A Year of Uncertainty

A Decade of Hope.

ALSO INSIDE: News on NCURA’s FRA XI Conference! Pages 8-9 and 19
On the Cover:

The New Year brings with it another year of uncertainty in what promises to be a decade of hope. Most of us are still dealing with the fall-out of the struggling economy. And while the partial recovery of the stock market should help the bottom line of university endowments, state-supported institutions will continue to see less-than-optimal support. Ironically, state legislatures are pulling back from support of higher education while, at the same time, increasing expectations of universities to serve as economic engines to partially revive the state economies. Dr. Milly Perry’s article, “Roadmap for Implementing Third Mission Universities,” brings an international perspective to the challenges faced by universities in documenting economic impact through technology transfer. Closer to home, NCURA President David Richardson looks at the year ahead as an opportunity to explore ways of expanding and improving NCURA’s professional development initiatives through the greater use of technology and a careful evaluation of our many quality programs.

For those who tend to see the glass as half-full, (and maybe more so for those who don’t) the “Leadership Tips” article by Ann Smith and Maria Valero-Martinez describes ways of “creating a framework of optimism.” As someone who is an eternal optimist, I recall an address to the nation by former President Reagan, who told a story of the boy who came down the stairs on Christmas morning only to find a big pile of horse manure under the tree. Undaunted, he ran out to the garage and hurried back in with a shovel. His dad, unsure of the reason for his enthusiasm, asked him, “Why are you so excited about a big pile of manure?” To which the lad replied, “I know there is a pony in there somewhere!”

May you all find ponies in 2010.

Jerry Pogatshnik
Co-Editor

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This era of economic ambiguity will be remembered by many of us as one of the most challenging and exhilarating times to be a research administrator. The uncertainty that has defined this period has defied all of our conventional beliefs as we simultaneously struggle to balance our operational budgets and at the same time manage the inundation of sponsored projects generated by the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The one constant among the financial uncertainty and challenges of the ARRA funding is that the demand for the services of research administration remains strong. It is exactly at times like these that we are reminded of the value of our professional membership in NCURA. For many of us, the true value of our membership is in the many opportunities NCURA provides to develop our own professional networks. I could not imagine dealing with the trials and tribulations of these uncertain times without the assistance of my NCURA network of professional colleagues.

However, if we are to grow as an organization and improve our professional offerings to our members, we must look beyond the basics of providing our members with just the opportunity to develop professional networks. Today’s members are more sophisticated and better informed than ever before, and our organizational offerings must constantly be adjusted to meet our members’ needs and demands balanced with the rationality of the marketplace. This past year witnessed the advent of the NCURA Podcasts, NCURA News, and the online broadcast of the annual meeting agency updates for the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. These initiatives were made available to the entire membership and allowed members to stay connected to the larger organization during a period in which many members yearned for training opportunities but fell victim to budgetary restrictions.

Looking ahead, we must continuously assess and evaluate our professional program offerings for both content and delivery. While our live in-person training programs continue to attract administrators eager to learn the profession or broaden their understanding, we must investigate instructional technologies that can be customized and targeted toward individual member needs. At the same time we must ensure the longitudinal solvency of our organization. Along these same lines, we must assess whether our historical membership model of “one size fits all” remains the appropriate model...
Grants.gov/PL 106-107

On January 22, 2009, Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) introduced S. 303, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999. The bill passed the Senate on March 17, 2009. This reauthorization of PL 106-107 calls for the completion and maintenance of a government-wide public website that serves as a central point of information and access for federal grant applicants, including grant: (1) announcements, (2) statements of eligibility, (3) application requirements, (4) purposes, (5) federal agency providers, and (6) deadlines for applying and awarding. Most notably, the website must allow grant applicants to apply for grants on it, among other uses. This bill is the legislative driver for Grants.gov. The bill requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to develop a strategic plan specifying federal financial assistance programs suitable for common applications and reporting forms or requirements; changes in law (if any) needed to achieve the goals of this Act; and plans, timeliness, and cost estimates for developing an entirely electronic, web-based process for managing federal financial assistance.

A similar bill has not yet been introduced in the House of Representatives – which may be a good thing. There is an opportunity to craft a House version that includes Grants.gov by name and addresses the need for OMB and the federal agencies to seek the advice and counsel of the stakeholders including colleges and universities in developing the next generation of Grants.gov. If a similar but different House version is passed, the differences will be reconciled in conference, and a final version presented for approval in the House and Senate.

Physician Payments

On January 22, 2009, Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Herbert Kohl (D-WI) offered S. 301, the Physician Payments Sunshine Act of 2009. As an amendment to the Social Security Act, the bill requires any manufacturer of a covered drug, device, biological, or medical supply that makes a payment or another transfer of value including physician ownership or investment interests in manufacturers (other than in publicly traded securities and mutual funds), to a physician, a physician medical practice, or a physician group practice to report annually, in electronic form, to HHS. The bill establishes report submission procedures to ensure public availability of required information on a website. A companion bill was introduced in the House (HR 3138) by Rep. Baron Hill (R-IN) on July 9, 2009.

As the research community knows, the payments by business and industry to NIH researchers has been a particular issue for Sen. Grassley. His regular contact with research organizations to identify and review financial interests and relationships between physicians and drug and device manufacturers has drawn significant public attention. The proposed Sunshine Act has the support of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) and the American Medical Association (AMA). A number of pharmaceutical companies, including Eli Lilly and Pfizer among others, have begun posting payment information on their websites. What types of information is posted (honoraria, medical education support, research grants, etc.) is different and each web page’s presentation of the information is different. Nonetheless, universities should consider reviewing the information posted to the websites as they review financial disclosures as a part of their implementation of financial conflicts of interest policies.
Public Access

On June 25, 2009, Senators Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) and John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced S. 1373, the Federal Research Public Access Act of 2009. This bill requires each federal agency with extramural research expenditures of over $100 million to develop a research public access policy applicable to researchers employed by the federal agency and researchers funded by the agency. Similar to but notably different from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Public Access Policy, S. 1373 would require agencies to develop policies and procedures for the submission and posting of final peer-reviewed manuscripts making them publicly accessible within 6 months of publication.

Pursuing the question of access, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a request for comments on “enhancing public access to archived publications resulting from research funded by Federal science and technology agencies” – Public Access Policies for Science and Technology Agencies Across the Federal Government on December 9, 2009. This request followed, by one day, issuance by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of an Open Government Directive (M-10-06) to the federal agencies. Agencies are required to create an Open Government webpage to make available information, with a focus on high-value data sets and (to the extent permitted by law and various restrictions) that is retrievable, downloadable and indexed for searches using commonly available web search applications. In this context, "information" means any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts, data or opinion presented in any medium or format (OMB Circular A-130). This directive supports the President’s goals of transparency, participation and collaboration in government as described in Pres. Obama’s January 21, 2009, memorandum “Transparency and Open Government.” Access to information remains a cornerstone of this Administration.

