NCURA's 41st Annual Meeting!

by Jean Feldman, Judy Fredenberg, and Richard Keogh

Chart a Course to NCURA's 41st Annual Meeting!

Grab your phasers, star logs, and celestial maps and be prepared to rematerialize at warp speed in Washington November 6-10, 1999 as we ring out the old millennium and chart a course for a new era of research administration in the 21st century. NCURA's 41st Annual program is packed with all the information, instruction, advice, tours, and interaction you need to prepare for the challenges and opportunities that await. Need convincing? Just point your browser to the NCURA Web Site (www.ncura.edu) and open an electronic copy of the annual program, which has been undergoing periodic updates and now is virtually complete.

Let's begin with the pre- and postconference workshops, which have been significantly updated and "refreshed" for this year's program. Included are workshops covering fundamental principles of federal grant and contract management, OMB circulars, intellectual property, and other basic concepts of research administration. But several specialized workshops are offered as well, such as Business Process Mapping (an essential part of ERA planning) and Preparing Effective Electronic Presentations. In addition, annual meeting participants have an opportunity to sign up for tours of several federal agency facilities that never have been offered at previous NCURA annual meetings. The tours will include the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense.

Board of Directors and National Committees Meet in Nashville, Drafts Bylaws Revisions

Traditionally, the spring meetings of the Board and National Committees have been held in conjunction with the meetings of another organization which gave us no control over location. This year, your officers chose to break with that tradition and select a site with an eye specifically to cost containment. Our Executive Director, Kathleen Larmett, worked with NCURA's travel agents to identify airports in the US for which airfares were the most reasonable, then verified that hotel costs were competitive. Nashville won hands down. And Vanderbilt University's (and NCURA Past President) Steve Smartt provided the icing on our cost containment cake by hosting a delightful dinner at the university faculty club.

And work hard they did! In addition to all the regular work usually accomplished at the spring meeting, the NCURA Board's agenda was augmented by three very important tasks: 

- NCURA Drafts Bylaws Revisions
- NCURA to Provide More Distance Learning
- RMR Goes On-Line!
depending on how quickly the U.S. Postmaster delivers your mail, you are reading this newsletter just prior to the ERA IV conference or immediately upon your return from what looks like an exciting program for our fourth conference dedicated solely to ERA activities. I am extremely excited since the NCURA Cookbook will make its debut at that conference. There have been a couple of articles written about the Cookbook over the last two years. In case you missed those articles, the NCURA Cookbook is a web-based tool that will allow the university community access to ERA software and/or solutions that are in the marketplace or are potentially available from other universities. Each software product or solution is referred to as a recipe. Recipes are combined into chapters.

The ERA committee met in Nashville in May and ironed out the final "chapters" for the Cookbook and identified several chapter editors. At the Nashville meeting, the committee spent hours hashing out the initial design and conceptual layout of the web-based tool and further agreed to concentrate on a single chapter. Erin Lindsay did an excellent job at providing a mock-up design which greatly increased our ability to communicate the concept and idea to the programmers that worked on the project. Our thanks to Erin!

By concentrating on a single chapter, the committee can provide a concrete example of how the Cookbook can be an extremely valuable tool in assisting other colleges and universities in locating systems, with varying degrees of sophistication, that can satisfy our hungry appetites for ERA solutions. Based on the survey responses received by the committee, there was a unanimous decision that the first chapter to be brought on-line would be the chapter devoted to funding opportunities. The surveys received overwhelmingly indicated that the vendor community has provided enough recipes (i.e., solutions) to satisfy our most discriminating palates.

The initial deployment of the Cookbook will allow the user to search for recipes on several criteria. For example, if you knew nothing about funding opportunities and never knew there were solutions available, you could simply enter the keywords "funding opportunities" and would be presented with a list of all the recipes (i.e., solutions from vendors or other universities) that would satisfy those keywords. Then, if presented with multiple solutions, you can tailor your search. Perhaps with your funding opportunities, you also desire an alert notification that will send e-mail directly to the faculty when an opportunity is added to the database. Rather than a plain chocolate-cake-type funding opportunity, you need a black-forest-cake-type of system. The Cookbook's searching mechanism is your tool to locate these systems and solutions. Contact information, e-mail address and short descriptions are also provided with the results of your inquiry.

Additionally, the Cookbook allows you to search by simply entering a chapter. By now, we've all heard about one of NCURA's other exciting projects, Electronic Approval and Routing Systems (EARS) co-chaired by Nancy Wilkinson and Pamela Webb. As the data is collected, these solutions will be entered into the Cookbook. You can drop-down the list box, select EARS and the system will display all recipes related to routing and approval systems!

Currently, the following chapters have been identified: Funding Opportunities, Proposal Development, Institutional Approval and Routing, Proposal Submission, Compliance, Negotiation and Award Acceptance, Start Up, Post Award Management, Reporting, Pro-Files, Intellectual Property, and Core Database.

Another very important feature of the Cookbook is the ability to add your own recipe. One reason for the importance of conferences, such as ERA IV, to the profession is that they allow us the opportunity to network with our peers. It is amazing how many solutions have been developed by the university community. The problem is that we don't know the solution exists. Well, the Cookbook is your tool to add your own ERA recipes. For example, perhaps you have developed a very nice human subjects system and you are willing to share that solution with other institutions (either free or will negotiate a license agreement with others). Simply add your recipe to the Cookbook. A chapter editor will make sure the text conforms to a prescribed format and that you don't say unkind words about other recipes. Once approved, the recipe will be added and the next user that queries the Cookbook for human subjects systems will be presented with your listing.

Taking this functionality one step further, the Cookbook allows you to indicate that you use a particular recipe. This is perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of the Cookbook since this will allow you to locate other universities that use the same software and collaborate with those institutions. For example, perhaps you use a certain system for faculty profiles and you need to figure out how to use the system more effectively. Simply consult the Cookbook. The Cookbook will show you all the other institutions that use that software. You can then pick up the phone and contact the person listed in the Cookbook. This can greatly help you when you try to figure out how to implement some new functionality or are having trouble determining the best way to proceed. Contact one of your peers and ask them, "How did you use the XYZ software to accomplish this problem". What a better way of utilizing this tool: immediate access to those that have already gone through the pain of implementing these solutions.

Future enhancements for the Cookbook will include technical information about the systems listed. Once you've identified a recipe that interests you, you will then show the recipe to your technical staff. This can save a tremendous amount of time. How? Well perhaps your IS shop is totally Oracle based. The recipe you've located and are considering indicates that it only runs on an Informix database. This information can be very useful. You won't waste time looking at...
DEAR ANN: I’ve had it with government interference. What’s tipped me over the edge has been the law extending the reach of the Freedom of Information Act to each bit of data collected on a research project.

If this law becomes implemented, the resulting invasion of privacy will end research involving human subjects.

How am I supposed to administer a policy like this? My faculty members will choke on it.

What makes matters worse is there’s no golden handshake on the horizon. I can’t even retire in protest, disgust, or self defense. I feel like...

DEAR PROMETHEUS: I agree, you’ve certainly got a gripe about these new regulations. They’re ill thought out.

But our higher education organizations are working hard to ensure that you won’t have to implement them as written. And what is assisting them immensely is the exposure in the media. It has generated a firestorm of protest. As Mary Ellen Sheridan wrote in the last issue of this newsletter, OMB is receiving 200 to 300 email messages daily on the topic. The exposure has just about guaranteed that the policy will never survive as originally published in the Federal Register.

Be that as it may, a milder version will be come into being, i.e., put the data in a time capsule for five years, use virtual people, give them all fake names, wait until all the human subjects are dead, or some such. Whatever it is, it will seem a lot less bad than the original.

In some ways, what the law did in this case, as often it does, is define the outer limits of the outlandish which ultimately makes the absurd more palatable.

So try to relax, and reflect on what we can learn from this.

Here’s what I’m thinking.

We all recognize that we can’t do away with rules and regulations completely. Even if the government didn’t force any on us, we’d come up with a few ourselves. I mean, we’re not anarchists, for crying out loud.

The problem is few of us have managed how we introduce new regulations to draw heat away from ourselves and direct it where it belongs.

For instance, the original guidelines on conflict of interest proposed some years ago were so broad reaching that strictly interpreted, a researcher had a potential conflict of interest if their kid’s cubmaster worked for a company for which they intended to do research.

The finals never came out that bad. But even today, in meetings of the Academic Senate, faculty members rail about their intrusiveness and blame us, the messengers.

Why? Because few faculty members saw how bad it could have been had the original survived. Those regs never made the front page of The New York Times or the Washington Post. NCURA, COGR, NASULGC, AAU, and SRA fought the guidelines quietly until they were worked into something our researchers could stomach.

We were among the few aware of how crazy things were to begin with. Because there were no body bags on nightly TV, when the final rules were published, no researchers exhaled a sigh of relief. They just stared at the campus research newsletter, “New Regulations Governing Conflict of Interest,” and whispered incantations under their breath that probably weren’t prayers for our ancestors.

As the public relations people tell us, perception is reality. What we’re learning from the FOIA and research data brouhaha is that if folks know how bad it could have been, they’re much more likely to accept what is.

Compare, for instance, what happened in this situation to how retailers use the Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price. We know that many stores post the MSRP next to the sale price because it establishes the baseline from which people gauge how good a deal they are getting. Doing so often makes the final price, no matter how high, seem reasonable by comparison.

Posting both next to each other is so common, few items are sold at list any more. Market experts know that shoppers who resist paying regular price will spend freely for items on sale. What often appeals to them is the bargain itself.

Hey, they say brightly after they trundle their purchase home, it was fifty percent off, and they took another twenty percent at the cash register, and there was no sales tax that day.

Does it fit? Not yet. But they were planning to lose a few pounds anyway. (A friend once coined the sniglet “outfat” to describe a outfit bought on sale with the idea of dieting into it.)

People are enticed by the MSRP trick all the time. Some economists predict that were this single gimmick discontinued for one month, enough people would postpone enough purchases to trigger a recession.

So here’s the clue: the next time you implement a policy, include the MSRP. That is, print both the proposed regs and your final policy on the home page. Give your researchers a whiff of how bad it could have been.

