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA
- Secretary-Elect: Alison Wellman Smith, Harvard Kennedy School
- Treasurer-Elect: Fredric Majnoun, Boston University School of Medicine
- National Board Member: Denise Moody, Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Molto grazie to our Region 1 Nominating committee for coming up with great candidates to run for regional officer positions, and a great deal of gratitude to all of the members who agreed to run.

Annual Meeting: Congratulations to our Annual Meeting Travel Award Winners: Odette Lobo from the Cambridge Health Alliance and Dimitrios Poutias of Children’s Hospital Boston. Many, many thanks to everyone who volunteered – our regional connection was very well staffed, our hospitality suite managers did a great job, and our newcomer and volunteer receptions were quite successful. We are also much obliged to Denise Moody and the Volunteer Membership Committee who helped find volunteers for almost all of Region I’s events this year.

If you have any pictures of the annual meeting or any other Region I events, please email them to ncurasecretary.region1@gmail.com with the names of the people in them. We’d like to add some to our developing website, which we hope to have up and running by the end of the year.

(At left, the annual meeting Region I setup at the Regional Connection)

Some of the changes the website committee is working on are:
- a new URL: (ncuraregion1.org) since all the other regions are using roman numerals
- redirecting the old URL (ncuraregion1.org) to the new one so people won’t have to change their browser bookmarks right away
- choosing a new website builder application with which to create a new website
- coming up with a standard operating procedure for website maintenance and updates

If you’re a techie and/or have suggestions for the site, please email webmaster@ncuraregion1.org Sincere gratitude to Dave Waldron for his service as webmaster so far this year. We will miss you as webmaster, Dave, but console ourselves that you’ll still be an active Region I member.

Proposed changes to Region I by-laws were approved so we are adding a secretary-elect position and limiting the secretary’s future term to one year so that there will be more continuity and more than one person around to do the secretary’s job. Language about having to announce the incoming elected officers at the national meeting has also been removed. The governance and nomination committee are now pondering changing the start dates of elected officers from January 1 to the fall so that chair, treasurer, and secretary-elects and all committee chairs can be appointed and get started nine months before the Region I spring meeting. The governance committee is also considering reducing the time elections remain open (currently thirty days), since electronic voting is now used, which is much speedier than paper ballots.

Karen Woodward Massey is the Chair of Region I and serves as the Director of Education and Outreach in Research Administration Services at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), Harvard University. She can be reached at chair@ncuraregioni.org or on Twitter @kwmassey
Region II was very active at AM 55 in DC. For Region II members that could not attend AM 55, there were some memorable moments. Some highlights included a record-setting and jam-packed Region II hospitality suite on Monday night made possible by our region’s Professional Development Committee. Monday night’s event was an opportunity for members from our region to learn more about Region II’s professional development workshops. Attendees enjoyed an international cordial coffee bar and dessert, met the PDC faculty and also learned more about the benefits of hosting a workshop. Colleagues that have hosted our workshop shared testimonials with the group. This was an opportunity to hear from colleagues who have benefited from the quality and value of our PDC workshops. The enthusiasm and attendance was fantastic as illustrated in the picture shown. A special thanks to Erin Bailey, Tim Schailey and Denise Clark and the rest of the PDC committee for all of their efforts in ensuring that this event was dynamite.

As you can tell from the email blasts that I have sent recently announcing new workshops, the interest of our PDC have really gained momentum. Please visit our workshop for future workshop offerings http://ncuraregionii.org

We also had a successful joint hospitality event at AM 55 with Region III promoting our joint meeting with Region III at St. Pete Beach, Florida May 4th – May 7th. Erin Bailey and Anne Albinak, our co-chairs for this meeting, are already ramping up their program committee to ensure an educational and activity filled experience. Please remember to visit our website at http://ncuraregioniii.org as details become available.

Best,
Brian N. Squilla

Brian Squilla serves as the Chair of Region II and is the Chief of Staff, Office of the Dean of the Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University.