Security

On November 6, 2009, the House passed HR 2868, referring it to the Senate for consideration on November 9, 2009. HR 2868, the Chemical and Water Security Act of 2009, combines three related pieces of legislation – the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009, Drinking Water System Security Act of 2009, and Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act of 2009 – with separate titles or sections devoted to each area. Of particular interest to the research community is Title I: Chemical Facility Security - Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009. This portion of the legislation establishes the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS), essentially as written, in statute. Through the hard work of the higher education Washington-based associations and college and university federal relations staff, the Act includes a provision – the Foster-Lujan amendment – requiring DHS to establish separate standards, protocols, and procedures for assessing vulnerabilities and improving the security of Chemicals of Interest in a college or university setting. The research community had hoped for additional provisions that addressed the unique use of chemicals in academic settings but are hopeful that DHS will exercise the flexibility the Foster-Lujan amendment provides to create standards that are achievable and meet the nation’s security goals. The current DHS CFATS regulations remain in effect, and institutions that use or plan to use Chemicals of Interest should consult the DHS website for information.

Finally, weapons of mass destruction and the management of laboratories that investigate various toxins and select agents could face significant changes in the regulatory environment in light of S. 1649, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Prevention and Preparedness Act of 2009, introduced on September 8, 2009, by Senators Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) and Susan Collins (R-ME). The bill directs the Secretary of HHS, in coordination with the DHS Secretary, to designate as “Tier I agents” those agents and toxins which have significant potential to be used effectively in a biological attack and for which the DHS Secretary has issued a Material Threat Determination, and directs the DHS Secretary to establish enhanced biosecurity measures for registered entities to use in handling such agents.

With the leadership of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), the research community has offered some comments and expressed some concerns with the bill as proposed. The creation of a list of Tier I agents will change the current approach of treating all select agents as equal risk, despite differences in pathogenicity and ability to be used as an agent of bioterrorism; and it makes some sense to have stricter security measures for extremely high-risk agents not found in nature, such as smallpox, or agents that can be readily weaponizable pathogens, such as B. anthracis, while allowing greater access to less pathogenic and ubiquitous agents. But the increased and enhanced inspections, reliance on industry/military models of personnel reliability reviews and background checks, facilities registration requirements, and other aspects of the legislation raise concerns within the research community. The responsibility for implementing many of these changes will fall to DHS. The research community has had a successful working relationship with the CDC and USDA in the select agent program and would look to continue that relationship.

Some of this legislation will become law; some will be amended significantly before becoming law; and some will get buried in committees. In all cases, proposing, debating and voting on members’ legislative initiatives is the work of Congress. And as Will Rogers said, we should, “Be thankful we’re not getting all the government we’re paying for.”

Carol Blum is Director of Research Compliance and Administration at the Council on Governmental Relations.
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Many explanations and interpretations have been given for the astonishing fact that, for decades, there have been no real changes in the way universities act and function. Universities are useful to society but not critical; they serve the elite without threatening it, and they are able to respond to popular demands and political needs. Furthermore, they contribute to national economic growth and security (Tadmor, 2003).

Today, changes in circumstance and conditions have driven universities to change not only the way they act but also the way they think. Academic research has become valuable to a nation’s progress and competitiveness. At the same time it has become too expensive, and this fact has driven public debate about universities’ governance and efficiency. Society’s needs for well-educated personnel in a vast variety of fields invites close discourse between society as the “end user” and the academic world, which requires the right influence in the process. The globalization of education, its promise for business, and the role of university education as the main tool for social and economic mobility, are other reasons for political intervention and for growing demands for changes in universities and the academic world.

THE CHALLENGE

Most of the research that has been carried out in technology transfer and Third Mission University (TMU) emphasizes the need to implement and drive an effective technology transfer process as a return on public investment into the university system. The research looks for responses to “WH” questions. “Why” should the university develop these activities? “When” and “where” should the university develop them? “Who” are the right people to take part in these activities? “What” are the constructive ways to engage in it? Some research studies suggest practical advice and best practice; others underline specific lenses through which they build a systematic framework dealing with the organizational aspects within the university, environmental aspects (outside of the university) or individual aspects of the required vision. Even though much of the research mentions the change process as the main objective (the vision is widely acknowledged), none of them uses Change Management theory as the analysis framework or uses Change Management tools for challenging the phenomenon that is clearly recognized as organizational change or the institution’s cultural change. Change Management (Nickols, 2004) is defined as handling planned and systematic changes. The purpose of change management is to efficiently assimilate changes and systems into the organization. Change may be perceived to come from within the organization and thus is controlled by it, or it may be understood as a mechanism that responds to shifts that occur in the organization’s environment and are not under its control.

The study objectives are, as one of the studies in the literature review put it: “Our understanding of academic institutions from an organizational perspective is quite limited. A fairly large number of publications on the university system have contributed mainly to the identification of different factors in the system’s black box […] few pioneering studies have moved further in their attempt to reveal what resides inside the black box, and identify university organizational designs as a key construct of interest” (Rothaermel, Agung and Jiang, 2006).
GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE ISRAELI ACADEMIC SYSTEM

Educational organizations are qualitatively different from business or commercial organizations. Their management parameters are different, they operate differently, and frequently their organizational values and the criteria for judging the organization’s success are also different. The educational organization is considered a “loosely coupled system.” This term refers to a situation in which two occurrences share only a few common variables, or the variance between the occurrences pertains to less important variables. Therefore, their common variance is reduced, and the ability to predict one occurrence based on the other is limited (Weick, 1976).

In a loosely coupled system, the sub-systems and their operations are partially linked, yet each sub-system maintains its privacy and independent identity. The parts of the system are attached by a delimited relation of dependency and control.

These facts are pertinent also to the link between the organization and the environment. Pressures from the environment or demands for change are “shielded” and do not infiltrate as a parameter that requires the organization to take action. Loose coupling is a characteristic of the structure of academic institutions (Weick, 1976). Educational organizations are defined as having loose couplings between environment, technology, policy, coordination, and supervision. A consideration of the university’s culture and structure must take into account not only the traditional university, but also the various models and structures which in recent years have developed into universities of a different nature. A distinction must be drawn between research institutions and colleges, private and government-owned universities, and between the traditional and the entrepreneurial universities (Kirp, 2003; Heeger, 2000; Lueddeke, 1999). Nevertheless, despite the variety of universities and the distinctions among them, there are some characteristics that are valid for the majority of universities.

The university has been defined by investigators as an “organized anarchy” (Cohen, et. al, 1986). In the university, where goals are neither unequivocal, conflicting, or clear, standard theories of management and decision-making do not hold. The university’s goals, though easily defined in universal terms by any person of knowledge, do not conform to the basic criteria for defining goals. Boyer claims that the historical, cultural, and structural characteristics of the university create the conditions that prevent it from initiating and establishing an organized and systematic mechanism for managing and assimilating change (Boyer, 1990). At the same time, the university exists in a social and cultural environment that requires it to respond to frequent changes in market demands, budgetary shifts, and technological innovations (Wilms & Zell, 2003; Bates, 1999).