Once you start doing so regularly, you might find researchers calling to ask if there are any new policies on the horizon because it felt so good last time when they escaped Wiley Coyote’s cartoon-sized mallet and suffered only a poke in the ribs instead. Won’t that be a hoot!!

Wondering why this question was answered and not yours? It’s because you didn’t send yours in. Stop brooding about what’s bugging you and write

“Ask Ann Granters”
NCURA
One Dupont Circle, Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20036
**Outside the Beltway**

by Steven Smartt

Seems to be a lot going on lately in terms of special reports and policy changes on the federal front. Not only is the knotty problem of revising Circular A-110 concerning access to data produced under federal grants still in a tangle, but the special report gnomes have been working overtime, too. Here's a digest of some recent developments and reports.

With considerable fanfare, the White House issued in late April, through the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), a long-awaited report on the "research partnership" between universities and the federal government. The impetus for the report came from complaints registered by university presidents following a series of regulatory changes, cost-accounting standards in particular, that were weighing down campuses.

The report is presented in three key sections: principles of the government-university partnership, integration of research and education, and proposals to strengthen the partnership.

Four guiding principles are offered: research is an investment, there's a linkage between research and education, merit review is the best kind of review, and research integrity is paramount.

This is followed by six operating principles: agency policies on cost-sharing must be clarified, merit review should be respected, both partners need to be cost-efficient, financial accounting should not substitute for accountability in research performance, blanket application of federal regulations and policies may not always be the most sensible, and future changes in regulations and policies should be viewed in the broad context of the partnership. The report calls for a national dialog before NSTC publishes a final set of principles next year.

There's much in the report to commend. My personal favorite: "Accountability and accounting are not the same." Streamlining grants administration is also a theme. But parts of the document read like, "O.K., if the feds will let universities treat graduate research assistants like the employee-student schizoids they are, then universities will be more consistent in handling payments to students." The basic story line of the report is let's kiss and make up, try to talk more often, and go from there. (And while you're up, wipe your feet and take out the trash.)

In June, the National Science Foundation released a new policy on cost sharing. NSF has always, owing to its statutory charter, taken seriously the concept of grants as assistance mechanisms. A grantee has to come up with a token one percent of the grant amount in matching funds, either by cost sharing on each project or in the aggregate for all of its NSF funding.

There's much for campuses to like in this latest clarification. Over time, the norms were squeezing faculty to sweeten their proposals with more and more cost sharing, and program officers were trimming awards while expecting the researchers to perform the same amount of work. Result: de facto forced cost sharing, plus the watering down of rates for facilities and administration costs.

Under the new policy, if a program requires cost sharing, details will be clearly stated in the program announcement. No more guessing on our part. And if an award is cut by 10 percent or more from the proposed amount, researchers can revise the scope of work. Sounds reasonable.

An interesting factoid behind this issue is that, when you look at the collective numbers, NSF knows that grantees contribute a very small share of the total costs of NSF projects. Campuses whine about absorbing costs, but the tally suggests that we have been paying a modest portion of the total. This new policy is more about the games that have been played in making awards than it is about the principle or the extent of cost sharing.

Actually, both the NSTC report and the new NSF policy contain some features that will have some campuses scratching their heads and wondering just what the problem is that is trying to be fixed. That's because the procedures and customs for things like payments to graduate students, cost sharing, and F&A rate calculations, while somewhat standardized, vary more than most of us realize.

At press time, the General Accounting Office was set to release a report on its investigation of graduate student compensation. This issue came under scrutiny when a complaint was made to a congressman about inconsistent treatment of student compensation within the University of California.

The GAO is expected to say it found no evidence to support the original allegations. The report will, however, raise some questions about adherence to the NIH guidelines on compensation levels for graduate research assistants. Watch for a clarification to follow from certain agencies.

Meanwhile, back at the A-110 corral, OMB is expected to issue a revised notice in July to report on the avalanche of comments they received — for and against — the proposed change in A-110 concerning access to data. OMB will at that time reveal the language they would now propose to implement and allow 30 days for comment. (Get your pencils sharpened.) Things are also in the works on several other fronts and much will change even by the time this column is in print.

Although OMB is pretty much obligated to keep this process on a trajectory to issue a final revision by the end of September, some legislative intervention is still taking shape. A House bill to flat out repeal the amendment that brought this about may actually be the focus of a hearing in the Committee on Government Reform. On the Senate side, the Science and Technology Caucus, an informal convening group that focuses on the federal role in science and technology issues, will take up the question of access to data at a late July discussion. And a draft senate bill being shopped around would repeal and substitute for the original statutory language something along the lines of what OMB has been considering.

The next political test may come, also in July, during a House Appropriations Committee vote on funding for agencies in the Treasury/Postal piece of the budget (sound familiar?). An amendment to that bill to delay the A-110 changes until further study is in the lock and load mode. It's doubtful that committee approval of such an amendment would survive the full process of passage in both houses, plus wrangling in conference, but it's a chance to measure sentiment that can invigorate other approaches.

Differences between last year's very broad statutory instructions to OMB to make almost all data accessible, and OMB's approach to try to limit access only to data behind federal regulations or policies, are almost certain to turn this ordeal into a Lawyer's Relief Act. As some have observed, this A-110 issue may be the bane of scientific research, but it's sure to be a boon for legal research.

Steve Smartt, a Past President of NCURA, is Director, Division of Sponsored Research at Vanderbilt University.
Nominees for Vice President/President-elect & Secretary
by JoAnn Moretti

On behalf of the NCURA National Nominating Committee I am pleased to announce the 1999 slate of candidates for the offices of Vice President/President-elect and Secretary.

For the office of Vice President/President-elect the candidates are Regina White, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs and Research, University of Vermont and Marianne Rinaldo Woods, Director, Research Administration and Sponsored Projects, University of Texas at Dallas. For the office of Secretary the candidates are Carol Quintana, Associate Director, Arts and Sciences Research Center, New Mexico State University and Pamela Webb, Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Chicago Campus, Northwestern University.

NCURA is very fortunate to have four outstanding individuals who are willing to assume these posts if elected. Each one has already committed countless hours to our profession and, specifically, to NCURA.

The ballots and biographical information on each candidate will be mailed out to the membership in August.

Please be sure to take a moment...cast your vote and help determine the future leadership of our professional organization.

JoAnn Moretti is Chair, NCURA Nominating Committee and Director, Sponsored Programs Administration, Harvard Medical School

Confessions of Two Reluctant Revisionists
by Milton Cole and Stephen Hansen

We have been members of NCURA for almost 20 years, and for the last ten years, we have been actively involved in its governance. As we have grown older with the organization we have grown more comfortable with its structure and culture. Like an old friend, we accepted its foibles, apologized for its failings, and loved it peculiarities. In other words, our familiarity with NCURA made secure with the status quo. When we learned of the plan to reorganize, consequently, we were immediate doubters. We sat glumly and witnessed the enthusiasm some had to seemingly dismantle that which we had worked so hard to build and preserve over the last twenty years. It made us down right grumpy to have our colleagues criticize the structure of NCURA. Having participated in the strategic plan and in the reinvention of the organization, however, we have to admit that we have become not just reluctant revisionists, but rather enthusiastic converts.

As we watched the strategic plan unfold, we clucked our tongues wondering why we were going through all of this folderol. After all, we would say each other, “if it ain’t broke, why fix it?” Sure we had to admit, albeit reluctantly, that some of the spokes on the wheels were bent, and yes, maybe one of the wheels was missing, but hadn’t the structure served us well? It slowly dawned on us that while the structure had served us well in the past, it might not be the best mechanism to take us into the future.

When we looked back over our years in the NCURA governance structure, we had to admit that the Executive Committee often became too involved in micro-managing and in endless debates on issues that a past Executive Committee already settled. We also realized that it was very difficult to move the organization ahead in a systematic way because we had no long-term goals and because parochial interests often stymied real change. Lastly, we had to admit that the perception that NCURA suffered from elitism and cronyism was a stumbling block to future growth.

After we overcame our blind loyalty to the structure and our fear of change, the proposed new structure made sense. By restructuring the Executive Committee and its committees, NCURA could have a Board that focused on the bigger picture and that worked toward long-term goals. Equally important, we admitted that the new structure was more democratic. It made all but three positions on the Board elected, instead of the current structure in which only the officers and some of the regional representatives are elected.

Even though we became convinced that the restructuring was a good thing, we still worried. Would the regions lose their distinctive cultures? Would the regions be steamrolled by a national juggernaut? Were the regions being disenfranchised? We listened carefully to the arguments and raised some questions. Our skepticism was like a well sharpened knife. We were ready to jump into the action and slice through the empty rhetoric to defend the status quo. Again, however, we had to admit that we were convinced, even though we didn’t expect to be. The changes in the governance will not affect regional meetings and regional traditions. The regions are not losing representation on the Board. In fact, they are gaining a greater voice because the number of Board members has been reduced and the President has far fewer appointments. We also became convinced that the elimination of the current standing committee structure did not weaken the regions. The standing committees will be replaced by task oriented committees with a focused mission, like the ERA committee. The result will be that there will be more opportunity for members to become involved in the governance of NCURA, not less.

We would love to portray ourselves as sage observers to the restructuring process. In fact, however, we were doubters; even cynics. As the arguments unfolded, however, we found our reluctance to change melt away in the face of sound logic. Our conversion process was slow, but we have become more than reluctant revisionists. We are now enthusiastic supporters. We believe that these changes will make NCURA stronger by better serving its members in the coming decade.

Milton Cole, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs for Research at Villanova University, has served on the Executive Committee for five years. He has also been Chair of the Publications Committee, a member of two Annual Meeting Program Committees, and Coordinator of the Annual Meeting Workshops. Stephen Hansen, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, was President of NCURA in 1996-97 and has served seven years on the Executive Committee, Chaired the Professional Development Committee, and Coordinated the Annual Meeting Workshops.
Regional Corner

REGION I
New England

I am happy to report that the Region I Spring Meeting was a great success. Portland proved to be a wonderful location, in spite of the fact that we arrived during a heat wave (would you believe 95 degrees in Maine?!). The University of Southern Maine graciously allowed us to hold hands-on computer sessions in their labs. Keynote speakers Jay Buckley, former astronaut, and Richard Pattenaude, President of the University of Southern Maine, gave entertaining and interesting addresses. We were delighted that NCURA President Cheryl-Lee Howard and Executive Director Kathleen Larmett were able to join us.