If you did not get the chance to attend AM55 in Washington, DC in August, you missed a tremendous opportunity to network and gain valuable knowledge. In addition, you missed Tony Ventimiglia receiving the Region III Senior Service award. A special thanks to all the Region III members who volunteered their time and shared their knowledge to help make the annual meeting a huge success. Mark your calendars now for next year’s annual meeting August 10th – 14th in Washington, DC.

The next Region III annual spring meeting is being held jointly with Region II in St. Pete Beach, Florida at the TradeWinds Island Grand Resort May 4th – May 7th. If you have not already made your plans to attend please do. This is a great opportunity for professional development, to find out how other institutions are handling the issues that you are struggling with currently, and to relax a bit in a beautiful location. As usual we will be looking for members to volunteer to help make this meeting successful, so be on the lookout for an email in the near future. Check out the Region III website – www.ncuraregioniii.org – to get more information on the meeting location. If you have never attended one of these meetings, please take a glance at the meeting archives on the website to see the valuable professional development and networking opportunities that are the standard for Region III conferences.

Region III is pleased to have Rick Smiley, East Carolina University, now serving as the new chair of the PDC Committee and Cameron Craft, Medical University of South Carolina, as the new chair of the Hospitality Committee. Danielle McElwain, University of South Carolina, has replaced Robyn Remotigue, who served as the Region III Volunteer Coordinator and accepted a new position as Research Manager in School of Public Health at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth.

Region III would like to congratulate April Heyward, University of South Carolina, who recently received her Master of Research Administration degree from the University of Central Florida.

Bill Lambert serves as Region III’s regional corner contributor and is Assistant Dean for Research Administration at Emory University’s Rollins School of Public Health.
“In a gentle way, you can shake the world.” – Mahatma Gandhi

Region IV was well-represented at the 55th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC – one out of every six attendees was from Mid-America! Regional members also took active roles in shaping the annual meeting:

- 7 served on the AM55 Program Committee, representing 6 of 12 tracks.
- 17 presented full- or half-day workshops.
- 75 presented concurrent, discussion, spark, roundtable, and senior forum sessions.

Numerous members were involved in organizing and implementing cultural and social events for the region, such as DC at Dusk bus tours, New Member Reception, Dinner Groups, Dessert Mix & Mingle, and Hospitality Suite. These events add to the richness of the annual meeting’s educational offerings.

Congratulations to Sue Rivera, Case Western Reserve University, for her winning entry in the “185 Cows” punchline contest during the Get Involved Fair: 185 cows walked into a bar and the bartender says, “You’re too young. We don’t serve kids.” The cows responded, “Please don’t tell our parents – they’d tan our hides.”

It was a proud moment when two of the five Julia Jacobsen Distinguished Service Awards presented at the annual meeting went to Region IV members: Stephen Hansen, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and David Richardson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Their volunteer service over the years has touched the lives of thousands of NCURA members.

Region IV continues to “shake the world” with its keen involvement in the NCURA International Fellows program. Most recently, Thomas Wilson, Rush University Medical Center, hosted Christle de Beer, University of the Free State, South Africa for a two-week fellowship that culminated in attendance at the annual meeting. And Jeremy Miner, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, was awarded a 2013-2014 International Fellowship to Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town, South Africa.

At the Region IV Board of Directors meeting in August, officers from the International Region – Agatha Keller and Annika Glauner, ETH Zurich/University of Zurich, and Patriq Fagerstedt, Karolinska Institutet – were invited as special guests to explore hosting a joint regional meeting in Chicago in 2015. Region IV and the International Region agreed in spirit to a joint meeting and planning discussions will continue to identify opportunities for mutual gain, such as through collaborative presentations and campus visits.

In short, Region IV embraces its commitment to supporting research together. Members give generously of their time and talents for the benefit of research administrators in our regional, national, and international communities. If you’d like to learn more about ways you can get involved, contact me directly at minerjt@uwec.edu I look forward to hearing from you!