In Israel, universities have had to face changes. The demands made on universities by the establishment that funds their scientific and cultural activities, for accountability and managerial leadership on the one hand, and the demands made by the market, technology, and the customers on the other hand, are forcing the universities to abandon the ivory tower, where they had maintained an unchanged existence, and to adjust themselves to their environment. The Melz Report for Changing the University’s Structure (2000) indicates that the current structure prohibits free flow of information among its units, limiting the possibility of introducing necessary changes and innovations:

“The current structure of most academic institutions is characterized by loose coupling among its academic and functional units. The structure is noted for several essential weak points relating to the work patterns of its units, issues of authority and role allocation, and the reciprocal relations between these components.”

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A “top-down” strategy for handling organizational changes in the university is a major vehicle for managing change in higher education, where “most layers of management and knowledge employees are isolated from environmental demands and from the administration thanks to their tenured status and the important feature of “academic freedom,” which provides the pretext for separate departments to reject the university administration’s decisions. The “top-down” strategy has borne positive results in terms of change implementation and technology integration in teaching and management processes” (Wilms & Zell, 2003).

“THIRD MISSION UNIVERSITY” – MODELS AND DEFINITIONS

The literature offers a number of models for analyzing and implementing the “Third Mission University,” and many terms and definitions for those activities: “The Tried Research University” (Tadmor, 2003), “The Triple Helix University,” “The Entrepreneurial University,” “The Future University,” “Third stream activity” (Hatakenaka, 2005), or “Technology Transfer.” Within a modern, knowledge-driven economy, knowledge transfer (KT) is about transferring good ideas, research results, and skills between universities, other research organizations, businesses, and the wider community to enable innovative new products and services to be developed. “Knowledge transfer is the deliberate process of exchanging information from one part of the knowledge system useful to another part, often across sectors or disciplines” (NSF, 2007). Other terminology refers to the “University-to-Industry” relationship, the emerging need to commercialize research output in order to enhance economic progress and a country’s competitiveness, through which the university rewards society for its financial support. Another definition talks about enhancing the economic and social impact of universities, helping develop innovation and new technologies, and helping industry to renew and breakthrough (Hatakenaka, 2005). Universities play a key public role in development, contributing to commerce and progress in a variety of issues and within society (Etzkowitz, 2002). There are a number of models of Third Mission University:

1. Individual-Institutional-Organizational (Phan & Siegel, 2006).
2. Entrepreneurial University - productivity of TTO - New firm- environmental and networks of innovation. (Rothaermal, Agung and Jiang, 2006).
3. Instill economic impact as a university value. (Hatakenaka, 2005).
5. The Singapore Model (Wong, 2007).

CHANGE MANAGEMENT – TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The underlying assumption of this study is that there is no universal one-size-fits-all solution for implementing the TMU. We need to find the right way to meet the cultural differences and regional conditions to articulate a good-enough roadmap for implementing and managing the change. We believe that using suitable change management strategies and specific measures to monitor the process can help the university progress towards the goal of implementing a “Third Mission University.”

There are several models and methods of change management.

The model of dynamic stability (Levin, 1952). According to this model, the main concepts in the process of change management are “unfreeze, change, and freeze.” These terms were influenced by the perception of the organization as a balanced system that operates in an environment that is not always stable and can cause a shift in the organization’s equilibrium. This model aims to bring the organization back to a balanced state. The change is considered a transitional period, at the end of which the organization’s equilibrium will be re-established.

The problem-solving model (Nickols, 2004). This model considers change as the shift from the problem stage to the solution stage. Once a problem is encountered, it must be defined as critical. Then goals are set and multiple solutions are identified. This process must be carefully planned.

The model of interactive strategic planning (Nickols, 2004). This model proposes three stages in change management: discontent, a vision, and the first step towards change. First there is the emergence of discontent with the current situation. This is countered with a vision for the future, and then the first step for implementing this vision must be planned.

The eight step model (Kotter, 1998). These steps include establishing a sense of urgency, creating leading coalitions, developing a vision and a strategy, clarifying the change and the vision, creating a strong foundation for action, creating successful experiences in the immediate future, assessing the change and defining additional changes, and finally, anchoring the new approaches within the organizational culture.

The model of organizational dynamic systems (Burke & Litwin, 1992). This model distinguishes between transactional systems (which include an exchange) and transitional systems (which include a process of change). In a transactional system, its components create the climate necessary for change, whereas in a transitional system, the components are the very behaviors that need to be altered, as part of the organization’s action for change management.
When a systematic change is planned, there is a crucial need for measurements to identify the base line from which the change is taking place and to realize the distance from the desired target. “It is important to identify appropriate criteria and indicators for describing the technological transfer” (NSF, 2007). The technology transfer phenomenon is complex and so is the measurement process. We will repeatedly examine and double-check the data that are available in this research for further validation.

1. Research output
   - Publications, conference proceedings, symposia, trade journals, web publications, and networks.

2. Collaboration
   - Interactions, formal and informal, any kind of F2F of ICT interactions (Technology mediated), partnership (financed research, faculty consultancy)

3. Economic impact
   - Any activity that increases value--individual, organizational, or regional (patents, disclosures, licenses, and spin-offs)

4. Interdisciplinarity

5. Education and training
   - Classroom learning, learning by doing, know-how, graduate students, training programs.

6. Societal et al.
   - Any form of dialogue with the public, dissemination of information, developing educational needs, identifying barriers and ethical issues.

Few research studies relate to the barriers for changes, as well as to individual changes. “There is no smooth path for any paradigm change” (Rothaermel, Agung and Jiang, 2006). The research mentions that “as the scope of an entrepreneurial university expands, the core of the system self-organizes in order to renew and transform its mission” (Rothaermel, Agung and Jiang, 2006) but does not give any indication as to the way to achieve these goals. Based on existing global best practices for implementing the “Third Mission University,” using change management theory and tools, will provide rational and practical steps which a given university can follow and by which policy makers can steer the academic system.

As the “Third Mission University” is one of the main changes in the academic world, in addition and side by side to the traditional missions of education (teaching) and research (Rothaermel, Agung and Jiang, 2006), universities ought to have the adequate theory and practice to face the challenge in an organizational and systematic way.

Dr. Milly Perry is a Researcher and Research Director at The Open University of Israel. Her Ph.D. is in Information Science, specializing in KM in Higher Education and Technology Transfer and Innovation Management (Post.Doc).

References


MORE WORKSHOPS THAN EVER!

