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NCURA Charts a New Course

by Cheryl-Lee Howard



Cheryl-Lee Howard,
NCURA President

NCURA is a strong and healthy organization. It is that way thanks to two things: the sense of responsibility that our past leaders have felt for the future of the organization and the time and hard work that dedicated members have volunteered. In the last issue of the *NCURA Newsletter*, we discussed how the 40 year milestone frequently acts as a catalyst for taking stock of where we've been and what the next 40 will bring. To do that for our

professional organization, we first need to know about the changes projected for its members.

Experts on today's workforce are projecting a great change in the average working professional of tomorrow. Estimates vary, but 1999 college grads are expected to have at least 10 jobs spanning a minimum of 3 different careers before they retire. Compare that with the Research Administrators you know who are retiring during the next couple of years. They have probably changed jobs only once or twice and have been in research administration (and members of NCURA) most of their working lives. Now think about how your job has changed over the past several years. The FAX machine and Email have allowed each of us to work faster and do more—to the point that we barely have time to think. Budget cuts mean fewer people in an office which has more duties to perform every year.

It is no wonder that fewer and fewer members have the time necessary to do NCURA's work and become the leaders of tomorrow. Some of those people still try, and feel guilty when they

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Access to Research Data and the Freedom of Information Act

by Mary Ellen Sheridan



Mary Ellen Sheridan

In the last issue of the *Newsletter*, Steve Smartt alerted NCURA members to a serious and invasive threat to academic sponsored research. While it's not necessary to rehash

that entire article, for those of you who may have been wintering at the South Pole and missed this stunning new "public right to all raw data" law, a brief summary follows.

Through the diligence of Senator Richard Shelby (R-Alabama), two brief but sweeping sentences were included in the Omnibus Budget Bill that Congress passed at the end of October. This language called for public access to all data produced under Federal funds, using the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as the vehicle. Agencies were given the opportunity to recover their administrative costs in obtaining and providing the data.

OMB clearly recognized the problems inherent in the broad statutory language

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NCURA to Hold 4th Fundamentals

NCURA will hold an additional "Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration" workshop August 25-27, 1999 in Providence, Rhode Island. The workshop, held this year in Orlando, Portland and Albuquerque had record-breaking attendance and in fact had waiting lists for each site. Because of the obvious need for this extremely important training session, the NCURA faculty: F. John Case, Desert Research Institute, University and Community College System of Nevada; Steven Smartt, Vanderbilt University; and Regina White, University of Vermont; have graciously agreed to do an encore of this "sell-out" workshop. The "Fundamentals," to be held at the Providence Biltmore, is primarily for the newcomer involved in project administration and is targeted specifically to: proposal development personnel; sponsored program administrators; grant and contract accountants; department, laboratory, center and institute administrators. Registration is limited. We ask that you do not make travel arrangements until you have received a confirmation for your registration from the NCURA office. The Providence Biltmore is located at Kennedy Plaza in Providence, Rhode Island. The room rate is \$119 single/\$129 double. Please call (401) 421-0700 for reservations by the cut-off date of July 26, 1999.

To register, please turn to page 14 of this newsletter or, visit NCURA's Web site at www.ncura.edu.

This will be the last "Fundamentals" for 1999. Three sessions for the 2000 season are presently in the development stage. Dates and locations will be published as soon as they are available.

CYBER-place



ERA IV to Feature NCURA's "Electronic Cookbook" Concept

by Denise Clark

Wondering what's happened with the NCURA electronic cookbook since Dick Keogh's introductory article in the September/October 1998 issue of the Newsletter?

First, let's update you on the intent of the cookbook project. As Dick stated in his article, "NCURA is initiating construction of a web-based Directory of ERA Systems. Once constructed, this directory (to be accessible via the NCURA homepage) will constitute an electronic "cookbook" of ERA software and supporting documentation. Institutions redesigning research administrative processes through information technology could access this constantly evolving resource for possible ERA "recipes" that already exist or are under development."

How do we envision building and organizing such a resource? The first phase of the project was to develop and request completion of a survey that would identify ERA resources for possible inclusion in the cookbook. We have received over 50 completed surveys and although we are still actively pursuing and encouraging more entities to participate, we believe we have enough information to move into the organization phase.

What is the proposed organizational structure? The thought is to build the cookbook as a series of "chapters", each being devoted to a particular module within research administration. Following is the chapter breakout:

- (1) Funding Opportunities - describes the electronic systems and methods utilized to assist faculty in obtaining funding;
- (2) Proposal Development - details how the specific agency application requirements are met;
- (3) Institutional Approval and Routing - examines how institutions obtain scientific and administrative approvals;
- (4) Proposal Submission - particular emphasis on electronic methods such as Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and HTML data streams as well as web based systems;

(5) Compliance - deals with the difficulty in tracking and managing compliance aspects related to research involving animals, rDNA and human subjects;

(6) Negotiation and Award Acceptance - examines the negotiation of the final funding terms and conditions and subsequent campus notification;

(7) Start Up - begins the university based account within the accounting system as well as scheduling the appropriate billings to receive the awarded funds;

(8) Post Award Management - includes tracking aspects such as subawards time and effort, cost sharing, project reporting and property accounting; and

(9) Award Reporting - examines fringe benefit and facilities and administrative cost analysis, and managing the reporting for intellectual property and institutional and agency mandates.

We are in the process of soliciting individuals to sign onto the project as chapter editors and chapter committee members. We anticipate the duties of the chapter editors (in conjunction with the committee members) to be:

- (1) collect and integrate information
- (2) determine content of chapter
- (3) compile info into a web based "chapter"
- (4) edit chapter as needed

If being a chapter editor or committee member sounds like the opportunity you have been waiting for, please let us (sdowdy@mit.edu or dc34@cornell.edu) know of your interest!

Still having questions? Want to hear more? Want to see more? Join us in Atlanta this August at ERA IV. Slotted for a concurrent session early in the program are co-chairs Stephen Dowdy from MIT and Denise Clark from Cornell (Dick Keogh is on sabbatical to co-chair the 41st Annual Program Committee). This

session will begin with a focus on the history and original objectives of the project with a synopsis of progress to date. The discussion will continue via an interactive environment where participants will be able to share their insight and vision on future possibilities and enhancements.

Strong audience participation will be anticipated and encouraged. Following this session and throughout the two and one half day program will be chapter concurrent sessions. Mirroring last year's program, demonstrations of system developments will once again be offered at the close of the program schedule on Thursday and Friday.

Interested in showing off your development efforts during this time slot?

Contact ERA IV co-chair Jerry Stuck at gstuck@nsf.gov .

Haven't completed a survey? It's not too late! Access the NCURA home page (www.ncura.edu), download the survey, complete the questionnaire, and return it electronically to sdowdy@mit.edu.

Prefer the paper trail route instead? Call the NCURA Office, ask for a hard copy mailing, complete the questionnaire, and fax it to (617) 253-4734.

Know of another entity that has an electronic solution(s)? E-mail us the contact information (sdowdy@mit.edu or dc34@cornell.edu) and we'll do the follow up.

Want to keep informed? Watch for periodic updates and continued status reports of the cookbook activities in future issues of the *NCURA Newsletter*.

Denise Clark is Co-editor of the Electronic Cookbook and a member of the Select Committee on Electronic Research Administration. Denise is also the Associate Director in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Cornell University.



Ask Ann Granters

by Bob Lucas

Institute for Scholarly Productivity
San Luis Obispo, California

DEAR ANN: Our grants manual says proposals are supposed to be in our office for approval at least five days before the due date.

No one ever meets this requirement. But that doesn't keep our office from posting reminders about the policy on our home page month after month.

I asked my boss why we keep doing this. It's ridiculous to remind people about a requirement no one ever complies with. Every time a proposal comes through the morning of the deadline, it reduces our credibility and dramatizes how ineffective and ineffectual we and what we stand for—compliance and administration—are.

What do you think?

SICK AND TIRED

DEAR SICK: It's true, the chances of anyone bringing a proposal in five days before the deadline are slim. But succumb to despair?

I think that rather than feeling exasperated, you should be elated you work for a boss who still believes that *SOME* day, *SOME* one, *SOME* where (is this beginning to sound like an aria from *West Side Story*?) will show up a week before the deadline with finished proposal in hand. Instead of whining about how you wish your boss would get real, be grateful you work for someone who still believes in the ultimate perfectibility of the faculty.