Jeremy Miner serves as the Chair of Region IV and is Director of Grants and Contracts at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Hello and greetings to Region V members. I want to thank all who attended NCURA’s Annual Meeting 55 this past August. (Wow, I am still not used to saying Annual Meeting and August in the same sentence!) Our Region was well represented by our many workshop leaders, presenters and volunteers. The Annual Meeting’s workshops, concurrent sessions and networking opportunities offered something for everyone. The many takeaways from this year’s theme, “Investment – Commitment – Rewards” will enrich our professional lives long after the meeting.

Besides the informative exchanges of the meeting’s formal program, Region V members took advantage of our team building opportunities. It was great to meet and talk to everyone that attended and joined us in
our hospitality suite, at the Washington Nationals’ baseball game and at the beach party Tuesday night. In addition, I am happy to report that our first Region V Mentor/Mentee dinner at The Grill from Ipanema on Monday night was a great success. Almost 50% of our new members joined a group of senior members for an evening of great food mentoring and networking.

The deadline for the Region V Logo contest has been extended to October 31st. The creator of the winning design will receive free registration at the 2014 Region V Spring Meeting. Email Thomas.Spencer@UTsouthwestern.edu for questions or submissions.

It is never to early to start planning to join us for Region V’s 2014 Spring Meeting May 3-7 at the Westin Austin at The Domain. You can follow Region V on twitter @ncura5.

Scott Davis serves as Chair of Region V and is Associate Director at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

REGION VI Western
www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura

It was nice to see so many of you at the first Summer NCURA Annual Meeting. I enjoyed meeting a lot of you in our hospitality suite which was very well attended – both by Region VI members and by many, many others!

At the Regional Business Meeting at the NCURA Annual Meeting, it was announced that the 2014 Regional Meeting will take place October 5-8, 2014 in Reno, Nevada. A shift from Spring to Fall has been in the works since a year ago so we are excited to finalize our plans. Preliminary meeting information is available at: http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/meetings.aspx If you are interested in volunteering, helping with the planning, or presenting, please contact 2014 Region VI Chair Samantha Westcott swestcott@chla.usc.edu

In addition, the final presentations from this year’s LEAD Me Program cohort took place at the Annual Meeting. The LEAD Me Program is a leadership and development program that pairs participants with mentors who are Region VI leaders. The mentee presentations were impressive. I was very inspired listening to their ideas on leadership – I look forward to the next year of LEAD Me! Congratulations again to the mentees, and much appreciation to the mentors who volunteered their time for this year-long program. For more information, please visit: http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/leadme.aspx

Election results are in! Please join me in welcoming our newest officers to the Region VI Leadership who will assume their positions on January 1, 2014: Chair-elect Melissa Mullen, Cal Poly; Secretary-elect Matthew Kirk, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; Treasurer-elect Samantha Aleshire, University of Alaska – Fairbanks; and Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) member Julie Guggino, Central Washington University.

Lastly, huge thanks to Treasurer Tim Mildren, Seattle University, and Secretary Sinnamon Tierney, Portland State University, who worked tirelessly with me every step of the way. This year would not have been as successful without Tim and Sinnamon!

Have a fabulous fall and I hope to meet more of you at future NCURA conferences.

Katherine Ho serves as the Region VI Chair and is the Deputy to the AVP and Executive Director of the Office of Sponsored Research at Stanford University. She can be reached at katherine.ho@stanford.edu
It was great to see everyone who attended NCURA’s first national meeting held in the summer. As always the program was varied and thought-provoking. I was pleased to be in our nation’s capital in warmer weather and I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

In response to the annual meeting date change, Regions VI and VII have also decided to change the date of our regional meeting. The next regional meeting will be held in October 2014 in Reno, Nevada. Regional leadership is already at work planning the program and logistics. We hope that you will take the opportunity to suggest topics, present a session or volunteer in any capacity!

In response to the by-laws changes approved by recent vote, an Ad-Hoc Committee has been formed to draft a set of Administrative Policies for Region VII. Many thanks to the committee members listed below for their willingness to work to improve and document Region VII’s processes.