Full Day Workshops

POST AWARD BASICS
Faculty: Cathy Snyder, Associate Director, Office of Contract & Grant Accounting, Vanderbilt University; Robert Barbret, Director of Sponsored Programs, Controller’s Office, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor; Michelle Vazin, Associate Director, Office of Contracts and Grants Accounting, Vanderbilt University

FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE ISSUES IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
Faculty: John Bain, Finance Manager, Department of Facilities Management and Planning, University of Massachusetts - Lowell; David Kennedy, Director, Cost Policy, Council on Governmental Relations, COGR

Half Day Workshops

RISK ASSESSMENT
Faculty: Jane Youngers, Assistant Vice President for Research & Sponsored Programs, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio; Gunta Liders, Associate Vice President for Research Administration, University of Rochester

WHAT EVERY DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE OMB CIRCULARS
Faculty: Ann Holmes, Assistant Dean, Finance & Administration, University of Maryland College Park; Tim Reuter, Executive Director, Boston University

ADMINISTERING SUBAWARDS THROUGH THEIR LIFE CYCLE
Faculty: Antoinette Lawson, Associate Director, Office of Research Administration and Advancement, University of Maryland College Park; Aimee Howell, Assistant Director for Finance & Administration, Center for the Advanced Study of Language, University of Maryland College Park

SETTING UP A POST-AWARD OFFICE (PUI)
Faculty: Pam Whitlock, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs (retired), University of North Carolina at Wilmington

EFFORT REPORTING - WHY ISN’T IT AS SIMPLE AS IT FIRST SEEMED WHEN I AGREED TO HELP MANAGE THIS?
Faculty: Kim Moreland, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration and Director, Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Laura Yaeger, Vice President, Higher Education Consulting, Huron Consulting Group

STARTING A CLINICAL OFFICE
Faculty: Tesheia Johnson, Associate Director for Clinical Research, Yale School of Medicine; Suzanne Liv Page, Director, Clinical Research Initiation Services/Clinical Research Revenue Cycle, University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine

PREPARING AN F&A PROPOSAL AND NEGOTIATING AN F&A RATE - AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROCESS
Faculty: Michael Smith, Managing Director, Huron Consulting Group; John States, Director, Sponsored Programs Finance Management, University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston; Deborah Carmel, Director of Cost Accounting, Harvard School of Public Health; Kevin Maynor, Director, Cost Analysis and Compliance, Office of Sponsored Research, University of North Carolina

DEVELOPING A FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE MONITORING PROGRAM
Facilitators: Heidi Grunwald, Interim Director, Temple; Steve Bradley, Regional Director, MAXIMUS; Kris Rhodes, Director, Higher Education Practice, MAXIMUS

UNIVERSITY F&A RATE PROPOSALS - FEDERAL REVIEW AND COMPLEX NEGOTIATION ISSUES
Facilitators: Gary Talesnik, Special Consultant Eclat Consulting LLC; Cindy Hope, Assistant Vice President for Research, The University of Alabama

SERVICE CENTERS - DEVELOPING, MANAGING AND MONITORING SERVICE CENTERS
Faculty: Charlene Bleevens, Assistant Vice President, Florida International University; Joseph Barabino, Associate Vice President for Research, Florida International University

DEVELOPING AND FACILITATING RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PI’S AND DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL
Faculty: Kerry Peluso, Associate Vice President for Research Administration, Emory University; Camilah Hicks, Director, Research Administration Education and Communications, Emory University

BEYOND THE BASICS OF SUBRECIPIENT MONITORING
Faculty: Antoinette Lawson, Associate Director, Office of Research Administration and Advancement, University of Maryland College Park; Aimee Howell, Assistant Director for Finance & Administration, Center for the Advanced Study of Language, University of Maryland College Park

A-21 AND A-110: AN OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL CIRCULARS
Faculty: Marianne Woods, Senior Associate Vice President for Research Administration, The University of Texas at San Antonio; Maggie Griscavage, Director of Grants and Contracts Administration, University of Alaska Fairbanks

SO YOU THINK YOU WANT TO BE AN NCURA TRAINER?
Faculty: Jennifer Rosa, Research Business Manager, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia; Ronald Polizzi, Associate Director, Contracts Office of Research Administration, Thomas Jefferson University

CASE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL SPONSORED PROGRAMS
Faculty: Bernard Trombley, Director, Huron Consulting Group; James Casey, Jr., Director of Contracts and Industrial Agreements, The University of Texas at San Antonio; John Carfora, Executive Director, Office for Research and Sponsored Projects, Loyola Marymount University

FAR FUNDAMENTALS
Facilitator: Ty Lane, Senior Contract Specialist, Office of Sponsored Projects; University of Texas Austin

ISSUES IN FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION COMPLIANCE - PROBLEMS, PERCEPTIONS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS
Facilitators: Alan Long, Assistant Dean for Research Finances & Systems, Harvard University; Patricia Hawk, Director, Sponsored Programs, Oregon State University

CLINICAL RESEARCH PROCESSES, SUPPORT SYSTEMS & COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS
Facilitators: Michael Amey, Associate Dean, Research Administration, Office of Research Administration, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; James Moran, Huron Consulting Group

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MARCH 3-5 2010
Marriott Rivercenter
San Antonio, TX
Determination of Allowable Costs: Critical for Sponsored Projects Success

by Jean Cody

Whether monitoring is done at the department level or in central administration and whether it is done prior to expenditure or after the fact, OMB Circular A-21 needs to be considered. OMB Circular A-21 (2 CFR 220), Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, establishes principles for direct and indirect costs that may be charged to federal research grants and contracts. Most of us are, or should be, familiar with A-21’s criteria for determining allowable costs, direct or indirect. As addressed in C.2., allowable costs must:

- Be reasonable
  - Reasonable is the prudent person rule. Is the cost necessary?
- Be allocable
  - Allocable asks if the cost is solely to advance the work under the sponsored agreement and benefits the agreement and the institution.
- Be given consistent treatment
  - Consistent treatment refers to “like circumstances.”
- Conform to limitations or exclusions of A-21 or the sponsored agreement.

Sounds pretty simple, right? So how do we do this, as a department, central administration or finance department? One of the most important ways to address allowability of costs is written policies and procedures that deal with their interpretation of A-21. Here are some suggestions for what to keep in mind when writing or updating your allowable cost/direct charging policies and procedures and implementing them. Of course these ideas are not all inclusive or exclusive. As part of the process you need to determine what works best for your institution.

- Determine who is responsible for monitoring expenditures for allowability.
  - Do you have good departmental support? Do they have the resources?
  - Is the central administration staff in a position to monitor all or some expenditures? Do they have access to what they need in the institution’s purchasing, payroll, disbursements and accounting systems?
  - Do you have an after-the-fact financial review at the time of invoicing/financial reporting? Does staff have adequate access to documents?

If you have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, meet with staff responsible for the institution’s indirect cost rate proposal.

- Make sure you agree on what are “like circumstances” and “major projects.”
- Determine how you will handle items normally considered indirect costs, such as office supplies and postage.