Maybe you could help turn the tide. I know of a campus that honors bearers of early proposals by listing their names in an honor roll in its on-line newsletter.

Check it out. You might create a catchy column header like, *Early Proposal Bugle* or *whatnot*.

For a while you may have nothing to put under the banner. But after a few months, the vacuum created by the empty space might suck someone in.

DEAR ANN: I need to get a proposal together quick for the Sea Grant Program, but I've run out of fresh initiatives. Do you have any suggestions for slipping tired ideas

past the reviewers at The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

DRIED OUT

DEAR DRY: Stale ideas are a problem for which there is no easy, quick, slick, glib solution. A dead idea is a dead idea. No way can you pump life into it. So let me give it a try.

How about this? Forget about the proposal. Get innovative and think about the package itself. If the contents are stale, you might get extra credit for creative packaging. Good first impressions, right?

Instead of shipping your proposal in its usual bubble pack, wrap it in newspaper and tie it with a string. If your program officer is a fish lover (NOAA has lots of them—and they're different from tree huggers—they actually eat the fish), the package may give him or her the appearance of something extremely fresh. That impression may last long enough to draw attention from the stench of your ideas.

If that doesn't work, try pork.

DEAR ANN: I received a notice today of a \$123,000 grant made to folks here by a foundation I won't name here, but it might as well be called the Foundation for the Support of Systematically Recalcitrant because search as I might, I could not find an approved proposal to go with it. I suspect there never was one—at least not one approved by my office.

This burns me up. I can't count the number of times I've told my researchers they have to route proposals through here first. The policy is unequivocal.

One of our staff members even has a tee shirt for casual day that reads, "What about 'You must get approval before your proposal leaves campus' don't you understand??"

Don't people know how important prior approval is? What if they commit us to cost sharing we can't meet? Or leave out indirect costs?? Or use margins less than one inch wide???

How can I optimize their chances of getting the grant if they won't give me the opportunity?

AMAZED

DEAR AMAZED: How do you optimize their chances of getting a grant when they've already won one?

If you've got someone writing proposals, getting grants, and not whining about how your office did nothing to add value to the process, consider yourself lucky.

Here's what I suggest. Call the perpetrator up, offer them an honorarium, and ask them to give a presentation to the other faculty members about how they did it. With competition as tough as it is, you need winners and lots of people to emulate them.

(Editor's note: Every now and then Ann loses her grip. This is one of those times. We're printing this letter only because she's such a dear and we don't know how to tell her she's off her rocker. But if she keeps this up, hey, I'm out of here as editor at the end of this year. I just might give her what for.)

Confidential to **LAST DITCH EFFORT:** "Try To Comply" is a catchy slogan, but it displays a lack of confidence that anyone is paying attention to you and your policies. It's like the cajoling parents who coddle their children faced with the drug scene by pleading, "Well, if you can't say 'no,' could you say 'let me get back to you on that?'"

Tell it like it is and make 'em comply.

(That's more like it, Ann. Ed.)

Coming across strange problems these days?

Send them to Ann at:

Ask Ann Granters
NCURA
One Dupont Circle, Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20036

Outside the Beltway

by *Steven Smartt*

Even though the federal fiscal compass clearly shows that government spending has been reoriented from a southerly to a northerly course, which is to say we've moved from deficit spending to annual surpluses, there are ample reminders that research budgets will continue to be pinched from year to year.

You may recall that in February the Clinton Administration budget plan for next year, fiscal year 2000, included scarcely any growth at all for R&D, aside from a well-received plan for more emphasis on information technology. Much of this information technology research is proposed to be in the NSF budget, but in general the other research agencies were targeted for very small increases and possibly no real growth. Even the NIH budget was proposed to receive only a modest increase and would not keep up with the inflation rate, due in part, we are told, to the extraordinary boost given NIH last year.

In the annual budget calendar, the second major checkpoint is the Congressional Budget Resolution, usually completed by April 15. The budget resolution is the general blueprint for projected revenues and expenditures for the next year, plus a rolling outlook for five years overall, that sets the parameters for the budget. It covers both discretionary spending (where R&D resides) and mandatory spending for programs like Social Security and Medicare.

The House and Senate, both under republican majorities, completed their versions of a budget resolution before leaving town for a recess in late March. The two versions of the spending plan are similar and consensus on Capitol Hill is only a matter of a conference on the small differences and then a final passage. This particular type of bill does not require the

signature of the president. Instead, it is an agreement between the House and Senate on the budgetary plan. It represents the preferences (or compromises) of the majority party and guides the allocations to the committees that will appropriate funds for the myriad federal agencies and programs.

Note that not all surpluses are created equal. The kind of surplus we have recently witnessed is one that is propped up by excess income in Social Security taxes. These revenues mask the fact that other types of government income fall short of the sum being spent on discretionary programs. It will be another two or three years before surpluses occur for both Social Security and in the discretionary programs.

Much like any negotiation, or even a poker game, the first one to make an offer or show their cards often has a disadvantage in the process.

The president's budget released in February was the opening gambit. His underlying plan was to spend none of the projected surplus and cut no taxes until Social Security had been "saved." The increased spending in his budget plan would be paid from new sources of revenue, yet to be legislated.

Now, a couple of months later, the budget resolution permits some insights into the cards being held and played by Congress. The republicans also are saying they want to spend none of the surplus on federal programs, assigning all of it to reserves for Social Security or paying down the federal debt, but would cut taxes a couple of years from now, when it is projected that we will have a "real" surplus, not counting Social Security taxes.

In short, this is quickly turning into a game about who can show the most fiscal restraint while staring at a pile of money.

The picture taking shape in the latest congressional budget resolution gives reason to remain sober about research budgets. The good news is R&D may get some of the leftovers at the surplus feast. The bad news is that by definition, there may not be any leftovers for a while.

Why should research administrators care about all this talk about budgets and spending? Three reasons come to mind – it affects our institutions and is one of the elements of strategic planning in research organizations; second, we serve both ourselves and the researchers we support when we are familiar with and well versed in big picture issues; and it

just might impress folks at the next family reunion or at least help you change the subject when Uncle Earl starts in about his root canal again.

Now, if you are really a budget savvy research administrator you might ask, "Once the dust settles on all this talk about proposed spending and budgetary blueprints, what really happens to R&D when the people with the aces sit down at the table?" Good question. Recent history has shown that actual appropriations for research agencies usually are higher than what the budget blueprint would suggest. The budget resolutions have been more conservative about research spending than the actual appropriations, especially when it comes to NIH. But we cannot allow ourselves to be complacent or presumptuous.

What still remains to be done to set budgets for the coming year will revolve around the spending bills in the thirteen appropriations subcommittees. The give and take, hem and haw, shuck and jive, bait and switch. . . you get the picture. That's why it's so important for the message to get through that research is an important investment. The value of public support for research can not be underestimated.

The politics of budget surpluses is new territory for the congress and the administration. It's one of the few steering currents in the 106th Congress, although hardly anyone in the current congress was around the last time a surplus was in the mix, thirty years ago.

Things can and will change in the midst of the process and therefore alter the outcome. The surplus estimates have already been revised upward since the Clinton budget was released a few weeks ago. We also are now spending money on important military activities that will have to be covered by funds that would otherwise be used elsewhere in the government. Uncertainty about tax cuts and possible new sources of revenue are still to be resolved. Of course, there will be no action in either direction on spending or taxes without a compromise between the congress and the White House.

Stay tuned, but also be attuned.

Steve Smartt, a Past President of NCURA, is Director, Division of Sponsored Research at Vanderbilt University.



Attend the
NCURA
Annual
Meeting!

"No Funds",
you say!

See details here!



(l to r): NCURA President, Cheryl-Lee
Howard with Catherine Core

The 1999 Travel Awards Program: Catherine Core Minority Travel Award

by William Corbett, Jr.