Many thanks are due to Steven Bernstein and Louise Griffin, Program Chairs, and their committee: Kevin Brodrick, Bill Corbett, Joan Giorgi, Martha Hamlin, Steven Kiser, and David Whitney.

A couple of announcements:

Sandra Hicks from the Division of Endocrinology at Children's Hospital won the Bernard M. Lane Memorial Travel Award to attend the Spring Meeting in Portland.

Mary McElroy, Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute was chosen to be the 1999 recipient of the Region I Merit Award. Mary is quite deserving of this award, according to Bill Corbett who introduced her at the banquet, for all the hard work she has put in on behalf of the New England region. Congratulations, Mary.

Bill Corbett has been elected Chair of Region I and Steve Kiser has been chosen as Treasurer. Both will assume office at the business meeting in November. Congratulations, gentlemen, and thanks to Jim Grayson for chairing the Nominations Committee.

Bill and I will work together over the summer to assure a smooth transition.

Believe it or not, we already have RADG dates for next year: October 27, 1999, December 7, 1999, January 26, 2000 and March 15, 2000 (the May 2000 date is still pending). And we have our October speaker: Dr. Madoy Lin from OPRR will talk about issues relating to human subjects—should be very interesting. Mark your calendars!

It looks like we'll be going to the Cape for the 2000 Spring Meeting. Final negotiations are underway with the Sheraton Hyannis for mid-May. Details will follow as we finalize our plans.

That's all for now. Enjoy the summer.

Sally S. Tremaine is Region I Chair and Associate Director in the Office of Grant and Contract Administration at Yale University.

REGION II
Mid-Atlantic

Hello- We hope that you are all enjoying some “battery recharge” with summer activities.

Mid-summer brings time for some professional reflection, as well. The 1999 Annual meeting held in Pittsburgh was a successful outing, by all accounts. A record attendance of over 140 members participated in the meeting. The riverboat cruise afforded a more unusual social opportunity, and the weather managed to cooperate enough to provide topside views of Pittsburgh’s “Three Rivers” neighborhoods. For the program itself, Geoff Grant’s keynote address, entitled “Geoff’s M etaphorical Trip West or You Can’t Rollerblade in a Buffalo Herd” offered the right combination of whimsy and professional perspective to launch the ensuing two day program. Many thanks go out to workshop coordinators, panelists, program committee members, and participants alike for crafting an engaging session.

We are pleased to announce that next year’s Annual Meeting will be held April 30 - May 2, 2000 at the Old Town Holiday Inn in Alexandria, Virginia. Veterans may remember this meeting site from about six years ago, that offers the convenience of metro Washington, DC, but in a delightful Federalist-period town with fashionable shopping and dining. And it’s all within comfortable walking distance. Mark those calendars early! Volunteers are needed to help with the myriad meeting details. Please contact the program Co-Chairs Marni Dunne at NYU or Denise Clark at Cornell.

Meanwhile, many of you will be garnering the latest technology developments at ERA IV in Atlanta that promises a kaleidoscope of generalists and specialist offerings. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Best Regards.

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

REGION III
Southeastern

Region III enjoyed a successful and (for those who were lucky in the casino) profitable Spring Meeting in St. Simons Island, Georgia on May 16-19. One hundred and eighty-four registrants—a record-breaking number—participated in the various workshops, concurrent sessions, and lifesavers (roundtable discussion groups) that comprised the meeting.

The travel award for the 1999 Spring Meeting was given to M. J. Carver from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

The officers presided over a very busy and productive business meeting during which the regional committee chairs and national committee representatives from the region reported on their past and future activities. Among the topics that generated the most discussion were related to site selection, membership, and by-laws.

Pat Buenemeyer (James Madison University), Site Selection Committee Chair presented a slide show of three candidate cities and hotels for the 2001 Spring Meeting. The members voted and selected the Lago Mar Resort in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Kathy Sukanek (University of Mississippi) reported the ad hoc Membership Committee’s recommendations to revise the requirements and scope of the travel awards, to clarify the role of the Membership Committee, and to design a prototype for a new member mentoring program.

M ary Watson (Valdosta State University) presented proposed revisions to the Region III by-laws that were developed by the ad hoc By-Laws Committee and led a discussion about the proposed changes. Among the changes adopted were the
addition of the Professional Development and Membership Committees and the removal of the Audit Committee from the list of standing committees; and the addition of site selection procedures to coincide with the election of regional officers to ensure that only members vote for the sites.

Dawn Boatman Stein is the Assistant Director, Division of Sponsored Research and Training, University of North Florida.

Special Note: Region III member, Mike Dingerson, OId Dominion (formerly of the University of Mississippi) is in the hospital recovering from surgery to remove a bullet after being shot during a robbery.

Friends and colleagues can send cards and best wishes to Mike at: P.O. Box 6084, Norfolk, VA 23508

REGION IV
Mid-America

The 1999 Region IV NCURA Spring Meeting in St. Louis Missouri was most successful this year with record numbers attending Evaluations of the program showed enthusiastic satisfaction with all of the sessions. The plenary speaker, Paul Simon, former U.S Senator from Illinois, provided an insightful oversight of the legislative perspective on future funding in research. The National Workshop "Training, Public Speaking, and Professional Electronic Presentations" presented by Samantha Speaking, and Professional Electronic Presentations, plus two plenary sessions, 27 concurrent session and 3 workshop offerings, was a big success.

Elections were held prior to the meeting, and I am pleased to announce that Susan Krause is our incoming Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect for this year. Susan currently is the Director for Program Development at Texas Children's Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. Susan has served on numerous committees at the regional and national levels. Congratulations and best wishes to Susan in her efforts toward next year's spring meeting.

The new regional representative to the executive committee is Kathleen Harriss. Kathleen is the Assistant Vice President for Research and Director of Research Services at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. As the new millennium approaches, Kathleen has an interesting and challenging job ahead of her as she continues in the tradition of a job well done by Marianne Woods. Kudos to Kathleen for all of her hard work over the last two years. I'm sure we can look forward to seeing Marianne's continued involvement in other areas of NCURA.

Cheryl Lee Howard, NCURA President, was also on hand to give us a "state of the (NCURA) union" address. Cheryl's presentation received positive response from our Region. The consensus from several regional members is that the organizational and other changes will make NCURA an even more member-friendly organization, and will allow greater opportunity for involvement by more of the membership. Marry thanks go to NCURA Past President Mary Husemoller and Cheryl, who along with the Executive Committee, the other officers and the NCURA staff, have done a fantastic job working on this initiative. What a way to keep NCURA on the 'cutting edge'.

Regional initiatives that are in consideration include web page (which means we need a web-master, and server space); a newsletter (electronic and/or hard-copy), and revitalizing the regional LISTSERV (or something similar). We will also be looking at creative was to reach out to under- and unrepresented institutions within the region. If any one has any ideas or wishes to volunteer in working with any of these areas, please e-mail me at ssmithe@ouhsc.edu.

Well, until next time, have a great summer and remember the words of Heraclitus, who said, "There is nothing permanent except change."

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

REGION VI
Western

Greetings, I hope everyone is having a terrific summer!

I am pleased to announce that Alice Martin Doyle, Loyola Marymount U., has been elected to the Regional Advisory Committee. Richard Seligman, California Institute of Technology, has agreed to continue for two more years as the appointed member. They join the other RAC members; Geri Walker, Western Washington U., Susan Lesser, Loyola Marymount U., Joyce Freedman, U.C. Berkeley, and Hal Gollos, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology. These people are of great assistance to Region VI.

By the time you receive this newsletter, one member in both your pre and post-award offices will have received the Regional Survey that Mary Ann and her committee have been developing. We are expecting this survey to yield valuable information for use by all members for several years so please fill it out and return it - we'd like to have a 100% response rate!

The hotel contract for the Spring Meeting 2000 has been signed. So mark your calendars - the meeting will be April 16-18, 2000, in Seattle. Our hotel will be Cavanaugh's on Fifth Avenue. The web address for Cavanaugh's is http://www.cavanaugh.com. Region VI is responsible for facilities planning and Region VII will be taking the lead on program development.

(continued on next page)
**Region VI continued**

Let me know if you can help in the meeting preparations.

Congratulations to Paula Burkhart and her group from the University of Oregon. They applied for and received a “Helen Carrier” grant from Region VI for their 6th annual workshop of Oregon Research Administrators held in June. One hundred forty-one Oregon Research Administrators attended this successful conference and Region VI was delighted to be part of it.

Don Allen, recipient of the Region VI Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award retired from the University of Washington at the end of June. We all wish him well and expect him to have a little more time for golf! He has promised to help Hal with the Spring Meeting golf event in Seattle.

After consulting with some Region VI members, Hal Gollos, Region VI treasurer, has decided to invest a portion of the regional treasury. He will give an update at our business meeting in November.

Enjoy your summer.

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

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**REGION VII**

**Rocky Mountain**

By the time you read this summer will be coming to a close. I hope many of you attended ERA IV in Atlanta, while the rest of us were closing the books on one fiscal year and preparing for the next. I’m certain it was a great success!

You should all know that your Executive Committee has been hard at work this Spring and Summer. I’m sure all of you have heard by now that some substantial changes are planned for the governing structure of our organization. While, as with any planned change, there will be some tweaking, I firmly believe we are on the right track. I urge all of you to participate in this process. Talk to your regional chairs, your national officers, or the NCURA staff. The changes being considered are the result of your comments and concerns. Help us to address them appropriately.

The Executive Committee has prepared a draft revision of the by-laws so that we may implement a structure designed to move the governance to a responsive, competency based, open group. And even as we speak, others are hard at work drafting policies and procedures to match. This exercise will then need to be carried out at the regional level during the coming year. It is an exciting time for NCURA. Scary to some, uncertain to others, but a time of opportunity for all of us that collectively are “NCURA”.

I recently spoke to a “seasoned veteran” of NCURA (Not old…just experienced!!) who mentioned that in a fit of office cleaning he had surfaced. What’s interesting is that these documents from a past decade had surfaced. What’s interesting is that these documents from a past decade had recommended the type of changes we are now considering. I take this as one more positive sign that we are heading in the right direction.