- Communicate with faculty and staff prior to writing policies, and especially procedures.
  - Talk with your principal investigators, program directors, and institute/center directors about their needs when working on projects.
  - Find out what staff needs are to process paperwork and monitor as accurately as possible.

- Get feedback on draft policies and procedures from all persons and departments involved.

Application of policies and procedures.

- Once policies and procedures are approved, communicate the information and provide training at all levels: principal investigators, project directors, central sponsored projects administrators, departmental research administrators, administrative assistants, financial departments and any other department involved with sponsored project administration.
- When monitoring, consider the sponsor’s guidelines and regulations.
- Make sure everyone knows if allowability is affected by exceptional circumstances. What are those circumstances?

Determination of allowable costs can be a complex issue. Just remember to keep in mind the needs of your institution and how you monitor expenditures for allowability. Taking the time to put workable policies and procedures in place — policies and procedures that were written with input from the whole institution — should streamline the monitoring process. It should also improve relationships with faculty, staff and other institutional departments, something that benefits all of us.

Jean Cody is the Assistant Director, Post Award, in the Office of Sponsored Programs at The University of Texas at San Antonio.

In addition to these workshops, FRA XI will also showcase over 50 Concurrent Sessions which combine 60 – 90 minute panel presentations with question and answer sessions for attendees.

FRA XI is also pleased to announce its keynote speakers Dr. Julia Lane, Program Director, Science of Science and Innovation Policy, National Science Foundation and Dr. John Voeller, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Representative to the STAR (Science and Technology in American’s Recovery) Pilot who will provide a summary and update on STAR. This address will be an exciting opportunity to learn about a future for transparency and accountability that considers all the stakeholders, including the research administrator.

Registration, program and hotel information are available online at www.ncura.edu
This is the second in a series of four articles about CTSA's.

INTRODUCTION
New grants and academic publications have always been seen as the gold standard metrics of success for a research institute, yet now the Clinical and Translational Science (CTSA) awardees are being challenged to demonstrate an additional (and much harder-to-measure) indicator of success: impact on human health. CTSA's and the funding agency for the awards, the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR), have struggled with how best to evaluate the overall impact of the CTSA's. The Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute (OCTRI), one of the first round CTSA awardees, has taken some unique approaches to this challenge. Whether or not other funding agencies follow in NCRR's footsteps, university research administrators may find these approaches useful in the ongoing effort to plan and evaluate our own contribution to the research enterprise.

With the CTSA awards, NCRR expects grantees to speed up the translation of research from bench, to bedside, to medical practice. The assumption here is that improving the throughput time for translation will enable a more rapid improvement in human health. The concept of speeding up such processes lends itself well to practices that have proved highly effective in other industries, such as manufacturing. OCTRI has partnered since the beginning of its CTSA award with faculty from the OHSU School of Management to apply some widely used industrial methods for improvement, specifically Hoshin Kanri strategic planning and Lean Six Sigma continuous process improvement. OCTRI is also attempting to better understand research productivity through its evaluation efforts.

Overall, OCTRI's approach to strategic planning and evaluation is cyclical, employing the disciplines of strategic planning, evaluation, and process improvement. Each stage of the cycle feeds into the subsequent stage, and the cycle repeats itself as the institute moves incrementally forward toward the goal of improving human health.

PLANNING
Many institutions go through extensive strategic planning processes only to have their carefully articulated plans go on to gather dust on a shelf while actual processes remain unchanged. The challenge with planning is to make the plans relevant, actionable, and to find mechanisms to keep the institute aligned with the plans and vice versa. OCTRI's approach to strategic planning has been to utilize aspects of a planning model called Hoshin Kanri coupled with a tool called the Balanced Scorecard.

Hoshin Kanri is a strategic planning methodology that emerged in the 1960s in Japan, most notably at Toyota, and since then has been widely used throughout business and industry to improve performance through teamwork. [1, 2] Through the process of Hoshin Kanri planning, OCTRI developed a mission, vision, and values that were informed by a thorough consideration of external factors in the marketplace. These gave rise to the articulation of overarching goals and then strategies for the organization. The development of strategies, or the “how” of the plan, was followed by the definition of key performance metrics that allow for management control, essentially allowing OCTRI to measure whether it is on track to meet its goals. Ultimately, tactics and expected key results were defined. In the version of Hoshin Kanri employed by OCTRI, one develops two plans: a Strategic Breakthrough Plan and a Business Fundamentals Plan which focus on new transformative strategies and existing business objectives respectively. In the middle of OCTRI's plan development, the institute went through a process called catch-ball, where leadership and plan owners respond and react to feedback on the plans and ultimately ratify them.

The Balanced Scorecard is a strategic management process with an accompanying performance management tool created by Drs. Robert Kaplan and David Norton.[3] OCTRI developed its own Balanced Scorecard to help integrate the strategic plans developed through the Hoshin Kanri process within the day-to-day work of the institute. The Balanced Scorecard helps an organization tie its strategies to its financial, customer, and business processes and learning and growth objectives. OCTRI's scorecard displays the institute's strategies by program and ties these to the metrics selected to measure success. It also incorporates tactics, data-by-quarter to document trends, key accomplishments and areas in which help is needed. In essence, OCTRI's scorecard is a snapshot of how the organization is meeting its strategic objectives over time.

EVALUATION
OCTRI's evaluation program aims to measure the institute's productivity and impact. This evaluation has included the traditional metrics of grants, publications, investigators served, and investigator satisfaction. Other more transformative evaluation initiatives that have come out of the strategic plans are also being incorporated into the work of the institute. One example of these efforts is a pilot project in OCTRI's Biostatistics Program to measure productivity on a more granular basis by tracking time on an hourly basis.
The OCTRI Biostatistics Program’s effort to have both faculty and staff track productivity metrics on an hourly, per-service basis began a year ago. OCTRI's evaluation staff conducted an assessment of low cost, off-the-shelf software solutions and decided to implement QuickBooks and its online time tracking system. A major decision was determining which services to track. Since concern about the potential tracking burden was high, it was decided to define a limited set of key services (See Table 1).

### Table 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biostatistics Services Tracked in QuickBooks</th>
<th>Tracking Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Management</td>
<td>Investigators &amp; Projects Served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Productivity Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical Consult</td>
<td>Project Estimates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Submission</td>
<td>Billing</td>
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<td>Letter of Support</td>
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<td>Manuscript Development</td>
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<td>Protocol Development</td>
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<td>Professional Developmnt/Research</td>
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<td>Education/Mentoring</td>
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<td>Statistics Software Training</td>
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After nearly a year of tracking, 80% of the Biostatistics Program’s billable time is recorded and there is an extensive dataset of the services provided to investigators. Early applications of the data have included understanding the program’s customer base and mix of services, budget forecasting, internal and external productivity reporting, negotiating for additional financial support from customers who are receiving more services than they are paying for, and institution-wide policy setting. (See Figure 1) Eventually, OCTRI plans to answer other questions with the data, such as the effect of biostatistics services on the likelihood of funding or publication of a study.