The Catherine Core Minority Travel Award is available again this year to research administrators who, because of fiscal constraints, could not otherwise attend NCURA's 41st Annual Meeting at the Hilton Washington November 7-10, 1999. As in the past, a total of up to four awards can be made and each travel award recipient will receive up to \$1,000 toward expenses associated with attending the Annual Meeting. The Travel Awards Program continues with its goal and purpose to acquaint the awardees with NCURA and the services it offers to its membership. Additionally, the program provides an opportunity to network and interact with peers and colleagues who face the same problems and challenges of the ever changing research environment; and the opportunity to access the most current information and regulations that affect our institutions.

The criteria for selection are as follows:

The individual must:

- be engaged in the administration of sponsored programs
- represent one of the following minority classifications: African American, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander
- never have attended an NCURA national meeting
- agree to stay at the host hotel for the duration of the meeting and be responsible for making his/her own room reservations accordingly
- include with this application a letter of support from an official at their institution which clearly delineates the benefits to the applicant and institution
- submit a report on his/her annual meeting experiences within thirty (30) days of the meeting

The deadline for the Catherine Core Minority Travel Award applications is August 15, 1999. Application forms are included in this copy of the NCURA Newsletter and available upon request from the NCURA Office at (202) 466-3894 or e-mail at info@ncura.edu.

William Corbett, Jr. is a member of NCURA's Membership Committee. He is also the Director of Research Administration at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS

Catherine Core Minority Travel Award

NOMINATION FORM

Name _____ Title _____

Institution _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

How long in current position? _____

What percentage of your time do you spend on the administration of sponsored programs? _____ %

Attach description of responsibilities _____

Attach how this award will benefit the nominee and the institution? _____

Nominator (Self-nominations accepted) _____

Name _____ Title _____

Institution _____

Address _____

Return this form and supporting letter by August 15, 1999 to:

NCURA Travel Award
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20036



REGION I New England

We have just completed another successful season of RADG meetings in Region I. Attendees have enjoyed a wide range of topics, including audit issues relating to ERA, an update from Washington, news from the institutional/Federal ERA interface, the new modular grants process at NIH, and "The Training Game." I would like to send a well-deserved thank you to all of the panelists who participated, as well as the folks who helped to organize the sessions.

Thanks are also due to the four faculty of the Region I Fundamentals, Joe Barabino, Barbara Cole, John Kavanagh and Sue Polmar. Great job!

It's almost June, which means it's almost time for the Region I Spring Meeting. Registration materials have already been distributed-if you haven't received a package, check the Region I website (located under "Organization" on the NCURA webpage at www.ncura.edu) for the program, hotel information, and the registration form.

If you can't make up your mind about whether to attend, let me persuade you: First, the workshops and concurrent sessions being offered are spectacular, with topics ranging from the OMB Circulars, time & effort reporting, and cost-sharing to NIH and NSF updates to ERA-related issues. Hands-on computer labs at the University of Southern Maine facility will provide training for NSF FastLane and surfing the NIH/NSF websites. A plenary session and afternoon workshop for research administrators shared with the Office of Naval Research University and Business Technology Conference provide an opportunity to learn about how to do business with ONR and what programs they currently fund.

If that's not enough, then consider the extracurricular activities. Attend the opening reception on Sunday (first-timers should be sure to come to the newcomers reception), and the banquet being planned for Monday evening, followed by dancing. On Tuesday afternoon, spend time with NCURA's President, Cheryl Howard, who will tell us what's

happening on the national scene. If you want to explore, Portland is a lovely city with many attractions. The Holiday Inn by the Bay overlooks Portland Harbor and is a short walk from the Old Port, the heart of downtown shopping and dining. And if you like lobster, Maine is definitely the place to be!

Have I convinced you to come? Great, I'll see you in June.

Sally Tremaine is Region I Chair and Associate Director, Grant and Contract Administration at Yale University

REGION II Mid-Atlantic

As of this writing, the finishing touches have been applied to the upcoming meeting to be held in Pittsburgh, April 18-20. Program Co-chairs Marti Dunne and Richard Sohn have done a superb job in organizing an in-depth array of programs and activities. Those of us in Pittsburgh serving as informal site hosts look forward to showing off the delights of the city!

The Executive Committee met February 27-March 1 as a special Governance Restructuring Task Force. The NCURA staff and senior officers put together an intensive 2-day workshop, facilitated by consultant (no, he's not related) Bud Crouch. Any of you who have participated in the regimens of "strategic think" would not have been disappointed. Seriously, every workshop agenda item prompted extensive discussions and constructive criticisms. Our President-elect, Nancy Wilkinson, will offer some summary comments on the importance of the strategic planning process at the Annual Regional Business meeting, to be held during the luncheon on April 19.

Wishing all of our members the spirit of renewal and recharge that comes with the return of Spring. (Beside, we'll need an energy boost to handle those modular

grants)! Look forward to seeing many of you here in Pittsburgh in two weeks.

Mike Crouch is Region II Chair and Director, Office of Research at the University of Pittsburgh

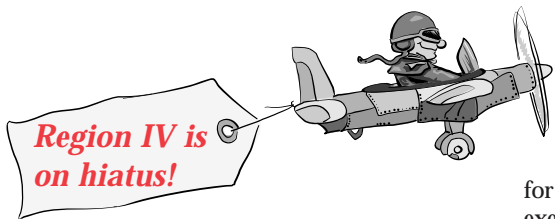
REGION III Southeastern

The Region III election results are in! We would like to congratulate Olivia Pope, Director of Contracts and Grants at Florida State University who was elected to the position Chairperson-elect for Region III. As Chairperson-elect, Olivia will serve as the second chief executive officer of the region. Her responsibilities will include assisting the Regional Chairperson in directing the activities of the region and serving as Chairperson of the Program Committee for the regional annual meeting.

When asked about her new position, Olivia said, "I am truly honored to have been elected for this position and I thank the members of Region III for their support. I look forward to the tasks ahead but will need the continued support and help of the membership to ensure we have a great program for 2000."

In other regional news, an ad hoc committee led by Mary Watson (Valdosta State University) has made several proposed changes to amend the Region III by-laws. The proposed changes will be discussed and voted on at the Region III Spring Meeting. Among the proposed changes are clarifications or expanded definitions of some of the administrative issues outlined in the by-laws. One of the substantive proposed changes involves making the Electronic Research Administration, Professional Development, and Membership committees standing committees in the region. A new article has been proposed to establish procedures for official balloting of the entire membership for site selection of the spring meeting. The proposed article also extends the time frame for holding the spring meeting through June 30 to allow the region to take advantage of lower rates at many southern resorts during early summer months and meet jointly with other organizations or regions in June.

Dawn Stein is Assistant Director, Grants Information & Services at the University of North Florida.



REGION V Southwestern

Anticipation continues to build as we rapidly approach our Spring meeting May 16-19 in Tulsa Oklahoma. With workshops on Sunday morning and on Wednesday afternoon, over 25 concurrent sessions and three well-known plenary speakers (Kim Moreland, Julie Norris, Cheryl-Lee Howard), we have a full agenda. As well, Tulsa's nationally known "Mayfest" arts festival will be happening, only two -three blocks from the hotel, through the 16th. Keep those cards and letters (registrations) coming!

The theme for the spring conference is "Lights, Camera, Action!!! Research Administration: A Four Star Performance." Considering all of the roles that research administrators are required to "play," we should all receive an Oscar. Learn more about our conference and the details as they continue to unfold at <http://www.tulsa.ouhsc.edu/ncura>. This year, Region V is making available, at a nominal cost, t-shirts with a Region V logo embroidered in the pocket region. Information is on the web page for ordering t-shirts, but orders MUST be in by April 30 in order for the shirts to be ready for the regional meeting. The reception on Sunday night of the meeting is informal, and has been declared "T-shirt" night. If you can bring yourself to wear a t-shirt to the reception, then be fashionable in either your Region V shirt, or a shirt representing your institution.

Congratulations are in order for three Quinten S. Matthews Scholarship winners which were announced last week. These awardees will receive financial assistance in attending the 1999 Spring meeting. This year's awardees are Jennifer Moore, Oklahoma State University; Manuela Dokie, University of Texas at El Paso; and Rebecca Perez, Texas Tech University. We look forward to meeting all three of these winners in Tulsa.

We have had two replacements for national committee representatives. Kudos go out to Jan Fox (Texas Christian University) who

has agreed to step in for Vicki Cox on the Publications Committee; and to Joan Howeth (University of Oklahoma-Norman) who replaces Marcia Davis on the Membership Committee.