The NCURA staff has also been very busy. Among the many other things they do to keep this organization running, they are hard at work bringing us along in the technologic age. With designs and redraws under way for the NCURA web-site, helping committees meet “virtually”, and development of list-serves for the committees, membership, and possibly the regions, their already full plates are overflowing. I urge you all to communicate your support and appreciation to these dedicated people. And don’t hesitate to call them on for help. You will find them very willing and very capable to assist you in any number of ways.

On a regional level, by the time you read this we should be well along with the election of a new treasurer, and an at large board member. It’s always exciting to see new people become involved. And our travel award group, headed by Karen McCrostie, BSU, should by now be close to deciding which worthy applicant will be given a travel award for the national meeting. Another way for us to get new people involved!

Remember, the rewards from participation far outweigh the risks. Don’t be a spectator… it’s the people that make NCURA!

Brian Farmer is Chair of Region VII and Manager, Grants & Contracts Finance Administration at the University of Idaho.

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**NCURA DRAFTS DREAM TEAM**

Continued demand for NCURA’s “Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration” workshop has led to the next step in providing professional development to its membership --- taking workshops to the campus.

In September the current “Fundamentals” Dream Team, made up of Regina White, University of Vermont; F. John Case, Desert Research Institute; and Steve Smartt of Vanderbilt will travel to the UCLA campus to present their workshop to over 70 individuals from that institution.

As NCURA began receiving more and more inquiries about bringing the “Fundamentals” to campus, it was decided another Team should be formed. In May, the Professional Development Committee recommended to the Board three individuals to form another “Fundamentals” faculty.

The Board accepted the recommendation and we are pleased to announce the line-up for our new “Dream Team:” Team Leader and former “Fundamentals” faculty, Donald W. Allen, University of Washington; Kim Moreland, University of Kansas; and Richard P. Seligman, California Institute of Technology.

The team will travel to only three campuses per year so, institutions interested in booking them should quickly call Kathleen Larmett, NCURA’s Executive Director, at (202) 466-3894 before their schedule is filled. A minimum of 60 registrants per school is required to participate in this special program. Workshops held on campus receive a discounted registration fee.
RMR Goes On-Line – Step One
by Robert Killoren

In the February/March issue of the NCURA Newsletter, I said I hoped to have a complete archive of the RMR available on the web within six months. I am pleased to announce that as of June 29, 1999, the RMR archive is on-line.

The new RMR web site is located at: http://www.ncura.edu/rmr/rmr.htm – and is reachable through a link on NCURA’s home page.

The main credit for this feat goes to my two trusty assistants: undergraduate student Jodi Denger and graduate student Matthew Lester, both of whom successfully finished their degrees at Penn State last semester. They did all the document preparation, getting clean photocopies of each journal page in the proper page size; digitizing the images; converting the images into pdf-text files; and then compiling them into web compatible files.

Adobe Acrobat Exchange and Adobe Capture were used to create the archives. However, what viewers see is not just an image file, but a searchable text file that was re-created by Capture’s character recognition software. This is where the student assistants did the most work – working with the Capture editor on all the words that the software could not readily identify. The final version of each issue is about one-tenth the size of an image-only version. So each issue is not only text-searchable with Adobe Acrobat Reader, but it downloads 10 times faster.

Upon entering the main home page, you can review the instructions to authors. There are some new requirements regarding providing articles in an electronic format. This is also where you can select to examine the master table of contents. By clicking on “RMR Archives and Master Table of Contents,” you are taken to the actual RMR Archives.

The Archives contains a listing of all the journal issues by number and date. By selecting a particular issue, you are taken to a listing of the contents of that issue. If you wish to view that issue click on the link that is provided, listing the volume, number, and date of the issue. This link will take you to the pdf file of the issue you selected. Adobe Acrobat Reader 3.0 is the recommended viewer for the RMR Archives. A link is provided on the web page to download a free version of Reader 3.0 from the Adobe web site.

A table of contents is provided down the left-hand side of the page. You can go directly to any article by clicking on the title. You can also page through the issue using the appropriate Acrobat Reader navigation tools. An especially handy tool is the one that looks like little binoculars. Clicking on this launches the search engine. Enter the word(s) you want to search. Say you are reviewing a special issue on conflict of interest and you want to search for anything about conflicts of commitment. Enter -- conflict of commitment -- and the search engine takes you to any matching text. Use the binoculars with the little circular arrow around it, and the search is repeated, looking for the next instance of the words.

As the title of this article suggests, this is just step one in putting RMR on the Web. We hope to continue making RMR more accessible and more useable to the research administrator.

Bob Killoren is the Editor of Research Management Review. He also serves Assistant Vice President for Research at Penn State University.

Editor’s Note: I’ve been to the RMR web site. It is extremely well designed and, with the instructions provided by Bob in this article, very easy to use.

Life As A Subrecipient:
Fundamentals Workshops for the College Fund/UNCF
by Ardis M. Savory

Now well through its 40th year, NCURA continues to follow the anniversary theme of growing and revitalizing new research partnerships. Based on a proposal written by former NCURA president Steve Hansen, NCURA, for the first time in its history, became a contract subrecipient! It was an interesting experience watching Kathleen Larmett and the NCURA staff negotiate and manage the contract, and give backup support to the Workshop faculty so that contractual obligations were met on time and within budget. Sound familiar?

In the process, NCURA formed a new partnership with The College Fund/UNCF to implement a portion of an infrastructure development assistance program (IDAP) funded by the Department of Defense under a contract to UNCF. Three sessions of the NCURA Workshop, Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration, were presented to UNCF member institutions. The workshops were offered with the aim of enhancing institutional capabilities to participate in educational programs, research, and other selected contract/grant opportunities. The IDAP program is under the direction of Ron Fontenot, and the workshops were coordinated by Darron Wheeler. Both are NCURA members as well as UNCF personnel.

Xavier University, Louisiana, hosted the first workshop, which was held in November in New Orleans. The second workshop was given in February in San Juan at the University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras campus, and the final workshop was presented in Minneapolis in May. Don Allen, University of Washington; Jo Barnes, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; Mildred Ofosu, Delaware State University; Ardis Savory, University of South Carolina and Mariame Rinaldo Woods, University of Texas at Dallas served as workshop faculty for this series.

One of the most exciting aspects of this new venture was the ever-enlarging partnerships and friendships that grew as the program developed and the workshop faculty had opportunities to interact with members of The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, The American Indian Higher Education Consortium and The National Sponsored Program Administrators Alliance. The support of Alden Reine and Paige Blache from Xavier University, Carlos Ramos from the University of Puerto Rico and Carmen McDermott from The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities gave an unexpected added dimension to the workshops. NCURA looks forward to extending the subrecipient partnership with The College Fund/UNCF next year as they continue this successful DOD/IDAP contract.

Ardis M. Savory is Associate Vice Provost for Sponsored Programs and Research at the University of South Carolina. She is also a past president of NCURA.
Hotel Room Rates Continue to Rise

by Kathleen M. Larmett

Last year, those of you who attended your regional meeting heard a report on escalating hotel room rates, in particular, those in Washington, D.C. Options given to us by the Hilton Washington to lower room rates by moving our meeting to an August or December time period were discussed and the majority of those in attendance felt it was worth paying more to stay in Washington in November. Now, as we look at possible room rates of over $170 by the 2002 Annual Meeting, we feel the need to ask, once again, for your opinion.

The buyer's market we enjoyed during the end of the 80's and into the 90's is gone and the current seller's market, in the most popular destination cities, continues with no end in sight. Hotels are charging their corporate clients room rates of $200 and higher and corporate America continues to raise the ante as they fight each other for hotel space to hold their meetings. Areas hardest hit are the major destination cities such as New York, Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago and the Washington, DC metro area.

What does this mean for non-profits? Non-profits whose membership is made up of individuals unable to afford high room rates are having difficult times locating meeting space with affordable room rates. Hotel sales staff, quite often, do not even return phone calls to non-profits looking to book a meeting. A number of those lucky enough to get that return phone call are now agreeing to risky deals with hotels. Deals that could cause grave financial harm for their organization in order to secure meeting space.

What could this mean for NCURA? If we look at the year 2002 we are facing a very high room rate --- a rate that will undoubtedly force some of our members to either stay home, or go to different meeting. NCURA's Annual Meeting is very labor intensive and that affects our room rate. Yes, we spend many dollars on food and beverage, but that has eliminated meeting room rental fees not lowered room rates. With our present model, we take up an entire hotel. Every session we hold in a hotel costs money. Hotels would like nothing better than to sell guest rooms only. Today, the happiest hotelier has a location near a convention center and need only handle guest rooms. A hotel's greatest margin of profit is in guest rooms. Every time they need staff to set-up and take down a meeting room, that profit margin is threatened by labor costs in other areas of the hotel. Having as many food functions as we do, helps cover part of those labor costs but, taking over an entire hotel --- well, that is what we do --- is a costly endeavor.

What can we do? What about a convention center? Our meeting is not yet big enough and we fall short of the number hotel room “sales” needed to book at the convention center. I would suggest that a move to another property might yield lower room rates however, a quick check of some other meetings in D.C. yielded the following information: the Association of Catholic Colleges & Universities and National Association of Independent Colleges & Universities paid $149 in January at the Hyatt Capitol Hill; American Association of University Professors are paying $159 in June for the Omni Shoreham; and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing will pay $160 to hold their meeting in September at the Marriott Wardman Park (formerly the Sheraton Washington). NCURA's rate this November at the Hilton is $150.

The obvious course would be to “get outta town” and fast! However, this may not be the best course of action for NCURA. The Washington, DC Annual Meeting is a bedrock tradition of the organization. We continually hear members say “Don't move the meeting.” Indeed, that's what we heard at the regional meetings last year. A meeting in DC helps many of our members obtain travel with the added advantage of agency and Capitol Hill visits. By having a meeting here, our members from federal agencies are able to attend and, most important present vital information to the rest of the membership. Should we move the meeting outside of the area, surely we will compete with other organizations for these same presenters who, due to travel budgets, may need to make difficult choices.