Moving beyond traditional metrics has challenged the culture of the institute, yet it has also yielded a rich dataset for evaluating productivity. Future plans include implementing a more robust time-tracking tool across all programs. How acceptable this will be to faculty and staff remains to be seen. However, our expectation is that the data gathered in the biostatistics pilot will help to overcome barriers to implementing further tracking.

### PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Once planned and, inevitably, unplanned activities have occurred and an effort has been made to measure success against the plan, the process of identifying opportunities for improvement intensifies. OCTRI has used another method commonly found in manufacturing called Lean Six-Sigma to undertake process improvements in its effort to speed up of the translation of research. Lean Six Sigma methodology is focused on achieving stable, predictable results from processes through an iterative cycle of measurement, analysis, improvement activities and control. [4] Achieving stable processes holds great value for OCTRI for many reasons, from ensuring quality data collection for investigators to gaining cost savings through process efficiencies.

OCTRI’s first round of process improvement projects targeted activities in the research kitchen, investigator navigator services, and regulatory support services. A large-scale improvement project was subsequently undertaken to streamline and normalize the Institutional Review Board (IRB) processes of the two partner institutions that make up OCTRI. Lean Six-Sigma advocates for the role of a trained improvement specialist, called a “green belt” or “black belt” depending on level of training, to champion the improvement process. OCTRI is currently hiring a black belt who will focus, at least at first, on process improvement in our clinical research enterprise.

Ensuring that findings from planning, evaluation and process improvement make it full circle so that they can inform the next cycle of planning is the role of the OCTRI Evaluation Program. Improving human health is the goal of all our biomedical research institutions, but how the CTSAs can bring unique process improvements to that mandate continues to be a somewhat elusive, though absolutely essential target of CTSAs efforts in Oregon and around the country.

The author would like to thank Michael Neal, MS, of the OHSU School of Management for his exhaustive and ever-patient efforts to enable OCTRI to conduct the work described in this article.

Anne King manages the Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute’s (OCTRI) Planning, Evaluation and Process Improvement Program.

### References

Biomedical research thrives in academic medical centers across the United States due in great part to the support provided to research from patient care revenues received by the institution. The careful management of patient care provides a surplus of funds which are used to fill the gap in research funding and support biomedical research at these centers. This balance between a vibrant and constant source of revenue from clinical operations to create a sustainable biomedical research enterprise at academic medical centers is fragile, at best.

Some of my faculty and others at my institution may be surprised to learn that there is a gap in research funding; after all, the federal government, which is the primary sponsor of biomedical research, pays for direct and indirect costs and from the faculty perspective indirect costs are already too high. The faculty member asks: doesn’t the funding that we receive for research from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and other federal agencies cover 100% of the cost of performing research? On the surface, the federal funding would seem to cover all the costs of doing research, but in reality it does not.

When an academic medical center or university prepares its Facilities and Administrative (F&A) cost proposal it uses real (historical costs) and that rate in the F&A proposal is negotiated down with the institution’s cognizant federal agency. For example: a university may have developed an F&A rate of 65% in its proposal with actual costs from its previous fiscal year audited financial statements, but that institution would be fortunate in obtaining a negotiated rate of 55%. That negotiated rate would represent a “loss” of 10% from the proposed cost for facilities and administration at that institution. There are some real costs which are incurred that a university may be prevented from putting in its F&A proposal because the federal cost principles classify those costs as unallowable. One primary determinant of unallowable costs is Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-21; that circular prohibits a university from including more than 26 points for administrative costs in their F&A proposal. In the illustration used above, if the university had calculated the total of its administrative cost pools at 33 points, the university would have to remove 7 percentage points from its actual rate of 72% prior to submitting the proposal to its cognizant agency. The result is that when a $100k grant is awarded to the university and all direct costs awarded for the grant award are within the F&A cost base, an award of $55k would be made for F&A costs. Using the university’s actual rate of 72% including all related administrative costs the F&A award for this grant would be $72k. Clearly other sources of funds are needed to fill this gap in federal research funding as well as nonfederal research funding.

The healthcare bill passed by the House of Representatives and the legislation moving forward in the Senate have some major differences. At this point it is not clear if the bill which comes out of the House/Senate conference committee will have a public option (which is in the House bill) or an insurance program modeled on the U.S. government employee-insurance system that would have private companies provide coverage under federal oversight (which is in the Senate bill). The House and Senate versions have certain common provisions, and each would:

1. Provide healthcare coverage to millions of uninsured Americans;
2. Prohibit coverage for undocumented individuals residing in the United States;
3. Have cost containment provisions for health insurance; and
4. Be financed, in part, through future cuts in Medicare reimbursement for inpatient and outpatient services.

The passage of healthcare reform legislation seems to be inevitable and this will lead to a decrease in patient care revenues at academic medical centers across the United States. On the other hand, if millions of uninsured Americans have healthcare coverage under this reform package, it would seem that there would be less charity care provided by these centers. However, the $102 to $106 billion in cuts for Medicare reimbursement proposed by the House and Senate, respectively, far exceeds any gain in revenue projected from newly covered Americans; there will still be an estimated 18 to 24 million people in the United States without insurance coverage. Charity care will simply not go away under the House bill or the Senate bill, and the funds that academic medical centers have traditionally used to support research performed within their walls will eventually disappear.

The biomedical research enterprise is healthy today with the awarding of ARRA funding, but those funds will be spent within eighteen months and academic medical centers and universities will slip back into the world of research budgets at federal agencies that barely keep up with or fall short of the inflation rate. Academic medical centers and research intensive universities need:

- Relief from the administrative cap which is very often imposed in negotiations with non A-21 institutions which are not subject to the 26 point cap.
- Assurance of a reasonable stream of revenue reimbursement for inpatient and outpatient services under healthcare reform.
- Reasonable, sustainable growth in federally supported biomedical research programs at the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and other federal agencies.

Tom Wilson is Senior Research Administrator and Assistant Vice President at Rush University Medical Center and Co-Editor of NCURA Magazine.
Planning for the NCURA 52nd Annual Meeting

It is a privilege to journey with the program committee and Co-Chairs Diane Barrett and Craig Reynolds in planning NCURA’s 52nd Annual Meeting. We are already working to identify and select a variety of top-notch professional development opportunities in an effort to meet the diverse needs of our membership. We look forward to sharing with you this vision as the program takes shape and becomes reality.

Judy Fredenberg
University of Montana
NCURA Vice President/President-Elect and NCURA 52nd Annual Meeting Program Chair

NCURA has given me much over the last twenty-five years, but on reflection the most important thing has been a sense of community. It is the hope of Judy, Craig and I, along with the entire 52nd Annual Meeting committee, that this year’s meeting will continue to bring that strong sense of community to our membership. Please plan to join us. We’ll be waiting to welcome you.