Nominations are made and the ballots are out! This year's candidates for regional representative to the NCURA executive committee are Kathleen Harris (Texas Tech University) and Thomas E. Wilson (Baylor College of Medicine). Vice Chair/Chair-Elect candidates this year are Susan Krause (Texas Children's Cancer Center and Hematology Service) and Susan Wyatt Sedwick (University of Oklahoma, Norman). Good luck to all of the candidates.

Until next time!

Scott R. Smith is Region V Vice Chair and a Sponsored Programs Administrator at The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center - Tulsa

REGION VI Western

The major news event for Region VI is that our joint Spring meeting with Region VII, held in Idaho, drew record attendance. The magnificent site on the shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene, combined with the amenities of the Coeur d'Alene Resort, and the high quality workshops and program were an unbeatable combination.

Don Allen, Director of Grant and Contract Services at the University of Washington, received the Region VI Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award at the Spring Meeting. This is the second time the award has been given. Don has served as Region Chair, and National NCURA Treasurer and has held numerous committee positions and has been an active participant in just about every NCURA activity. He has been a friend, colleague and mentor to many of us in the Region. Many thanks also to Samantha Westcott, committee chair, and John Case, Mary Nunn and Tania Clucas for their work in selecting this year's winner and planning the presentation.

The Travel Award winner to the Spring Meeting was Prescilla Barrette, Administrative Manager, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Congratulations, Prescilla! John Case has chaired the Travel Committee this year. Members of his committee were Bill Schulze, Samantha Westcott, Margaret Brasch, Michele Goetz, Annette Luckow and Paula Burkhart.

Mary Nunn and her Institutional Survey committee will be mailing their survey to your institutions very soon. The more responses we get, the more complete the data. This will be a valuable resource for many years, so look for the survey and be sure to complete and return it.

Carol Zuiches is Region VI Chair and Director, Office of Grant and Research Development at Washington State University.

REGION VII Rocky Mountain

By the time you read this, the Joint Regional Meeting for Regions VI and VII will be over. With record numbers registered, a great program, and a wonderful setting, I know you all left with great memories of the great State of Idaho!

Those of you who attended the meeting heard some discussion of proposed changes in the structure and governance of our organization. I urge everyone to closely examine materials, as they become available, and to consider these proposed changes carefully. These changes are designed to ensure that NCURA is responsive to the members, and proactive rather than reactive as we move into the 21st century. Remember that this is the result of strategic planning, anticipating the future and attempting to prepare for it, instead of getting there and finding we are on the wrong road. Your thoughts and comments are important if we are to provide for the needs and desires of the membership. Strategic planning develops a map for the future, but it is malleable, not set in stone. Please pass on your ideas to your region, or if you are comfortable doing so, directly to the national officers. If you share your thoughts they can be incorporated into the future plans of NCURA, and we can offer the opportunities you want, and the services you need.

I also want to again urge each and every one of you to get involved in NCURA. The good you receive from the organization is directly related to what you are willing to put in. I can assure you that it can be a very rewarding experience, worth the time and effort.

Hope you all have a great summer!

Brian Farmer is Region VII Chair and the Manager of Grant and Contract Finance Administration at the University of Idaho.

NCURA Financials – “The Margin” – FY98 and FY99

by F. John Case



F. John Case

NCURA made many strides last year programmatically and financially it was a very successful year as well. Various special conferences contributed to the organization ending the year with a positive “margin” of \$43K. The margin was discussed in two previous articles by John Fini, Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee and myself. As defined previously, the annual margin relates to the amount of revenue in excess of expenditures for a fiscal year. The margin is important to the organization since it is used to create new programs, expand initiatives and enhance the programs available to the membership.

In FY98, the organization recognized \$1.450 million in revenues from its various activities. This is an increase of 12% over the previous year’s revenues. Contributing to this increase was the success of the ERA III Conference held in Atlanta. This conference generated a margin of \$53K, a significant accomplishment of the program committee. Also, the NCURA annual meeting in Washington generated income of \$536K in FY98. The Fundamentals workshop, an NCURA tradition, once again had four successful sessions that trained approximately 300 research administrators. This workshop contributed \$122K in revenues to the organization. Shown in Chart 1 is a summary breakdown of the revenue by source. The regional revenues are not included in this analysis.

On the expense side, the major categories are the annual meeting, membership services, and special conferences/workshops. These three areas made up 87% of the spending in FY98 (as shown in Chart 2). The expenses of the annual meeting and special conferences are driven by attendance. Membership services expenses, which totaled \$300K in FY98, include officer and committee expenses, member publications (newsletter, directory, RMR) and an allocation of National Office expenses.

In February, the Executive Committee approved the FY99 budget for NCURA. This budget projected a margin of \$28K for the year. This margin represents 2% of the annual operating budget of \$1.5 million. An increase of 3% of revenues over last year is projected. This is primarily due to both projected increases in the membership and in the annual meeting revenues. The program committee for the annual meeting has made a few changes in the workshops and general sessions that are expected to increase attendance in both areas. The recent satellite conference was a success, exceeding projected revenues by 21%. We hope this trend continues throughout the year. In Chart 3, the FY99 budget is shown. The major expense categories are similar to FY98.

Overall, FY98 was a success for NCURA in many ways. The programs it offered the membership were well attended which resulted in a positive margin for the year. We look forward to a similar performance in FY99, and with early indications this looks attainable.

If you have any questions regarding this information, I would be more than happy to discuss it with you.

F. John Case is NCURA’s Treasurer. He is also the Assistant Vice President and Controller of the Desert Research Institute, University and Community College System of Nevada.

Chart 1–1998 Revenues

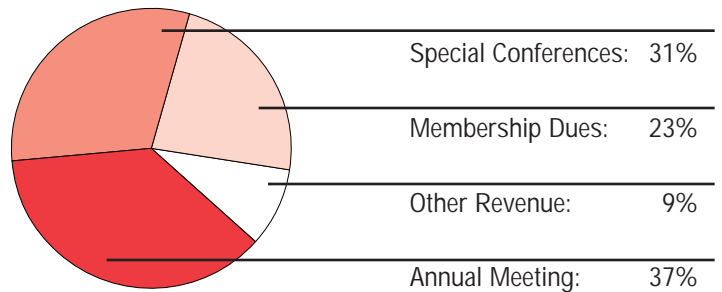


Chart 2–1998 Expenses

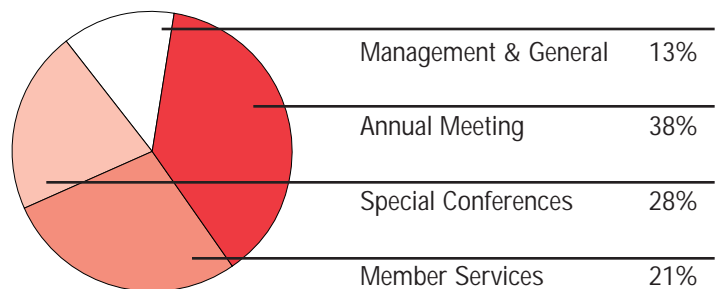


Chart 3–1999 Budget

Revenue

Membership Dues	\$384,000
Annual Meeting	639,000
Special Conferences	
Electronic Research Administration	195,000
Fundamentals Workshop	90,000
Satellite Teleconference	75,000
Other Revenue	
Micrographs/Monographs/Newsletter/RMR	51,200
Miscellaneous	50,800
Total Revenues	\$1,485,000

Expenses

Annual Meeting	589,000
Special Conferences	
Electronic Research Administration	140,000
Fundamentals Workshop	71,000
Satellite Teleconference	51,000
General Administration/Membership Services	
National Office	\$341,000
Executive Committee	57,000
Miscellaneous	46,000
National Committees	38,000
Special Projects/Other	44,000
Directory/Newsletter/RMR	80,000
Total Expenses	1,457,000

Once Upon a Time...

by Dennis Barnes



Dennis Barnes

NCURA Comes of Age in the Decade of the '70s

Throughout this year we are celebrating NCURA's 40 year history. In this issue, we continue "Once Upon A Time" with Dennis Barnes' well-crafted remembrances of research administration and NCURA in the 1970's. From the launch of Sputnik to the establishment of a permanent NCURA Office, Dennis has captured the essence of the 70's.