Moving away from the DC Metropolitan area (Virginia and Maryland included) does have some advantages. Second and now, third tier cities with lower economies definitely will bring about lower hotel rates. As an example, the College Registrars Association met this spring in Charlotte and the Hilton gave them a room rate of $116. Having a reasonable rate would certainly help to fill a room block and avoid serious financial penalties but, a number of these cities do not have hotels large enough to accommodate meetings with 1,200 and 1,300 people. What we will then experience is a citywide meeting with two or three hotels in use for both guest rooms and meeting rooms.

Is this a problem? Many associations already handle citywide meetings and their members accept this as normal practice. NCURA members, however, are accustomed to having all sessions at the host hotel. With the exception of some workshops held across the street from the Hyatt Capitol Hill, we have never used more than one hotel for our Annual Meeting sessions.

Staying in DC and deliberately downsizing the meeting is another option we could look at. We might reduce the association's room block and the number of meeting rooms needed, along with perhaps, a shorter meeting. If we stay in Washington, our room block will begin to shrink due to those who can no longer afford to attend. We may want to be proactive and reduce the block and the size of our meeting before we start paying penalties.

Staying in DC with a downsized Annual Meeting for those on the East Coast (or those with healthy travel budgets) with an added mid-year Annual in a less expensive location for those unable to handle the high cost of Washington may be another alternative. With a smaller meeting in a second location, we would stand a much better chance of avoiding a citywide meeting.

There are, most probably, many other solutions. I have laid out the above scenarios for you as a starting point for discussion. Changing our successful Annual Meeting in any way is a risk but, we are already facing risk with the current structure. Serious discussion of the future of NCURA's Annual Meeting is needed. Please let us hear from you. Contact your regional chairperson or go the NCURA web site where we have set up a special "Discussion Web". We need you thoughts, your likes and dislikes and most important --- your ideas and solutions.

Kathleen Larmett is NCURA's Executive Director.
Chart a Course for NCURA’s 41st Annual Meeting (continued from the cover)

Environmental Protection Agency, the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, the Office of Naval Research, and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

Because many attendees will be arriving on November 6th in order to take advantage of reduced airline fares associated with a Saturday night stay over, a “Night of Networking” has been instituted to kick off the 41st Annual meeting in grand style. The “Night” will begin at 6 p.m. on Saturday and will feature some great live background jazz, a bar, some special exhibits, and a new fun way of identifying fellow attendees who share your common interests. Our “Night” will end (officially) at 8 p.m., early enough for “night owls” to catch a late dinner or drink at a favorite nearby Washington restaurant or watering hole.

The Annual NCURA Banquet is set for Sunday. Banquet festivities begin with a Reception and conclude with some expectedly “pointed” observations - both in prose and song - from renowned political satirist Mark Russell. The non-workshop portion of the conference begins in earnest Monday morning; Vice President Gore has been invited to deliver the keynote address. Attendees next will have the difficult task of deciding which concurrent or discussion group session to attend. The Program Committee has packed the meeting with so many exceptional offerings, attendees will be forced to make some very difficult decisions over the course of the conference.

For those wishing to concentrate on specific topics, the Program Committee has grouped concurrent sessions into seven “tracks”. These include: preaward administration, financial issues, departmental research administration, biomedical issues, federal agency topics, electronic research administration, predominantly undergraduate institution concerns, and a senior research administrator focus. Conference attendees also will note that some sessions have been designated “Special Focus Topics” - another innovation being introduced this year. These topics have been grouped within two-hour time slots in order to allow more in depth or “hands-on” learning.

Many perennially popular features of past meetings reappear again this year - such as the NIH/NF Grant Managers’ Reception, which provides an opportunity for personal interaction with federal grant officers, perhaps previously “met” only through e-mail correspondence or phone conversation. The equally important Newcomers’ Reception once again will provide opportunities for new attendees to meet many NCURA “veterans”, including national and regional officers, members of NCURA standing committees, and members of the NCURA national staff. And, of course, there will be “The Party”, featuring lots of great food, assorted beverages, perhaps a game or two, and the annual farewell reappearance of “Soul Source” - a.k.a. “The NCURA Band”. For those less rebellious (or simply needing a brief “breather”), party facilities will also include an area set aside for softer music, tables accommodating communal chats, and quieter contemplation.

If you have not yet registered, do so now! You will find NCURA National Meetings only improve with age. Registration never has been easier. Just download a registration form from the NCURA web site and mail it in. Or, if you are paying by credit card, just register electronically right from the web site and your space will be reserved instantly. See you in November!

Jean Feldman and Richard Keogh are the Program Co-Chairs for the 41st Annual Meeting. Judy Fredenberg is the Workshop Coordinator for the Annual Meeting. Jean Feldman also serves as the Head of the Policy Office in the Division of Contracts, Policy & Oversight at the National Science Foundation. Dick Keogh is Director, Office of Research and Grants Administration at Rhode Island College. Judy Fredenberg is Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Research at the University of Montana.

Bylaws Revisions (continued from the cover)

more up to date formats in use by other associations, the Board began the task of writing a rough first draft. A major change in that rewrite will be the transfer of as much of the procedural directives as possible to the Administrative Policies (page xx of 1999 Membership Directory). A three person task force (Tommy Coggins, Brian Farmer and Marianne Rinaldo-Woods) was appointed to coordinate the redraft process when it became apparent that it was more than the Board could accomplish in one day. The final draft will be made available to you later this summer. You will be asked to review the proposed changes and will have the opportunity to discuss them at our annual business meeting in November. A final vote on the changes will occur by mail in late November or early December.

GOVERNANCE RESTRUCTURE - Although no comments or questions had been received at the governance discussion site (www.ncura.edu/governance), questions and comments from attendees at the Spring Regional Meetings, from the Standing Committee meetings, and from various conversations with the membership at large were shared with the Board. These regional meeting questions and responses have been summarized for your information, and should be available on the governance discussion site by the time you read this article. In general, they cover issues of regional involvement, ensuring that all members have a chance to participate, and a desire or need for more details about both current and planned governance structure. These questions provided a good basis for the Board to test the prioritization of principles in use during restructure planning. It is notable that both enhanced membership participation and regional involvement continue at the top of the Board’s list as we enter the process of reformulating our administrative policies.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND TRANSITION - The Board also worked to identify problems and potential pitfalls which might occur during a change in administrative policies. It is obvious that we will require a period of transition which will occur over at least a two year period. It is equally obvious that by modernizing our bylaws, we are allowing ourselves the ability to continuously modify our structure with small changes when necessary. This minimizes the long-term chance of a negative impact from the change in structure while maximizing the benefits.
NSTC Report on the Government-University Research Partnership
by Barbara E. Siegel

On April 27, 1999, President Clinton released the National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) Presidential Review Directive - 4 report, Renewing the Federal Government-University Research Partnership for the 21st Century. Concerns regarding the health and vitality of this partnership raised by educational and industry leaders, congressional delegates, and the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) resulted in the establishment of a multi-agency task force by NSTC in the fall of 1996. During the summer of 1997, universities, associations and federal agencies were asked to provide comments on the health of the relationship. Responses representing hundreds of universities and university associations were received. A working group was formed to review the responses and to prepare the initial set of findings. Its charge was to evaluate the policies and regulations that shape the partnership; its goals were to clearly articulate the principles of the partnership, minimize administrative burden, recognize the inextricable linkage between research and education, and continue to maintain appropriate stewardship of public funds.

The report concludes that the relationship between the federal government and universities continues to be strong and of great benefit to the nation. Contributions to economic prosperity and security through research, development and education; the integration of research and education; and merit-based awards were viewed as key to the success of the enterprise. However, the report recognizes that several areas need to be addressed in order to strengthen the partnership. First and foremost, there must be a clear articulation of the roles and responsibilities of the partners and the goals of the partnership. In the current environment, the relationship is defined more in terms of regulations and OMB circulars than in national goals and priorities. These goals and priorities need to be explicitly stated in order to redefine and strengthen the partnership.

To this end, the working group, under the direction of the NSTC task force, developed a set of guiding and operating principles. Over the course of the next year, comments from the university community will be solicited and incorporated into the final set of principles. Once the principles are in place, new policies and regulations governing the partnership will be developed to more accurately define the relationship as one of mutual trust, respect, and benefit.

The proposed statement of principles includes four guiding principles to govern the interactions between the partners and six operating principles designed to help implement the guiding principles. Guiding principles include the following:

**Guiding Principles**

- **Research is an Investment in the Future.** This principle acknowledges the potential long turn-around time on the investment and the need to manage investments as a portfolio with a focus on collective returns. Outcomes of individual project investments are not always predictable and should not be used in isolation to determine the value of the investment.

- **The Linkage between Research and Education is Vital.** The intellectual development and scientific contributions of students are two of the most important benefits of the government's investment in university-based research. The report acknowledges the inextricable linkage between research and education.

- **Excellence is Promoted when Investments are Guided by Merit Review.** Merit review provides the check and balance necessary to promote and fund excellent science.

- **Research Must be Conducted with Integrity.** The credibility of the relationship relies on the integrity of the partners.

**Operating Principles**

In order to implement the guiding principles, six operating principles were defined in the report:

- **Agency Cost Sharing Policies and Practices Must be Transparent.** Although there are times when it is appropriate for universities to share in the financial support of research, the report acknowledges that a university's major contribution is the intellectual input of its researchers. Agencies should explicitly state cost sharing requirements when applicable and describe the role cost sharing will play in the evaluation process.

- **Partners Should Respect the Merit Review Process.** Although merit review may be used in concert with other selection criteria, it is an essential ingredient to ensure the selection of promising research activities and the promotion of excellence in science.

- **Agencies and Universities Should Manage Research in a Cost-Efficient Manner.** It is imperative that federal funds supporting research and education are maximized. Costs associated with compliance should be kept to the minimum required for good stewardship. Duplicative stewardship requirements should be eliminated to allow for the redirection of resources to research and education.

- **Accountability and Accounting Are Not the Same.** “The principal measure of accountability must be research outcomes.” It is imperative that federal agencies limit fiscal oversight requirements to those that provide reasonable stewardship of federal funds. Additional requirements must show “added value” in terms of increased stewardship rather than duplicative burden.