Diane Barrett
University of Wisconsin-Madison
NCURA 52nd Annual Meeting Program Co-chair

Every year I look forward with excitement to the NCURA annual meeting—an opportunity to see old friends, meet new ones and maintain my currency in research administration. This year I am especially pleased and honored to serve with Judy Fredenberg, Diane Barrett and my program committee colleagues. We’re working hard to develop a program for you that celebrates our community and provides opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing!

Craig Reynolds
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
NCURA 52nd Annual Meeting Program Co-chair

Have you or any of your colleagues made a career move? Please contact NCURA so our entire membership can help celebrate the change!

MILESTONES

JACQUELINE DEJEAN, formerly of Tufts University, is now the Associate Vice President of Grants and Research at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

CARLO ERACLEO recently joined Partners Healthcare in Boston, MA as a Post Award Grant Administrator.

SUZANNE RIVERA, PHD, MSW, has been appointed Vice President for Research Administration at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX.
COMPLIANCE

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) has posted a link to a new free responsible conduct of research resource, a series of lab management video vignettes: http://learning.ucdavis.edu/LabAct/. Funded by ORI, the project was developed by the Laboratory Management Institute at UC-Davis. The videos provide an interactive course that focuses on the day-to-day lab management issues, including quality assurance and authorship.

ORI has recently started a blog that provides updates about ORI as well as recent events and publications regarding the responsible conduct of research: http://ori.hhs.gov/blog/index.php. The blog does allow readers to leave comments and is updated regularly.

Carol Pech is the chair of the Compliance Neighborhood Committee and serves as Assistant Director, Health Sciences Institutional Review Boards Office, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

DEPARTMENTAL

How to Fit Research Administration into an Already Busy Day

Are you a Departmental Research Administrator? Are you also the department’s budget manager, payroll clerk, purchasing assistant, party planner, and window washer? It’s likely that research administration is just one of the many tasks that you may have within your department. Conflicting priorities within the department can become real problems when matched up against proposal deadlines and the faculty’s need for information. So how do you handle it?

In my experience, time management is critical. You must be able to effectively ration your time in order to accomplish everything that you need to get done. Using project management terminology, you are a limited resource who is needed on many different tasks. Your experience is a valuable asset in estimating how much time a given task will take. From there, you can set up your schedule.

And then the inevitable happens. Professor ‘X’ comes to you with an idea for a proposal that is due tomorrow. There goes your schedule. Or does it? At our university, our Office of Sponsored Programs is a tremendous help in this area by imposing deadlines well in advance of submission dates. Last minute submissions either don’t happen or happen with limited review. Faculty in our school are very familiar with these deadlines and are almost always compliant.

Time management is also critical for your own personal health and well being. No one looks forward to long days (and evenings) performing a juggling act. For your own sake, make sure that you get enough rest, exercise, and proper nourishment. You’ll feel better and work better as a result.

Automation can be our friend. Why reinvent the wheel each and every time. Keep electronic copies of commonly needed files and use templates whenever possible. Again, your OSP may be your best friend in this area by providing budget templates and boilerplate text that can be used for different proposals. You may also be able to gather up-to-date electronic copies of faculty CV’s. Having these things on hand will make your lives easier by reducing the amount of time you’ll need to spend gathering them each time.

Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Unless you’re a one person operation, there is likely someone else in your department who may be able to give you a helping hand and may welcome the chance to learn something new. Cross training someone else also provides you with a built-in backup in case of illness or vacations. You Dean needs to be aware of your workload in order to justify an allocation of resources to help you out. You may need to keep a log of your time for a while to demonstrate the need, but it will be well worth it.

Finally, use the resources available to you on the NCURA web site, particularly the Departmental Neighborhood. Subscribe to the listserv. If you’re encountering a problem that is new to you, chances are someone else has encountered it before. Post a question. You’ll be surprised at how much good advice you’ll get. Also, check out the library. There are resources that you may find useful and links to other sites that will help you in your work.

Stephen C. Block is a member of the Departmental Research Administration Committee and serves as Assistant Dean for Administration, School of Information Studies, Syracuse University.

eRA

As we begin a new year, the field of electronic research administration continues to change and grow.

Grants.gov Submissions Growing: In federal fiscal year 2009 ending September 30, Grants.gov reports that it “processed 309,771 applications... a 53% increase over the 202,133 applications processed in FY 2008.” The Recovery Act (ARRA) had a bit to do with that. Grants.gov says “there were 64,409 applications processed for Recovery Act specific opportunities... This represents 21% of the total applications processed in FY 2009.”

NSF Reinstates Option to use Grants.gov: The National Science Foundation is now allowing the use of Grants.gov for preparing and submitting proposals in addition to its own FastLane system. NSF stopped allowing Grants.gov submissions the past few months due to the instability of the software, however, those concerns appear to have been alleviated. All new funding opportunities issued on or after December 1 will reflect these two options.
Virtual Communities of Professional Interest

www.ncura.edu/members/Neighborhoods

Adobe Reader Compatibility: Grants.gov has tested, and deemed compatible with its system, the following versions of Adobe Reader: 8.1.1, 8.1.2, 8.1.3, 8.1.4, 8.1.5, 8.1.6, 8.1.7*, 9.0, 9.1, 9.1.1, 9.1.2, 9.2. All are Vista compatible. *Mac users are asked NOT to use version 8.1.7 due to some compatibility issues. A table showing compatibility can be seen at http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811.

Terri Hall is the chair of the eRA Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director, Electronic Research Administration/Associate Director, Pre-Award Administration, Office of Research, University of Notre Dame.

FRA

We all need to be current on the updates that have been provided by the two largest audit agencies. Below find links to the FY 2010 audit work plans from both HHS OIG and NSF. In addition, we have linked the A-133 Compliance Supplement issued 6/2009 for ARRA considerations in your A-133 audits.

HHS OIG Work Plan
Appendix A: Recovery Act Work Plan

NSF OIG Work Plan
ARRA - Page 5

A133 Compliance Supplement (ARRA)
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/a133_compliance/arra_addendum_1.pdf

Brian Sevier is a member of the Financial Research Administration Neighborhood Committee and serves as Assistant Director, Contracts & Grants at IPAS, University of Florida.

PUI

Getting Heard as a PUI Research Administrator

Research Administrators at predominantly undergraduate institutions (PUIs) have a lot to crow about. We know that PUIs produce a disproportionate share of future Ph.D.s. We know that most research scientists view their undergraduate experience as pivotal in their careers. And as a category, we get hundreds of millions of dollars for research and sponsored projects. Not bad for a class of institution devoted to education rather than research.

But perhaps that way of looking at it is just the problem. PUIs aren’t devoted to education rather than research. By and large, we are devoted to both. And getting that message out to our sponsors and government officials is more important than ever.

So what can a PUI research administrator do to let our elected representatives know about the important work we are doing?

Here are some suggestions.

Hone your message.