By many measures the national commitment to research and universities became serious in the wake of the launch of the Soviet Sputnik in 1957, when the U.S. feared that its leadership in science and technology as a major factor in our national security and well being was in doubt. A conscious effort was made in the 1960's to expand the community of "research universities," and federal funding of research and students grew substantially. NCURA began as a formal organization in 1959.

The 1970's were to see rapid growth of sponsored programs offices, not only for the promotion of sponsored research programs, but increasingly for the management of sponsor funds, including compliance with stricter governmental regulations and financial accountability. Universities discovered again the old adage that, "he who pays the piper calls the tune."

My experience at the University of Virginia was typical. When I joined the University in 1969, there had been an Associate Provost for Research for only a couple of years. When I assumed the position two years later we were a staff of four, key among whom were two retired army officers who understood the place of and could administer procedures and regulations. Our furniture was government surplus and mechanical "adding machines" and typewriters were tools of the office.

From a membership of about 500 at the beginning of the decade, NCURA grew to more than 1200 at the end. In this period, professional development emerged as the formal priority and member service of NCURA, and its pursuit was made greatly aided by the establishment of a permanent Washington staff and office.

But there were other changes during the period that affected the distinctiveness of the organization we know now. Early in the decade a strong preference emerged for holding all annual meetings in Washington, D.C; earlier the practice had been to hold every other meeting at another site. The recently news-notable Mayflower Hotel was the Annual Meeting site for a few years (\$19 for a single room in 1971), then the Capitol Hilton, until attendance required the larger Hyatt Regency and now the Hilton Washington. This identification with Washington has reinforced the mutual

awareness of the membership and the federal agencies, and facilitated the participation of the federal agency leadership in NCURA's meetings.

In a letter to me in 1994, Ken Beasley of Bulter University laid claim to the first hospitality suite at the 1971 Annual Meeting. NCURA "regions" had been established in the early 1970's, and as Chair of Region IV, Ken made his room available for an informal regional reception; Mereda Weiss was persuaded to do the same with her adjacent room. Invitations were by word of mouth and Ken personally bought the snack food and drinks. The idea soon spread to all of the regions.

Professional development, which is so central to NCURA's activity today, was first a formal offering at the 1974 Annual Meeting, where an audience much greater than anticipated showed up and signaled the receptivity and interest of new and experienced research administrators alike. Four years later NCURA offered a series of workshops around the country with the National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers (NACUBO). These were all well subscribed, as research administrators attempted to align with the increasingly elaborate requirements of sponsored program development and accountability.

A permanent NCURA office was debated for several years, but a decision postponed because the cost was deemed to be more than could be born by the dues (\$5 in 1969), and it was felt that as a member, rather than institutionally based organization, large increases in the dues would not be supported. However, as the membership grew and the affairs of the organization became commensurately more demanding, the decision was made by the Executive Committee in 1977 to set up a small office in downtown Washington. But the decision was not made without reservations. In a report to the organization, President Marge Hoppin (University of Iowa), the first woman to serve as Chair, noted, "Our size, nearly 1100, should also give us cause for concern," (by which she meant the organization had become too large) and, "NCURA is not an economic success." The years have shown that the decision was the right one.

NCURA has been fortunate to attract long serving and very competent professionals. Natalie Kirkman joined NCURA in 1979. Kathleen Larmett was appointed Executive Director in 1997.

The decade saw other issues debated at length, including professional ethics, publications, the place and needs of smaller institutions. Little discussed at the beginning of the period was "diversity," perhaps because the membership consisted overwhelmingly of white males, in marked contrast to today's membership.

Most all the milestones of the 1970's represented progress for NCURA, but there was at least one notable exception. For most of the decade a highlight of the Annual Meeting was the "reception" at a notable site in Washington. Eric Rude has reminded me that these included the National Geographic Society, the State Department, the Smithsonian, the National Academy of Sciences, the Capitol, and the National Portrait Gallery (many of these were arranged by Julie Jacobsen, capitalizing on her extensive personal contacts in the city. However as the Annual Meeting attendance grew, the events became too hard to arrange and to orchestrate; 1979 was the last of these memorable events.

In the Seventies, NCURA built on the groundwork of the previous decade and laid the groundwork for the next.

I have intentionally avoided making reference to many of the individuals who provided outstanding leadership and service to NCURA during this period; the list is too long. However, it is notable that many of these leaders continued to serve for many more years and some remain well known to the current membership.

These observations are drawn from several sources, including: an excellent essay by Julie Norris and Jane Youngers on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of COGR; and personal communications from Eric Rude, Ken Beasley, and Marge Hoppin.

Dennis Barnes is Past President of NCURA and recipient of its 1996 Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award. He can be reached via e-mail at dennis_barnes@mindspring.com

NCURA Region VI Joins NSF to Host the First FastLane Practicum

by Pamela A. Webb and Richard Seligman

Our trusty dictionary defines “practicum” as follows: “in a college or university, the part of a course consisting of practical work in a particular field.” Thanks to a lot of hard work on the part of a group of university research administrators and NSF colleagues, approximately 260 research administrators and faculty spent a full day focusing on “practical work in a particular field.”

The FastLane Practicum was held on March 9, 1999 on the campus of the University of Southern California, in conjunction with the NSF Regional Grants Conference hosted by the University of Southern California, the California Institute of Technology, the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. Consisting of a combination of lecture, demonstration, and hands-on workshop sessions, the Practicum gave participants a full day’s exposure to FastLane and its many functions. The idea for this program grew out of the realization that there are not enough resources at NSF to send a delegation to each grantee institution to provide hands-on training in the use of FastLane. Through the Practicum,

however, it was possible to provide such training to groups of research administrators and faculty who can then return to their campuses to pass that information along to their colleagues. NSF speakers and instructors included Jean Feldman, Carolyn Miller, Jerry Stuck, Evelyn Baisey-Thomas, and Richard Langguth. Speakers and instructors from local universities included Ellen Beck (UCLA), Bonnie Hale (Stanford University), Tanya Landon (CalTech), Alice Martini Doyle (Loyola Marymount University), Diann Swieda (UCSD), Michiko Taniguchi (UCSB), Pamela Webb (UCSB), and Dick Seligman (CalTech). Nearly every session included speakers from both NSF and the university community. It was truly a partnership.

Thanks to a generous Helen Carrier Professional Development Grant from NCURA Region VI, it was possible to augment the program with two special guest speakers from outside the immediate area. We were fortunate to have Cindy White from Washington University and Anne Geronimo from the University of Maryland share their experiences in

offering FastLane training on their campuses.

Topics presented at the Practicum included NSF grant policy considerations and their relationship to FastLane, an overview of the FastLane modules, future FastLane developments, bugs, wrinkles, quirks, and idiosyncrasies, and strategies for implementing successful FastLane campus training programs. Hands-on workshops included an introduction to FastLane for research administrators, a FastLane workshop for faculty, and a session on FastLane business functions.

By day’s end, a group of weary, but enlightened, research administrators were ready to return to their home campuses, better prepared to assist fellow administrators and faculty with the challenges of life in NSF’s FastLane.

Pamela A. Webb is Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the Chicago Campus of Northwestern University. Richard Seligman is Director, Office of Sponsored Research at the California Institute of Technology.

Meet Me in New Orleans (Virtually)

by Thomas Coggins



Thomas Coggins

With a mighty swing of President Cheryl-Lee Howard’s virtual gavel, NCURA’s first ever electronic Executive Committee meeting came to order at 1:30 p.m. on February 12, 1999. While this ground-breaking event is

not likely to be confused with Neil Armstrong’s “One small step for man”, it did signify the beginning of a new way of doing business that will likely be repeated many times in the future.

The Executive Committee was scheduled to meet in New Orleans in late February for its regular winter meeting. With the agenda for that meeting dedicated almost entirely to strategic planning, President Howard felt that other Committee business could best be addressed prior to gathering in New Orleans. The original plan called for

“business by e-mail,” with reports and action items posted to a special website and discussed via e-mail. It quickly became apparent that maintaining meeting protocol while sifting through a barrage of e-mail messages was going to be a confusing and difficult task.