- **The Benefits of Simplicity in Policies and Practices Should Be Weighed Against the Costs.** The report acknowledges the importance of assessing the “tradeoffs” when changes in government-wide or agency-specific practices are proposed.

- **Change Should Be Justified by Need and the Process Made Transparent.** Change for the sake of change is discouraged and time to implement necessary change should be provided.
INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

The second section of the report focuses on the integration of research and education, noting that this relationship is the “hallmark and strength of our research and education system.” A series of action items are proposed in this section which reaffirm the significance of the integration of research and education and provide for NSTC review of policies and practices to ensure consistency in the treatment of students, recognizing their roles as both researchers and students.

ACTIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP

The report concludes with a series of action items to strengthen the partnership. NSTC has established a working group to develop implementation procedures within the next twelve months for each of the six action items:

2. Clarify and Extend the Use of Merit Review in Awarding Research Funds
3. Clarify or Amend Cost Sharing Policies and Practices
4. Reduce Differences in Grants Administration Across Agencies
6. Strengthen Environmental Protection in the Research Laboratory Setting

All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the report. To help with the process of collecting feedback, the task force, under the direction of Dr. Arthur Bienenstock, has asked the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) to establish a web-based feedback site. The FDP website has been designed so that respondents can provide feedback to the report as a whole or to any of its component parts. The FDP will compile the responses and provide NSTC and OSTP with periodic summaries.

The full text of the PRD-4 report can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/OSTP/html/rand/downloaddrpt.html or accessed from the FDP feedback website.

Barbara E. Siegel is Executive Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at Northwestern University. She also serves as Chair of the Federal Demonstration Partnership.

Bienenstock Discusses the NSTC Report on Government-University Research Partnership

by Barbara E. Siegel

In his keynote address to attendees of the June meeting of the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), Dr. Arthur Bienenstock, Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, asked three questions about the NSTC report on the government-university research partnership: (1) Is the statement of principles useful and complete? (2) Regarding the integration of education and research, are there implications that need to be evaluated and addressed? For example, the implications of student unions, cost sharing, and funding principles. (3) How much flexibility should there be in the system with regard to cost sharing? What are the consequences, and for whom, of flexibility or rigidity and where should energies be focused with respect to cost sharing?

In his remarks, Bienenstock stated: “...do not think that we have thought of everything. If there’s something... that bothers you, that you want us to think about, tell us, even if it seems obvious. What may be obvious to you may not be obvious to us.” In order for the principles to truly represent both the federal government and the university partners, universities must provide input.

Dr. Bienenstock concluded his address with the following: “This report can have a big impact or a little impact. It can disappear, or it can be the catalyst for change in the system. A lot of that depends on how much you, your university faculty, your administrations, those in the government who have responsibility for interfacing with universities think about the issues. We have gone on, in many ways, with practices that have been dictated by convenience, by goals of making things clean and neat, when the subject that is being considered is not clean and neat, like research as opposed to education when we know that research and education, in our American context, are very much inter-linked. We have to give careful thought to these questions. We have a chance, because we do have, for a year and a half, an administration that believes very, very deeply in the value of research, in its long-term impact on society; that recognizes that universities are, on the one hand, institutions with all the foibles of human beings and yet, on the other hand, represent some of the greatest achievements of human beings and that those achievements are very, very important to carrying out the national function. We live in a time where there is such an administration, it is committed to improving the situation, and it wants careful thought from all of us on how to do it.”

This is our opportunity to help define the partnership between the federal government and universities for the 21st century. It is important that we take this seriously and participate in the process. It is also important that we “spread the word” to others in our institutions and professional organizations. The outcome of this initiative is dependent on our participation. This is our window of opportunity to change the partnership from one of accountability defined by accounting rules and regulations to accountability defined by scientific outcomes.

Barbara E. Siegel is Executive Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at Northwestern University. She also serves as Chair of the Federal Demonstration Partnership.

CYBER-place

(Continued from page 2)

demonstrations and solutions that your IS shop will not be able to support. Or, perhaps information will be useful to them in helping to justify the move to a more state-of-the-art environment.

So, visit the NCURA homepage and follow the links to the Cookbook. Those of you that are fortunate enough to read this article prior to ERA IV will have to wait a few days. But we promise you, the wait is well worth it and we certainly need your feedback, support and ideas.

I’d like to thank my co-chair, Denise Clark at Cornell University for helping me brainstorm the ideas and material for this article. It was Denise’s hard work that helped us gather the survey information that helped lead the way to this initial roll-out of the NCURA Cookbook. If you would like to be involved with this project, please contact my co-chair, Denise Clark at dc34@cornell.edu or me, Stephen Dowdy at sdowdy@mit.edu.

Stephen D. Dowdy is Co-Editor, along with Denise Clark, of the NCURA Cookbook. Steve is a member of NCURA’s Select Committee on ERA. Steve serves as the Manager of Network and Information Systems in the Office of Sponsored Programs at MIT.
NIH INTRODUCES MODULAR GRANT APPLICATIONS
by Ronald G. Geller

As announced in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts (Dec. 15, 1998), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is expanding its use of the Modular Grant Application. In modular grant applications, total direct costs not exceeding $250,000 per year will be requested in $25,000 modules instead of being compiled from detailed and separate budget categories.

Beginning with the May 25, 1999 receipt date, modular grant applications were implemented for Academic Research Enhancement Awards (R15) and with the June 1, 1999 receipt date, modular application procedures applied to all competing individual research project grants (R01), small grants (R03), and exploratory/developmental grants (R21). Some aspects of the modular application process also apply to SBIR/STTR applications, but will not be discussed here. NIH and Institute/Center guidelines and Program Announcements soliciting applications involving these grant mechanisms are being revised to reflect the new modular grant application format. Unsolicited investigator-initiated applications requesting more than $250,000 in any year and applications for grant activities not specified above will be required to follow the traditional application instructions and applicable NIH policies. Requests for Applications (RFAs) soliciting applications of $250,000 or less. On the basis of this experience, the current dollar levels should be included.

EVALUATION
The first full year of implementation will be a period for comment. NIH welcomes comments on the experiences and concerns of investigators, reviewers, applicant organizations, and staff. Adjustments and refinements to the procedures may be made both during and after the comment period. A formal assessment of the process will follow. Comments and questions on modular grant application procedures may be addressed to modulargrants@nih.gov.

FEATURES OF THE MODULAR GRANT APPLICATION
Applications will request direct costs in $25,000 modules, up to a total direct cost of $250,000 per year for all unsolicited new, revised, and competing continuation R01, R03, R15 and R21 applications and competing supplements, as well as applications responding to RFAs for these mechanisms.

Application budgets will be simplified. Detailed categorical budget information will not be required to be submitted with the application; budget form pages DD and EE of the PHS 398 application kits will not be used. Instead, total direct costs requested for each year will be presented. Information, in narrative form, will be provided only for key personnel by position, role, and level of effort and, when applicable, for Consortium/Contractual Costs.

A typical modular grant application will request the same number of modules in each year. Additional narrative budget justification will be required only if there is a variation in the number of modules requested.

There will be no routine escalation for future years. In determining the total for each budget year, applicants should first consider the direct costs of the entire project period. Well-justified modular increments or decrements in the total direct costs for any year of the project that reflect substantial changes in expected future activities may be requested. For example, purchase of major equipment in the first year may justify a higher overall modular budget in the first, but not in succeeding years. In developing the requested budget, basically the total direct costs needed over all the years, including one-time costs (such as equipment) and escalation, will be calculated and then divided by the number of years. The amount in modules of $25,000 closest to that dollar level should be selected. This process is not applicable if the costs are expected to differ significantly from year to year. In these latter situations, appropriate annual variations in the number of modules should be requested.

Scientific Review Groups (SRG) will evaluate the budget on the basis of a general, expert estimate of the total effort and resources required to carry out the proposed research, rather than on the basis of detailed categorical costs. Recommendations for change in the budget will be made in modules. Reviewers also may comment on the requested budget without making specific recommendations, suggesting issues to be handled by NIH staff.

The "Other Support" pages (GG) of the PHS 398 will not be submitted with the application, but will be requested "Just-in-Time" if there is a possibility for an award.

Information on "Research Projects Ongoing or Completed During the Last Three Years" will be provided for the principal investigator and other key personnel as part of the "Biographical Sketch." This information will include the goals of the research and will be used by...
reviewers in the assessment of investigators' qualifications to carry out the proposed project.

Additional budget information may be requested, but only under special circumstances. Every attempt will be made to fund these grants at a level at or close to the recommended total direct costs. In unusual situations, individual Institutes and Centers may make some reductions to accommodate portfolio management policies.

Awards resulting from modular grant applications are eligible for administrative supplements, in accordance with current NIH policy.

**POSTAWARD ADMINISTRATION**

Awards resulting from modular applications will be issued without direct cost categorical breakdowns. Thus, the significant rebudgeting provision does not apply. In accordance with applicable Cost Principles, CAS, and the NIH Grants Policy Statement, recipients are required to allocate and account for costs related to their awards by category within their institutional accounting systems. Costs must be allowable, allocable, reasonable, and consistently treated. Total costs will be monitored based on scope of the research, scientific aims and, rate of expenditure. Institutions will be monitored on the basis of their overall administrative and financial systems.

Two very important questions have come up frequently:

**Q** Are detailed budgets necessary for the development of modules at time of application?

**A** This matter is left to the discretion of the applicant institution. It may be necessary for institutions to require certain budgetary detail from principal investigators for purposes of determining exclusions from the base when calculating facilities and administrative (indirect) costs. In addition, institutions may need to ensure that adequate resources are being requested for the proposed research activity. However, any budgetary details required by the institution are for its internal use only and should not be submitted in the application.

**Q** Must detailed categorical budgets be developed at time of application or award to comply with consistency standards contained in OMB Circular A-21?

**A** No. OMB Circular A-21 does not prescribe the categories to be used in estimating, accumulating, or reporting costs by educational institutions. A categorical budget for purposes of the modular application is defined as having two categories: direct costs and facilities and administration (indirect) costs. Costs are estimated (in the application), accumulated, and reported (Financial Status Report) on this basis. Thus, we have confirmed with the Office of Audit Resolution and Cost Policy, DHHS, the Office of Grants Management, DHHS, the Office of Inspector General, DHHS, and the Office of Naval Research that no additional categorical detail is required to satisfy OMB Circular A-21 cost consistency standards. However, as stated in the question above, institutions may require detailed categorical budgets to meet internal institutional needs.