Deb Murphy, Chair, Arizona State University
Brent Brown, University of Utah
Randy Draper, R.W. Draper & Associates
Judy Fredenberg, University of Montana

As I write this, Region VII elections are well underway and, by the time you read this, new officers should be announced. I hope you will join me in congratulating them.

Karen Henry serves as the Chair-Elect of Region VII and is the Executive Director, Office of Sponsored Programs, at Boise State University.

REGION VII
Rocky Mountain

www.ncuraregionvii.asu.edu

REGION VIII
International

http://www.ncuraintregion.org

More than 35 members from the International Region visited the 55th Annual Conference in August in Washington DC. The Region held their second Business Meeting where the Chair informed the group about the upcoming 1st International Region Meeting from next April 9th in Washington DC. The meeting will be held prior to INORMS 2014 so members will have the possibility to visit both Conferences. Members of the International Region also took the opportunity to network in the Hospitality Parlor. As last year, the International Region was hosted in the Hospitality Suite of Region VI and VII and it was a perfect opportunity to connect with members of these regions. Fellowship Programmes was a topic not only during the conference but also during networking.

Read what two European members of the International Region report from their Fellowship: Susanne Rahner, the Treasurer of the International Region and Director of her own management company, YGGDRASIL, in Berlin, and Siegfried Huemer, Head of EU Research Support at the University of Technology in Vienna, visited Denise Wallen at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, just a few days prior to the 55th Annual Meeting. The visit took place within the EARMA-NCURA Exchange fellowship.

“Our two host universities were University of New Mexico (UNM), Albuquerque and State University of New Mexico (NMSU), Las Cruces. Our host at UNM was Dr. Denise Wallen, Research Assistant Professor at the College of Education, UNM, and Senior Fellow of the Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundation at the Center for Health Policy, UNM. She had put together a demanding and dense program and looked into our well-being and needs every possible time of the day. As a comprehensive land-grant institution of higher education, NMSU (New Mexico State University) is dedicated to teaching, research, and service at the undergraduate and graduate levels, a Hispanic-serving institution, and is home to the very first Honors College in New Mexico. Our host at NMSU was Josie Jimenez, Associate Director, who supported us wonderfully during our fellow visit.

We met all staff people from the top management: Dr. M. Dougher, UNM Vice President for Research (VPR), and the Dean of the College of Education (COE) Dr. V. Florez, where strategies and policies are developed, down to the operational level where the processes are implemented and the daily work is performed. This diversity enabled us to see the full picture in the different strategic and operational levels. What struck us most, was the openness of both universities, we were given reports, checklists, handbooks, templates on different issues and levels of the institutions. We have rarely seen such openness and helpfulness.

The repeated topics were: How to implement the support services pre- and post-award, how to streamline the services, create efficient processes without redundancy, who is responsible for the quality management in the submission as well as in the implementation phase, authorization of the processes, IT support tools, communication and training of administrative staff and Principal Investigator (PI), and strategic goals and lobbying, scientific language and conno-
tations in the US and in Europe. And above all: how to participate as a US scientist in the new European Research and Innovation Programme Horizon 2020, and vice versa.

We have been exposed to many techniques and procedures in use, saw many good ideas, and were introduced to institutional management software. This gave us - as we went along – many opportunities to discuss our processes back home. We carry home high motivation and many ideas for our services back home. The task is now to keep some of the ideas in the daily work-life and keep the spirit and momentum of the visit.”

Agatha Keller serves as the Chair of the International Region and is the Co-Director EU GrantsAccess, at ETH Zurich/University of Zurich;

Susanne Rahner, NCURA International Fellow, serves as Treasurer of the International Region and also is Director of her own management company, YGGDRASIL, in Berlin; and

Siegfried Huemer, NCURA International Fellow, who is Head of EU Research Support at the University of Technology in Vienna
NCURA YouTube Tuesdays

By Kallie Firestone

NCURA YouTube Tuesday gives members the opportunity to showcase your expertise in research administration for the Research Administration Community.

NCURA YouTube Tuesdays provide member-generated content that enables anyone to learn about all aspects of research administration. Because it’s on YouTube, the audience is even bigger than NCURA members. It’s truly a way for us to reach out to the community and show the great level of leadership and insight NCURA members have to offer.