As frustration mounted and the juggling of e-mail became more cumbersome, a few discouraging words and wistful remarks about a return to the good old days were voiced. At that point, one virtually enlightened Committee member suggested taking our meeting to the Web and using “chat technology.” The suggestion took no time in becoming a reality, made possible by NCURA’s incomparable National Office staff. The special website that allowed for the orderly posting of comments and motions proved to be a vast improvement.

Executive Committee members were able to view and comment on reports from officers, task force representatives, and standing committee chairs. The virtual discussion included such issues as new ideas and plans for the annual meeting, the establishment of a new Distinguished Service Award, selection of a new NCURA Fundamentals faculty member, and the FY 99 budget.

After much discussion, the Executive Committee voted to reject a recommendation by the Professional Development Committee that NCURA establish a Distinguished Service Award in addition to its Outstanding Achievement Award. On another PDC recommendation, the Committee heartily endorsed Christina Hansen as Regina White’s replacement on the Fundamentals of Research Administration faculty. The budget approved by the Finance and Budget Committee was adopted for FY 99.

The Executive Committee’s first virtual meeting was by no means flawless, and there will always be a need for face to face interaction. However, it did demonstrate that NCURA’s business can be conducted effectively in a non-traditional setting.

Thomas Coggins is the Secretary of NCURA. He also serves as Associate Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at the University of South Carolina.



...from the cover

NCURA Charts a New Course

(continued from page 1)

can't focus on NCURA responsibilities the way they want and need to. Others just don't volunteer because they are overwhelmed by the time they would need to devote. In either case, both the members and the organization lose.

Your Executive Committee and Officers feel strongly their responsibility for ensuring that the needs of its members and the organization are met not only today, but in the next century as well. In past issues of the *NCURA Newsletter*, you have read articles describing the strategic planning initiative which has been underway for the past couple of years. As part of that initiative, your Executive Committee has been designing a plan for restructuring the governance of NCURA. The new structure is designed to allow NCURA to function far more effectively in today's environment—to respond more rapidly to changing needs, special circumstances, and unexpected opportunities. It takes into account the fact that our average member is getting busier, has less time to devote to NCURA, and may not spend an entire lifetime in Research Administration. By utilizing short-burst task forces, we can utilize the talents of people who can only work briefly and then need to move on. We will also be able to utilize the talents of more individuals in any given time period. Not only will this result in a higher level of accomplishments, it will allow more involvement and easier identification of tomorrow's leaders.

Last month, the Executive Committee approved, in concept, the following structure. Implementation plans and much of the procedural structure is still in process.

I. The national governing body will be called the "Board of Directors" and will consist of the following members:

- President
- President-Elect
- Immediate Past President and Chair of the Nominating/Leadership Development Committee
- Secretary
- Treasurer and Chair of the Financial Advisory Committee
- 11 Elected Members (Seven elected geographically by regional membership and 4 elected at large by the national membership)
- 3 Appointed Members (Appointed by the President with the concurrence of the Board)
- Executive Director (Non-Voting)

The elected members of the Board may not hold another major office in NCURA (Committee Chair, Regional Officer, etc.) concurrent with their Board Membership.

II. Standing Committees

These committees will be created by the Board and will be designed to accomplish routine or frequently recurring actions such as recommendation of Fundamentals Faculty, editing of publications, etc.

Three are planned initially, with the following responsibilities:

- A Nominating/Leadership Committee to handle the most important task of leadership development and recognition. It will be responsible for identifying, cultivating and tracking the leaders of tomorrow. This committee will also be responsible for selecting each year's slate for officer and board elections.

- A Financial Management Committee to serve in a financial advisory capacity. This will include such things as long-range fiscal planning, investment counseling, designing and using models for determining the fiscal potential of new activities and other fiscally related responsibilities.
- A Professional Development Committee to oversee the logistics of various aspects of NCURA's information dissemination/training mission. It will do meeting evaluations, edit publications, recommend faculty, recommend editors, etc.

III. Task Forces

These will be created to accomplish most of the actual work of the organization. Their assignments will normally be short-term and single task projects. Task Force membership will be competency based. Just about any job (task) that needs doing from the annual meeting program to designing a data base will be handled via task forces.

The changes highlighted above rely heavily on some of the other strategic initiatives underway such as building electronic systems and databases, streamlining and improving communications, and ensuring that our financial outlook remains secure. Some of these actions may also require changes to NCURA's by-laws which are currently being reviewed with that in mind. You will be kept informed as progress is made. If you have questions or wish to discuss the implementation or procedural design, your regional representatives to the Board will be able to discuss the process or you can feel free to talk with any member of the Board.

Cheryl Lee Howard is President of NCURA and Assistant Dean for Research Administration, Homewood Division at the Johns Hopkins University.

Straight Talk : A Primer on Award Administration Satellite Video Conference Reaches 156 Institutions

Thanks to the tremendous efforts of the "cast" of NCURA's second live satellite video conference, it is estimated that we reached over 5,000 viewers, which included faculty, on April 8.

The players: (l to r) Gunta Lidars, University of Rochester; Geoff Grant, Stanford University; Cheryl-Lee Howard, Johns Hopkins University; Carol Quintana, New Mexico State University; John Richards, CalTech; Jane Youngers, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio; F. John Case, Desert Research Institute; Julie T. Norris, MIT; Robert A. Killoren, Jr., Penn State





Access to Research Data and the Freedom of Information Act *(continued from page 1)*

by narrowing and focusing its proposed implementation, published in the Federal Register (February 4, 1999, pages 5684-85), to “published” data used in “developing policy or rules.” However, even OMB’s wording raises questions of definition, interpretation, scope, and cost of implementation. It appears inevitable that the vast gap between Senator Shelby’s language and OMB’s approach will inevitably lead to a legal challenge.

Although we should be used to it by now, the scientific community and academic administrators have been caught unprepared by this provision. We have already seen how the powerful driver of public accountability generated regulations covering scientific integrity and financial conflict of interest. It is argued that providing access to the data arising from publicly-funded research assures an opportunity for validation, re-interpretation, and accountability. As policy, the objective seems worthy and even beneficial. That said, it is also obvious that access to raw data may also be misleading, misinterpreted, and dangerous for both scientists and the public.

Much of the research community’s anxiety has focused on the choice of FOIA as the tool to access data held by the grantees. The exemptions of FOIA were presumed by congressional supporters to assure that inappropriate release of data would be suppressed. However, it is not at all clear that these exemptions will protect the intellectual property of researchers, assure obligations of confidentiality already promised to human subjects, and, as many have noted, protect the confidential information provided by private sector partners other than the grantee organization, who have collaborated on research funded in part with Federal support.

The National Science Board issued a statement on the sharing of research data in late February that urged the repeal of the Shelby provision. NIH posted a lengthy discussion paper on its web site examining a detailed set of concerns and questions raised by the use of FOIA as well as OMB’s implementing language.

OMB finds itself between that proverbial “rock and hard place.” Indications from OMB are that they are being inundated with comments, upwards of 200-300 emails per day. The chorus from the scientific community has been uniform and loud: this approach to data sharing is intolerable and other mechanisms for public access must be found. But OMB has a law in hand, dictating that A-110 should be modified directing Federal agencies to use FOIA to obtain data from grantees, and must move forward to implement that law.

Some, including NSF Director Rita Colwell, have suggested that OMB call “time-out” and step back from precipitously implementing a well-intentioned but flawed law. This is a complex public policy issue requiring intensive review and analysis. Doesn’t it seem obvious that this discussion should be conducted “in the sunshine” so that the involved parties have sufficient opportunity to reach a process that assures that the released data does not cause greater public harm than benefit.

In late March, an OMB staffer described their intention to proceed cautiously with implementation. The comment period for the first proposed A-110 revision ended April 5, 1999. After some period of review and consideration, OMB intends to publish a second version of implementing language. Among the items that would be addressed in that revision are definitions of key terms, clarification of the process, and an assessment of the protections of FOIA. After another period of comment, OMB would consult with senior congressional members and members of the White House and executive agencies before a final revision to A-110 is published.

One repeal bill, HR 88, offered by Congressman George Brown (D-California) and others, would repeal the Shelby Amendment. While this has great appeal to the scientific community, it is unlikely to move forward in a Republican-controlled Congress. Other legislative approaches are under consideration.