Institutions are reminded that they must have a mechanism to accurately monitor and report institutional cost sharing. In addition, recipients are reminded that they must meet the standards for financial management systems in 45 CFR 74.21 which require, among other things, that actual outlays must be compared with budgeted amounts for each award. Such comparison will be made on the basis of the modular application budget categories of direct and F&A costs.

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE**

In order to assist applicants and institutions in preparing Modular Grant Applications, a website has been developed that includes detailed background information and samples of: several budget narrative justifications, notice of grant awards, checklists, biosketches as well as information on peer review of modular applications and FAQs. A new section includes the grantee web sites dealing with implementation of the modular grant application process. The inclusion of additional sites or other training materials is welcomed. The URL is http://www.nih.gov/grants/funding/modular/modular.htm

Ronald G. Geller is Director, Office of Extramural Programs in the Office of Extramural Research at NIH. Ron is also the Chairman of the NIH Modular Grant Committee. You are encouraged to contact the NIH Modular Grants Website with questions and comments: modulargrants@nih.gov

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**...more from the cover**

**NCURA to Provide More Distance Learning**

(continued from the cover)

excited to work on these programs and help provide professional development to so many people."

“A subscription to the NCURA Satellite Video Conference Series allows not only “live” training,” said Howard, “but the ability to videotape key segments for incorporation into the University’s long-range training programs. This is an excellent opportunity for Research Administration, Controller’s, and Human Resources Offices to capitalize on national expertise for their home-grown training.”

In April, some schools had over 100 staff view the conference. I don’t know of any institution with a budget large enough to send 100 individuals to a conference. The price of the registration was, for many, cheaper than just one airline ticket. On top of airfare, think of hotel lodging, and other costs associated with travel. The added bonus of this type of conference is the ability to video tape it. Many schools, choose to tape the broadcast and use it later to train those who could not attend the live broadcast. This type of training is going to grow as more and more organizations see the benefits to their membership. NCURA is at the forefront and I am proud that our organization is helping to lead the way!”

See pages 16-17 for more details and registration information.
NCURA is pleased to provide four more opportunities for continuing distance education to its members and their institutions. Having received thousands of requests for more broadcasts, we have put together a series of four-hour workshops based on topics that are most in demand. New this year are continuing education units for those in attendance. Institutions who register for one workshop or the full series will receive the added bonus of a license to videotape the workshop to be used for training whenever the need arises. Handouts will be available for each subscriber and every session will be fully interactive through the use of a special 800 telephone number. For descriptions, faculty and information on how to become a season “ticket holder” for this series of workshops, please see the next page.
Cost Sharing

This workshop provides an in-depth, detailed review of the issues surrounding cost sharing on sponsored projects, primarily grants and contracts funded by federal agencies. The workshop will present definitions of cost sharing, both voluntary and mandatory. The session will include a review of the types of costs that qualify for cost sharing and the requirements for documenting cost sharing. Information will also be provided on the relationship between cost sharing, effort reporting, and indirect cost rates. There will be an opportunity for discussion of issues related to cost sharing, raised by broadcast participants. Consideration will be given to pressures from funding agencies and investigators to maximize cost sharing. This workshop is designed for research administrators with either pre-award and/or post-award responsibilities. It will be most valuable for those newer to the field.

Faculty: Richard P. Seligman, Director, Sponsored Research, California Institute of Technology; Christina Hansen, Director, Office of Research Administration, University of California, Irvine; Elizabeth Mora, Director, Sponsored Projects Operations, Harvard University; Robert Killoren, Assistant Vice President for Research, The Pennsylvania State University; Mark Righter, Partner, McQuaide-Blasko Attorneys at Law.

Indirect Costs for the Lay Audience

Indirect costs, or more properly titled, Facilities and Administrative Costs, remain a mystery to many faculty and other members of the campus community. Designed for faculty, administrators on the departmental or school/college level, and newcomers to research administration, this program will attempt to unravel the mystery by clearly explaining what indirect costs are, how they are calculated and applied, the types of rates institutions use, and what are the implications of waiving indirect costs on certain projects. As well, the presenters will spend time on other important costing topics such as applying the principles of allocability, allowability, and reasonableness. The program will conclude with an interactive conversation about indirect costs and current costing issues.

Faculty: Jane A. Youngers, Director of Grants and Contracts, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio; Mary Ellen Sheridan, Assistant Vice President for Research, University of Chicago; Jerry G. Rife, Director of Contracts and Grant Accounting, Vanderbilt University.

Program Details

September 24, 1999
11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., EDT

Cost Sharing

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REGISTRATION – Live Satellite Broadcast Subscription Series

The cost of the full series (all four workshops) is $2,800.00 per campus. To purchase a “ticket” to an individual session the cost is $950.00 per campus.

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CANCELLATIONS: Notification of cancellation must be received no later than 14 business days prior to the each telecast and are subject to a $50 cancellation fee. Cancellations received after the deadline will not be refunded. You must receive confirmation from NCURA to receive a refund.
After forty years in university research administration, I feel entitled to have a favorite decade. For me it was the '80's. Admittedly, my fondness for the 80's stems in part from my disappointment with the 70's, which began with reductions in Federal funds for universities, with initiatives such as the Mansfield Amendment requiring DOD funded university research to have potential military relevance, and other hints that the Nixon administration was displeased by student (and faculty) opposition to Vietnam. As the decade unfolded, the presumed partnership between the Federal government and the universities deteriorated as accounting issues, such as the transfer of costs between research grants, salary distribution systems and time and effort reports, became increasingly divisive. And after a university president recited a litany of serious problems with proposed revisions to Circular A-21 at the 1978 annual NCURA meeting, the Comptroller General of the United States responded that fiscal controls were the only assurance of accountability since the public understands little of what the research entails.

Consequently, many of us entered the 1980's, the Reagan years, ready for a change. Not surprisingly, there were still cost issues to deal with, including a cap on faculty effort charged to departmental administration, a ceiling on administrative costs charged to overhead, salary limits on NSF and NIH grants and various other initiatives by a hyperactive DHS audit group. Nonetheless, the 1980's took us in new directions and brought fresh challenges.

**Bureaucratic Accretion**

We made progress with liberalized grants administration, much of it stemming from the Florida Demonstration Project, but at the same time found ourselves fighting against a tide of proliferating Federal regulations, whimsically characterized as "bureaucratic accretion." Procurement proved an inviting target, with little differentiation between profit and nonprofit entities, and we dealt with such initiatives as "competition in contracting" and "debarment, suspension and ineligibility."

Newly mandated or expanded compliance programs focused even more directly on the research itself and on the conduct of those performing it, including animal welfare, the drug free workplace and workforce, and scientific misconduct, the latter highlighted by the protracted duel between John Dingle and David Baltimore.

**Export Controls**

Perhaps the most baffling regulatory maze that we encountered in those years was in the Alice in Wonderland world of export controls. Alerted by an episode at Cornell, we suddenly discovered that much of what was taught in our classrooms and generated in our laboratories constituted technical data subject to the "International Traffic in Arms Regulations" (ITAR) and, to our consternation, appeared on the "M Unitions List." After several decades of being pressed to justify university research by proving it had practical applications, much of it, to our surprise, now became "militarily critical technology" of sufficient value that it could not be "exported" to foreign nationals, students and faculty included, here or abroad.

It took the greater part of the decade before we managed to carve out an exemption for the export of fundamental research results. However, in the non-exempted areas, some mission agencies still sought to control research results by export controls or by issuing "rights in data" provisions under which they controlled dissemination. And where national security was not an issue, there was a parallel debate over the sponsorship of university research by foreign entities, in this case couched in terms of unfair competition with U.S. companies.

**University-industry Relationships**

From my perspective, however, one of the most significant developments of the 80's was the renewed relationship between academia and industry. That renewed relationship, aided and abetted by the passage of the Uniform Patent Act in 1980, was not at the outset an easy alliance as industry lawyers matter-of-factly informed us that he who has the gold makes the rules. There were concerns not only in our own institutions but in the media about the relationship (characterized in Time Magazine as "Pure Knowledge vs. Pure Profit"). Nonetheless, we set about establishing the mechanisms by which the open culture of the universities could be coupled with the proprietary, profit orientation of industry. We carefully refined or developed our policies with respect to publications, proprietary data and confidentiality, patents and licensing, and a broad range of related issues.

And in conjunction with this activity we revitalized, expanded and created intellectual property and technology licensing operations and wrestled with complex and time consuming issues such as the allocation and licensing of patent rights, copyrights, computer software and its derivatives, biological materials and their progeny, background data, and countless others. As technology transfer in some institutions took on a life of its own, those institutions, in a manner consistent with their individual circumstances and culture, searched for the proper balance between using technology transfer to generate revenues and ensuring that it did not jeopardize their basic missions or adversely affect relations with research sponsors.

**Conflicts of Interest**

In the wake of the new and rapidly expanding relationship there were, of course, new problems. We fretted initially about professors acquiring large blocks of stock and executive responsibilities in biotech and other companies. This concern soon broadened to include a whole range of interactions between our faculties and students, our own institutions and our industrial sponsors, and we refined our policies on defining and disclosing conflicts of interest.

Nor was it long before perceived conflicts of interest, particularly those involving federal funds, caught the attention of Congress and the press. We read about them in the Wall Street Journal and in the Congressional Record, and PHS and other federal agencies drafted expanded conflict of interest regulations to prevent federally funded research from being influenced byush private financial interests of those conducting it. Based at the outset on the assumption that conflicts must be eliminated, the regulations eventually recognized that conflicts are inherent in these relationships and the guidelines were rewritten to emphasize full disclosure and institutional management.

**Conclusion**

The 1980's gave us an opportunity to defend more than accounting principles. We defended our research environment
On May 7, 1999, the National Science Board approved a new cost sharing policy for the National Science Foundation (NSF). The policy was formally announced in June by NSF’s Director, Rita R. Colwell, in an NSF Important Notice, which is available on the web at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1999/iin124/iin124.htm.