We’re inviting you to share your administrative edge with the world! What better way to demonstrate your knowledge of our industry than to stand up and educate others? Not to mention, you can link to your video on your LinkedIn profile, Facebook, Google+, or other social media platform to let colleagues see you in action. Members have also linked their videos to their vitae and volunteer and presenter proposals. The more videos we produce, the more we demonstrate that NCURA produces knowledgeable, talented experts in research administration.

Generating a video is much easier than you might think. This year at the NCURA National Meeting, we offered a special session on the how-to of putting together your own video for YouTube Tuesdays. The session was a huge success! Participants had a chance to get the basics of creating and submitting a video, and we even brought in a camera for some impromptu video spots.

Creating a video is easy to do, so why not give it a shot? There are a couple of ways to do this:

1. All by yourself - See the Draft Script/Timeline template on the right to help you begin organizing your thoughts related to your script.

2. Get help from NCURA directly – contact Tara Bishop bishop@ncura.edu and she can walk you through the rest of the process of it becoming a YouTube Tuesday hit.

NCURA YouTube Tuesday gives members the opportunity to showcase your expertise in research administration for the Research Administration Community.

Kallie M. Firestone, is a Senior Compliance Specialist with MIT’s Internal Audit Division and active NCURA member. She has been involved with the organization both regionally and nationally since 2001. Her career in research administration began in 1997 at WSU and has made its way to MIT by way of University of Washington and Vanderbilt. She is currently serving as Chair of the Professional Development Committee.

wikiHow has a great instructional site entitled “How to do a YouTube Video” http://www.wikihow.com/Do-a-YouTube-Video which gives advice on equipment use, idea generation, video creation and final editing. Once you have recorded your clip, contact Tara Bishop bishop@ncura.edu and she can walk you through the rest of the process of it becoming a YouTube Tuesday hit.

Thank you for your help in educating the community...together.
NCURA is calling for our members support in maximizing the growth in online education and sharing of resources by creating more topical communities and increasing engagement in Collaborate.

Time to Build New Communities and Network! Be a Champion leader for a Community!

Do you have a suggested community that would benefit members and be engaging to open in Collaborate? NCURA would love to hear from you. If you would like to advocate a new community for Collaborate please fill out the Application and submit to the NCURA office at Collaborate@ncura.edu.

We ask that you please submit your complete application by October 31st.

All applications will be reviewed by the Collaborate Community Chairs with support from the NCURA Community Curator before launching.

For more information please contract Stephanie Moore Community Curator at moore@ncura.edu.
NATIONAL CONFERENCES
2014 FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION (FRA) CONFERENCE
San Francisco, CA.................................................................March 15-17, 2014
2014 PRE-AWARD RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION (PRA) CONFERENCE
San Francisco, CA.................................................................March 18-20, 2014
56TH ANNUAL MEETING
Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC.............................August 10-13, 2014

NATIONAL TRAVELING WORKSHOPS
FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
Baltimore, MD .................................................................November 18-20, 2013
Charleston, SC .................................................................December 9-11, 2013
LEVEL I: FUNDAMENTALS OF SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
Charleston, SC .................................................................December 9-11, 2013
LEVEL II: SPONSORED PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP – CRITICAL ISSUES IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
Charleston, SC .................................................................December 9-11, 2013

ONLINE TUTORIALS
A Primer on Clinical Trials – 8 week program
A Primer on Federal Contracting – 8 week program
A Primer on Intellectual Property in Research Agreements – 8 week program
A Primer on Subawards – 8 week program

DEADLINES FOR DECEMBER 2013
Submission of Articles to Contributing Editors .......................October 25, 2013
Submission of Articles to Co-editors .................................November 1, 2013
Submission of Advertisements ..............................................November 1, 2013

Additional information for authors can be found at:
www.ncura.edu/content/news/newsletter/author_instructions.php

For further details and updates visit our events calendar at www.ncura.edu