Many research administrators have been actively involved in the response to this new law and the potential A-110 revision. They have been effective communicators to academic researchers about the potential threats to the conduct and reporting of research that FOIA access to data could provide. At this time, it is still uncertain what OMB’s second drafting of the implementation will bring.

As research administrators, we may be called upon to assist in the process of adapting traditional methods of sharing scientific data to new mechanisms to share that data with sponsoring agencies and the public. As long as FOIA is the vehicle for access, there will be grave reservations about the disruption of research productivity within Federal grantee organizations. This is likely to be a long and contentious process involving the definition and redefinition of public policy. Any A-110 revision would likely lead to drawn-out agency implementation. Ultimately, increased public accountability and access to research data appears inevitable. The path, however, is still convoluted and quite muddy, with no evidence that there is a viable alternative to FOIA.

Mary Ellen Sheridan is Assistant Vice President for Research and Director, University Research Administration at the University of Chicago. She is a past NCURA President and was the founding editor of Research Management Review.

SUBJECT MATTERS

by *Marti L. Dunne*



Marti L. Dunne

For years, Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) have toiled behind the scenes, keeping a low profile, their work going largely unnoticed. A gradual awareness that the field was emerging into national prominence was confirmed for me

when in December of 1996, the New York Times Magazine section ran an article featuring Arthur Caplan, Director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania. Art was aware of it, too: "It used to be that I'd have to fight to get any coverage for these kinds of issues. Nowadays, there's so much bioethics in the news that there are times when I can't keep tabs on it all."

Articles began to appear in a variety of newspapers. "Energy Department will pay \$4.8 million to Settle Suits over Radiation Experiments;" "Privacy Legislation in Congress Could Wind up Hindering Research on Drug Use;" "Scientists Must Convene Now on the Ethics of Cloning;" "Families Emerge as Silent Victims of Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment;" "Yet Another Sex Difference Found: Gaining Relief from a Painkiller;" "Subjects in Medical Trials May Not be Fully Informed."

A major factor in the sudden surge of interest in this arena, is, I believe, the dizzying number of scientific advances which have occurred recently. From cloning, to genetic blueprints, to stem cell development, the public is being bombarded with headlines that hold great hope for medical cures, but also carry the specter of the big, bad, evil scientist who is tinkering with nature or vying to be God. The computer age has also contributed to the concern; all of our medical records are now accessible to scores of people at the touch of a button. And the rise of HMOs has increasingly blurred the distinction between medical care and insurance records, further contributing to a loss of privacy.

Never have IRBs been so closely scrutinized as in the past two years. In June 1998, two reports were issued, one by the DHHS Inspector General's office, and one from NIH's Office for Extramural Research. Depending on which one you believe, the IRB system is either on the verge of collapse or it continues to provide an adequate level of protection at a reasonable cost.

The high profile in the area is matched by activity in the regulating agencies. After many years of status quo in the regulations, we have seen several new directives related to human subjects issued by the Federal Government. In 1994, over the protest of many researchers, the NIH issued guidelines mandating the inclusion of women and minorities as subjects in clinical research. This was followed two years later by a lifting of the ban on conducting medical experiments, in certain situations, without patient consent. Just one year ago, NIH issued another set of guidelines requiring that children be included as research subjects. Three months later, OPRR released proposed changes to that portion of the regulations which provides specific protections to pregnant women. The revised policy called for presumed inclusion of pregnant women in research, exactly the opposite of what had been the prevailing wisdom.

The surprising aspect of all of these changes is not that the Federal Government promulgated new rules (we are certainly accustomed to that!), but that they reversed three decades of practice in the field not by just LIFTING restrictions on the recruitment of what had always been considered vulnerable populations, but rather, by insisting on their participation. These actions, when considered in toto, seemed to be heading us towards a trend of broad inclusiveness in human subjects populations.

But then, just when you thought it was safe to start to recruit everyone, a report was released in January entitled, "Research Involving Persons with Mental Disorders that May Affect Decision Making." Even a cursory reading of this report leads to the conclusion that none of the 21 recommendations will lead to a policy of encouraging inclusion of this population. In one respect, this is not so surprising. Although additional protections were proposed in 1978 for the institutionalized mentally disabled, they were never implemented. So, this change, at least, has been a long time coming. My reading of the recommendations, however, raises at least one major dilemma for IRBs. A very fine balancing act will be needed to ensure both protection for these subjects and their right to autonomous decision-making. In New York State, for example, a person is deemed competent unless legally designated otherwise. How can an IRB decide a person is not capable of giving informed consent when the State deems that person to be competent?

For those of us who serve on Human Subjects Committees, keeping up with the changing regulations and medical and technical break-throughs has been a real challenge. On our committee, we are finding that more time needs to be set aside for each meeting. We mostly review education and social science studies, yet we are grappling with new types of research and new issues all the time (can privacy really be assured on the Internet; how can a researcher judge the ability to consent in an Alzheimer's patient?). There are few precedents or clear committee policies to guide us in these deliberations.

Where does all of this leave us, besides overwhelmed and confused? A few suggestions come to mind:

- Inform and educate your committee members as well as yourself. Our professional organizations will be important sources of information as we seek to reach consensus on a broad array of new questions. Using a train-the-trainer concept, if IRB members have the opportunity to attend meetings and conferences dealing with human subjects issues, they will be better able to advise their students and colleagues. One relatively new, inexpensive source of information exchange is the IRB list-serv (to subscribe, send e-mail to: rmnelson@post.its.mcw.edu).
- Consider ways to streamline the review process. To ensure complete and accurate review and to relieve committee members of some of the paperwork burden, NYU's IRB is considering a primary review system. Two members and the Chair will be assigned a proposal and be responsible for pre-review, liaison with the researcher, and presentation to the committee.
- Press for adequate resources for this function. In a recent evaluation of NYU's committee, we learned that our volume had doubled since 1988. This, according to NIH's report on IRBs, is a national phenomenon. In keeping with one of their less contentious suggestions, we should all lobby hard to obtain additional staff for this venture. After all, misery loves company.

Marti L. Dunne is Director, Office of Sponsored Programs and Chair, University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects at New York University. She is a Past Chair of Region II.

Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Registration Information & Form

Schedule

DAY ONE

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Registration
9:00-9:15 a.m.	Introductory Remarks
9:15-10:30 a.m.	Legal Framework for Research Administration
10:45 a.m.-noon	Introduction to A-21
noon-1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00-2:30 p.m.	Pre-Award Research Administration Services
2:45-4:00 p.m.	Costing Issues
4:30-5:30 p.m.	Hosted Reception <i>(Refreshments & Hors d'oeuvres)</i>

DAY TWO

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
9:00-10:30 a.m.	Pre-Award: Proposal and Budget Development
10:45 a.m.-noon	Compliance
noon-1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00-2:30 p.m.	Negotiation and Award
2:45-4:00 p.m.	Post-Award: Financial and Administrative Services

DAY THREE

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
9:00-10:15 a.m.	Special Considerations in Award Management
10:30 a.m.-noon	Termination and Audit
Noon	Adjournment

Registration Information

The registration fee includes course materials, two continental breakfasts, two luncheons, one reception and all refreshment breaks. To register, please complete and return the registration form below as soon as possible- payment or purchase order must accompany your registration. An acknowledgement of your registration will be mailed within seven days of its receipt. Please contact the NCURA Office if you do not receive an acknowledgement.

Registration Fee

NCURA Members \$450 Non-members \$500

**COURSE REGISTRATION IS LIMITED.
EARLY REGISTRATION IS RECOMMENDED.**

Refunds of the registration fee, less a \$35 administrative charge, will be refunded upon written request that is received by NCURA no later than five business days prior to the opening day of the course. You must receive a written confirmation of your cancellation request from NCURA to receive a refund. Registrations are transferable.

Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

Individuals who successfully complete this course will receive 1.7 Continuing Education Credits. The CEU is a nationally recognized unit designed to provide a record of an individual's continuing education accomplishments. Certificates will be issued to those who complete this course.

etc.

Course Materials -- you will receive a 4" binder with over 700 pages weighing approximately 10 lbs. Although the handout comes in a canvas carrying bag, you may wish to reserve space in your luggage rather than have it considered carry-on luggage.