The new policy is based on a review of cost sharing approaches undertaken this past winter by an internal NSF working group. It addresses apprehensions identified by the research and education community. It also reflects concerns expressed by former Director Neal Lane, now head of the President’s Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Dr. Colwell.

At press time, NSF is working on a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that will provide more detail on the actual implementation of the new policy. These will be posted on the web this summer as soon as they are complete.

NSF is already applying the new policy in the preparation of new program announcements. Changes will also be reflected in the Fiscal Year 2000 revision of the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), which will be available early in the fall of 1999.

The key principles underlying the policy are as follows:

- **NSF-required cost sharing is considered an eligibility rather than a review criterion.**

  The intent is to place the focus of the review on the technical content of the proposal, and to avoid auction techniques that distract from the merit review process.

- **NSF cost sharing requirements beyond the statutory minimum requirement will be clearly stated in the program announcement, solicitation or other mechanism which generates proposals.**

  The ambiguous term “encouraged” will no longer be used in program announcements or other solicitations.

- **For “unsolicited” research projects, only statutory cost sharing will be required.**

  The intent is to focus cost sharing on those situations when it is most productive, most consistent with partnership roles, and to avoid pressuring proposers to “shotgun” limited cost sharing resources.

- **NSF program officers must follow the current NSF guidance which states that they may discuss with principal investigators the “bottom line” award amount, but may not [re]negotiate or impose cost sharing or other institutional commitments.**

  The intent is to save time and grief for all the participants in the process.

- **Any reduction of 10% or more from the amount proposed should be accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the scope of the project, unless the program officer, principal investigator, and institution clearly agree that the project, as proposed, can be carried out at a lesser level of support from NSF with no expectation of any uncompensated institutional contribution beyond that formally reflected as cost sharing.**

  Again, the intent is clarity and common understandings.

  FAQs under development will provide more specifics and reinforcement on these points.

  In addition, the NSF FastLane team is working on a module to support electronic submission of revised proposal budgets. This module is to include the capacity for proposers to submit impact statements (e.g., reductions of project scope) as part of the revised budget submission.

  What the policy does not address explicitly is faculty salary support. This is an important issue that will be subject to a separate review by NSF.

It is important to note that cost sharing is not limited to NSF as a concern. The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) recently issued its long-awaited report, Renewing the Federal-Government-University Research Partnership for the 21st Century, which addresses cost sharing along with many other issues critical to the government-university partnership. This report is available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/OSTP/html/rand/index.htm.

A multi-agency task force, which included representatives from NSF, developed the report under the auspices of the NSTC Committee on Science. The NSTC review of the Federal-government-university research partnership was conducted under Presidential Review Directive – 4, to which many NCURA members provided comments and insights.

In the NSTC report, the first stipulated operating principle was that “Agency Cost Sharing Policies and Practices Must be Transparent.” The NSF policy is designed to be consistent with that aspiration.

NSF welcomes input from the community, especially NCURA members, on the guidance provided about this policy. We also want to hear from you about the effectiveness of NSF’s implementation of this policy from the perspective of both research administrators and Principal Investigators. The ultimate effectiveness of these changes is only as good as the constructive—and supportive—feedback you provide. Don’t be shy! Contact us at policy@nsf.gov or jrom@nsf.gov if you have questions or comments.

Joanna Rom is Director, Division of Grants and Agreements at the National Science Foundation.

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1 “As in any investment partnership, each partner contributes to the research endeavor. While the primary contribution of universities is the intellectual capital of the researchers’ ideas, knowledge, and creativity, it is sometimes appropriate for universities to share in the costs of the research (and in some cases cost sharing is required by statute). Cost sharing can be appropriate when there are compelling policy reasons for it, such as in programs whose principal purpose is to build infrastructure and enhance an awardee’s institution’s ability to compete for future Federal awards. Cost sharing is rarely appropriate when an awardee is acting solely as a supplier of goods or services to the government since this would entail a university subsidy of goods purchased by the government. If agency funds are not sufficient to cover the costs of a research project, the agency and the university should re-examine the scope of the project, unless there are compelling policy reasons to require university cost sharing. Agencies should be clear about their cost sharing policies and announce when and how cost sharing will figure in selection processes, including explicit information regarding the amount of cost sharing expected.”
NCURA Annual Meeting Volunteers

Looking for a way to meet new colleagues at the Annual Meeting? One sure way is by becoming an NCURA Annual Meeting Volunteer. For the third year in a row, the NCURA Annual Meeting Volunteers will be working to help make your meeting a rewarding experience.

Susan Edwards, Heat Transfer Research, Inc., and Linda Golden, The University of Tulsa, both volunteers last year, are coordinating our volunteer effort this year. They will be happy to set up a schedule for you and answer any questions you may have.

This is a great way to make new friends and establish new networks that will be valuable, well after the meeting. If you’ve ever wondered about becoming more active in your association, this is a perfect opportunity to get a “behind the scenes” look and at the same time contribute to a very worthwhile activity. Volunteers assist at the registration desk, and help workshop faculty and panelists with handout materials and evaluation forms. Whether you have one day or one hour to volunteer you will be welcomed into the growing number of members who help support the most important event of our year.

If you would like to become involved, please contact Susan (sme@htri.net) or Linda (linda-golden@utulsa.edu) or call Tara Bishop at the NCURA office (202) 466-3894.
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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Once Upon a Time...
(continued from page 18)
against excessively bureaucratic regulations and compliance programs and protected the free dissemination of information against arbitrary controls, even at the expense of federal funding. We proved that we could collaborate with industry and generate practical applications of tremendous value to society without compromising the integrity of our institutions. We learned to manage the conflicts which flowed from our broader interactions with the “real world” and how to approach and resolve the ethical and moral questions that our new relationships entailed. The issues of the 1980’s went to the heart of our academic traditions and research policies and tested our institutions most directly in those areas in which university research administrators played a critical role. We can look back to those years with pride in how well our profession responded.

George Dummer is Director, Office of Sponsored Programs Emeritus at MIT. He is the 1997 recipient of NCURA’s Outstanding Achievement Award in Research Administration.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:
September/October Issue
Submission of Articles: September 3, 1999
Space Reservation for Ads: September 3, 1999
Submission of Display Ads: September 10, 1999

1999
August 25-27
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
Providence, Rhode Island

September 24
Live Video Satellite Conference, Part I of the 1999-2000 Subscription Series
Cost Sharing
Broadcast live from Atlantic Studio in Washington, D.C.

November 7
Workshop ’99
Hilton Washington, Washington, D.C.

November 7-10
41st Annual Meeting
Hilton Washington, Washington, D.C.

2000
January 25
Live Video Satellite Conference, Part II of the 1999-2000 Subscription Series
The Ins and Outs of Contract Language
Broadcast live from Reuters Studio in Washington, D.C.

February 14-16
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
Orlando, FL

March 7
Live Video Satellite Conference, Part III of the 1999-2000 Subscription Series
Indirect Cost for the Lay Audience
Broadcast live from Reuters Studio in Washington, D.C.

April 3-5
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
Denver, CO

April 30-May 2
Region II Spring Meeting
Old Town, Alexandria, VA

May 5-9
Joint NCURA Region IV and SRA Spring Meeting
Omaha, NE

May 18
Live Video Satellite Conference, Part IV of the 1999-2000 Subscription Series
Hot Topics: The Best of the Best
Broadcast live from Reuters Studio in Washington, D.C.

June 14-16
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
Madison, WI

November 5
Workshop 2000
Hilton Washington, Washington, D.C.

November 6-8
42nd Annual Meeting
Hilton Washington, Washington, D.C.
A REVIEW OF
DANIEL J. LEVLES’
"THE BALTIMORE
CASE"
by Mary Ellen Sheridan

For any research administrator with interest or responsibilities touching on scientific integrity, this book, subtitled “A Trial of Politics, Science and Character,” is a “must read.” The cast of characters includes many people we know, some by reputation, some by personal and work experience and some by their scientific standing. Thumbing through the index, one finds so many familiar names and organizations that the reader is irresistibly lured to the tale just as the complex web of known characters in a familiar soap opera magnetizes its daily viewers.

Kevles has written the definitive serious analysis of the famous, or perhaps more aptly, infamous, case of alleged scientific misconduct. The whistleblower (Margot O’Toole) alleged that her former boss (Thereza Imanishi-Kari) had included fraudulent data in a paper published in Cell in 1986. Widely known as the “Baltimore” case, in fact David Baltimore, Nobel laureate and current President of California Institute of Technology, was never accused of misconduct. The fact that it’s his name that became the one held up for public scrutiny and inference of known behavior speaks much to the politicization of scientific ethics so well dissected by Professor Kevles in this book.

Daniel J. Kevles is Professor of Humanities at Caltech and it should be noted that he began this book and had it well in hand long before Baltimore was recruited to Caltech. Kevles is a highly regarded historian of science with a deep understanding of the scientific process, institutional management of research, faculty and collegial relationships. Kevles’ ability to analyze these events in the broader context of national scientific policy, including articulating the roles of Congressional players and agency staff, makes this book powerful reading.

The actual science underlying the allegation of fraud is challenging reading for probably all but the most well schooled in modern biological sciences, especially immunology. But, don’t be deterred by this daunting section of arcane terms and complex analytical procedures; for most of us generalists, the meat of this book lies elsewhere. Kevles has examined the individual players and their roles over the ten-year period in which this landmark case played out. His rich assessment of characters and behavior, how people communicate, how they work in groups or fail to work, how power and intimidation can sway good judgement, how principles may be taken to extreme, keeps your attention. There are disturbing and angering abuses of public trust by governmental and Congressional offices. In the end, there are no winners, but there are many losers.

Although it’s not a beach read, “The Baltimore Case” offers a reflective analysis of the wrenching experience of an investigation of scientific misconduct prolonged to an extreme beyond belief. We know the plot, we know how the story ends but still this book teaches painful and valuable lessons of special interest to scientists and academic and research administrators.

On another note, Professor Kevles has also written a wonderfully wise and insightful history of scientific research in academia, including the development of the management of scientific research in academia. The book is “Universities and Their Leadership,” (Princeton University Press, 1998, pages 199-240.) His chapter is well worth reading.

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.