Attire?

Please feel free to wear casual, comfortable clothing. Because meeting room temperatures vary greatly, it is suggested that you dress in layers.

Travel Plans

You should not make travel plans until you receive a confirmation from NCURA that you are registered for this meeting.

Hotel Information

Providence Biltmore
Kennedy Plaza, Providence, Rhode Island
Rate: \$119 single, \$129 double
Phone: (401) 421-0700
Cut-off date: July 26, 1999

The historic Providence Biltmore offers an outstanding meeting location where grandeur is the first order of business. Here, the opulent ambiance of a bygone era blends with modern day convenience, gracious service and superb amenities to impress even the most discriminating group.

Questions?

Call NCURA at (202) 466-3894, FAX (202) 223-5573, e-mail info@ncura.edu.

Registration Form: NCURA Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration

A check made payable to NCURA, an authorized purchase order or credit card payment in the amount of \$450 for NCURA Members and \$500 for Non-members must accompany registration. If you would like to join NCURA and receive the discounted registration fee of \$450, please include an additional \$130 for 1999 Membership Dues. Please return completed form and payment to: NCURA, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 220, Washington, D.C. 20036

Fee includes course materials, one reception, two continental breakfasts, two luncheons, and refreshment breaks.

August 25-27, 1999 • Providence, Rhode Island

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PLEASE NOTE: Refunds of the registration fee, less a \$35 administrative charge, will be honored if a written request is received no later than five business days prior to the opening day of the course for which you are enrolled. AFTER THAT DATE NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE. You must receive written confirmation of your cancellation request from NCURA to receive a refund. A registration may be transferred to another person by the original registrant with advance written notice to NCURA.

Your registration will be acknowledged upon receipt of check, authorized purchase order or credit card payment.

NCURA Calendar

May 16-19

Region V Spring Meeting
Tulsa, Oklahoma

May 15-19

Region III Spring Meeting
St. Simons Island, Georgia

June 6-9

Region I Spring Meeting
Portland, Maine

June 21-23

Fundamentals of Sponsored
Project Administration
Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 4

EARS Symposium II
Atlanta, Georgia

August 5-7

Electronic Research
Administration IV
Atlanta, Georgia

August 25-27

Fundamentals of Sponsored
Project Administration
Providence, Rhode Island

November 7

Workshop '99
Hilton Washington
Washington, DC

November 7-10

41st Annual Meeting
Hilton Washington
Washington, DC

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:

July/August

Submission of Articles:
July 2

Space Reservation for Ads:
July 2

Submission of Display Ads:
July 9

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA), founded in 1959, is an organization of individuals with professional interest in problems and policies relating to the administration of research, education and training activities at colleges and universities.

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Workshop '99 - New and Improved

by Judy Fredenberg



Judy Fredenberg

NCURA workshops have long been the hallmark of excellence in professional development for university research administrators and this year we are excited to reveal that Workshop '99 has been retooled and is, indeed, new and improved!

Perhaps the most significant change in approach is offering only half-day workshops—22 of them in fact—on Sunday, November 7. If a change in format from some full-to all half-day sessions isn't enough, we're pleased to announce that many new topic areas will be highlighted. Such sessions include: *Effective Facilitation Techniques*, led by Kathi Delehey, Colorado State University, who will be joined by NSF's Mitch Crawford. *Process Mapping with ERA in Mind* will be offered by Emory University's Bruce Derr and Tanya Landon, Caltech. Mike Anthony, UCLA, will lead a workshop designed to cover the broad area of *Audit Issues*; and, Pam Whitlock, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, will coordinate a session on *Regulatory Compliance Overview for the Smaller Office*. Moreover, the half-day format allows us to offer beginning sessions in the morning and follow these with advanced sessions in the afternoon as demonstrated by an *Introduction to Federal Contracts* followed by *Advanced Principles of Subcontracting* led by David Mayo, UC-Santa Barbara.

We haven't forgotten traditional favorites: CalTech's Dick Seligman, along with Chris Hansen from U.C. Irvine and Sue Camber from the University of Washington, will offer *Cost Sharing on Sponsored Projects*. Mark Daniel, Children's Hospital - Boston, will return with a session on

Explaining F&A (Indirect) Cost. Ellen Beck, UCLA, will moderate the *NSF FastLane* session; and, Hal Gollos, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, is coordinating the *NIH Commons* workshop. Ada Sue Selwitz, University of Kentucky, and Carey Conover, Northern Arizona University, will offer a new twist to an old favorite by focusing their human subjects session on *Social Sciences IRBs*.

Another significant result of this retooling effort involves the on-site visits to Federal agencies. Wednesday afternoon, November 10, four separate tours are planned: Karen McCrostie, Boise State University, is coordinating a tour to the Department of Education. Victor Peguero, University of Maryland College Park, is arranging a visit to the NASA-Goddard Space Flight Center. Pat Hawk, University of Oregon, is organizing a visit to the Environmental Protection Agency; and, Bill Schweri, University of Kentucky, is working with the Office of Naval Research and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

From this preliminary lineup, it's easy to see why we anticipate large crowds of workshop attendees eager to participate in these new sessions. So, register early to guarantee your involvement while helping us plan appropriately for crowd control!

If you have questions or comments, please contact Judy Fredenberg, Workshop Coordinator, The University of Montana, 406-243-6670 or Victor Peguero, Deputy Coordinator, University of Maryland College Park, 301-405-6177.

Judy Fredenberg is the Workshop Coordinator for the 1999 Annual Meeting. She is also the Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Research for Federal Relations and External Affairs at the University of Montana.

your ncura staff...



Now We Meet Charlie Ells

In January 1999, Charlie became our newest full-time staff member serving as Manager of Financial Services. He actually began with NCURA back in March of 1998, working two days a week. Charlie recalls, "I was 'on top of the world' when the position was expanded to full-time!"

Charlie was born and raised in Chelsea, Massachusetts (a small city, north of Boston). His work experience, prior to NCURA, has been in the non-profit religious sector. Before moving to Virginia, one of his positions was

Business Manager for a Retreat Center which also sponsored many travel excursions, plus printed and mailed quarterly travel brochures and a newsletter. Little did he know then, that all that stuffing experience would come in handy at NCURA. The year 1999 is the ten-year mark of his living in Virginia. Moving there proved quite a shock. He remembers thinking, "I never realized I had an accent, until people started telling me I dropped R's from words that had them and added them to words that didn't have them." While visiting home, after living here a while, he listened to all his relatives and realized "help me, we do talk that way".

During off-hours Charlie enjoys walking in the mountains or along the seashore, reading, music, some cooking and the theater. "There is something so peaceful in looking at the water, driving through the mountains or feeling the wind and water on your face, or being entertained by people gifted in drama and music. I enjoy being entertained, not being part of the entertainment." When he hears that a play is interactive with audience participation, he says "I'm out of there." In fact, this 3 seconds of fame in the newsletter is more than enough.

His nickname is "Mr. Moose". The name achieved in a split second, five years ago, when he began to walk into the office building. The secretary jumped up from her desk and shoved a pink message slip in his face, "Do you think

you could wait until I reached my office and took my coat off?" His boss was in his office and commented, "I think the secretary has been attacked by a moose!" That was it, it stuck and in five years has produced gifts of moose cups, slippers, towels, shirts, etc. So when you visit D.C., there on the wall you will find a poster entitled Mr. Moose.

Looking back on the first year with NCURA is a very positive and pleasurable experience. After turning forty, he wanted and needed a different challenge. A change. A place where new things were being created, learning was on going and exciting, people loved what they were doing, and serving others. NCURA certainly fit that bill. "The staff here is truly exceptional! Kathy and Tara make a great one, two leadership team and Tracy and Marc both add to and complement them. This is the first place where everyone genuinely gets along and works well together. Coming from 18 years in the religious sector, that is a unique and shattering statement." The most interesting point in the year was the Annual Meeting. "It is still a blur!" He laughs and remembers that just splashing water on his face and taking his shoes off brought such contentment. "This meeting gave me a brief glimpse of the depth of this whole organization and the dedication of its members to sharing their knowledge and experience with colleagues. I'll be ready for the next one!"



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