Each one of our institutions has a unique mission and each has its own way of manifesting that mission with regard to research and sponsored programs. How does your faculty and your student body get involved in research and sponsored projects? Why is that important to the people in your neighborhood (aka, your electoral district)? When you have your elevator speech on that topic, you are ready to go public.

Spread your message.

Start with your government relations office. Keep them regularly informed about federal and state grants that are awarded to your university. Let them know of any hot-button issues that directly affect your university’s ability to get funding. Provide them with information that will help them inform government representatives about the needs of your PUI college.

Some of our peer schools may not have a designated government relations officer; government relations may be the responsibility of the public relations office. In that case, work with them to determine how you can best position your school to deliver your message to your elected representatives.

Listen to what others are saying.

And keep the two-way street open.

Our government relations office has kept us well informed about the status of the debate over education reform in the state of California, for example, and helped our School of Education develop their response to the situation.

Network.

There are many good resources for networking with sponsors and government officials. NCURA’s national meeting always includes representatives from government agencies. But there are other organizations as well. The Council on Undergraduate Research, research “provides information on the importance of undergraduate research to state legislatures... government agencies, and the U.S. Congress.”

We’d love to hear your ideas about how predominantly undergraduate institutions can get their voice heard. Please drop the PUI neighborhood a line at first by joining at info@ncura.edu and signing up for the PUI neighborhood listserv. You’ll get a confirmation and are on your way to a world of information, experience and the possibility of helping a peer!

Joseph McNicholas is a member of the PUI Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director of Pre-Award Services and Associate Director, Office for Research and Sponsored Projects, Loyola Marymount University.
Is Your Glass Half-full or Half-empty?
Creating a Framework of Optimism

by Ann Smith and Maria E. Valero-Martinez

It seems quite easy to encounter stressful changes and events these days. Whether facing challenges with ARRA reporting, bleak economic news, compliance audits, lay-offs or other disappointing circumstances, do you permit your mindset to hold that the “glass is half empty” or are you a person who could be called an eternal optimist? An optimist is widely thought of as someone who sees the positive aspect in every cloud and views the world through rose-tinted spectacles (or a glass that is always half full). Great leaders believe that treating every day with the “glass is half full” attitude is one of the keys to successfully dealing with stress and living a more satisfying and healthy life.

Individuals have different styles for how they define a positive or negative event. An individual’s optimism is measured by one’s “explanatory style” or how one chooses to view a positive event. An event can be categorized as internal or external, stable or unstable, isolated or global. Characterization of an event as internal or external means the event is a result of something an individual did (internal) or something out of their control (external). Stable or unstable refers to whether the positive event will re-occur (stable). Global events are viewed as having an effect on other areas of an individual’s life, whereas isolated events are viewed to have little or no impact on the future.

An optimist will often define a positive event by: (a) something they did (internal), (b) a sign of more good things in the future (stable), and (c) evidence that other areas of their life will be positively affected (global). Negative events are viewed as: (a) not their fault; and (b) an isolated occurrence that will not affect future events or areas of their life. For example, an optimist who is promoted is likely to believe the promotion is because she/he is good at her/his job and will receive more benefits and promotion in the future. If she or he is passed over for the promotion, it will likely be attributed to having an off-month or exterminating circumstances, but that she or he will do better in the future.

Pessimists tend to think the same way about negative events. They typically believe that they are responsible for negative events (internal) and that one negative event will trigger more in the future (global), because they personally are the cause. They typically see positive events as an isolated incident (local) caused by things outside their control (external) and that probably will not happen again (unstable). Not only will pessimists view a promotion as a lucky event that is unlikely to happen again, they may even worry that they will now be under more scrutiny. Being passed over for promotion would probably be explained as not being skilled enough. The pessimist would, therefore, expect to be passed over again for future promotions.

Researchers like Martin Seligman, Director of the University of Pennsylvania’s Positive Psychology Center, have been studying optimists and pessimists for years, including the effects of optimism on a person’s general level of happiness. They have found that an optimistic worldview carries certain advantages. Optimists typically see hardships as “learning experiences” and often, even the worst day holds the promise that “tomorrow will probably be better.” Optimists often see the brighter side of things and believe that they experience more positive than negative events and that the good events will enhance everything they do.

Optimists also tend to experience less stress than pessimists do. Because optimists believe in themselves and their abilities, they expect good things to happen. Negative events are seen as minor setbacks that can be easily overcome. They do not feel overwhelmed when things do not go as planned. In fact, optimists believe that things happen for the best and another opportunity will present itself because they are in control of the future. Positive events are seen by optimist as further evidence of good things to come. Because optimists believe in themselves, they are more likely to take risks and therefore create more positive events in their lives. In a longitudinal study of ninety-nine Harvard University students, those who were optimists at age 25 were significantly healthier at ages 45 and 60 than those who were pessimists. Other studies have linked a pessimistic explanatory style with higher rates of infectious disease, poor health, and earlier mortality. Highly pessimistic individuals have a higher risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease and other ailments. Do these studies prove that having a positive attitude can add years to your life? Maybe not, but having an optimistic outlook on life may bring with it less stress, increased self-esteem and greater health benefits.

Optimism also undoubtedly has a remarkable effect on helping teams to stay healthy, efficient and productive. Seligman also analyzed the explanatory styles of sports teams and found that optimistic teams performed better than the pessimistic ones. Optimistic teams also had better synergy. Optimism can be contagious and can have a positive effect on office staff during difficult times. Office morale can improve and individuals can have a better outlook about themselves and their institutions.

With an optimistic attitude, teams can accomplish tasks that might otherwise seem insurmountable to their pessimistic counterparts. Increases in overall performance and productivity may also be seen when the staff have optimistic attitudes. Optimists do not give up under challenging situations and they are more likely to achieve success because of their persistence.

As leaders, it is important to lead with optimism and a positive attitude. Our attitude and actions affect, in one way or another, the people around us. This happens not only verbally, but also instinctively and on a subconscious level, through thoughts and body language. Negative thoughts, words and attitude bring up negative and unhappy moods and responses from others.
By choosing to be an optimist, we have the ability to positively affect our staff and, in turn, inspire them and help them to make positive impacts in their work and lives.

Consider whether you are a leader who leads with optimism. If you are interested knowing where you are on the scale of optimism, take the Optimism Test developed by Seligman at http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter.aspx. If you are not satisfied with the result, there are steps you can take to re-direct yourself to more positive attitudes, positive thinking and action. One approach is to re-frame events by identifying negative thought patterns and replacing them with more helpful or adaptive thoughts. It does take effort, but remember that negative thinking can be changed. Start by banishing negative remarks from your conversations. When you catch yourself thinking a pessimistic thought about an event in your life, first evaluate the evidence. What are the facts not the fears? Next, think about alternate explanations and outcomes. Practice this and you might find that you simply feel better with this new positive attitude. Additional avenues for increasing your optimism include reading good self-help books, injecting humor into your responses and interactions with others, and maintaining balance. Other specific practices could include observing those instances in which you discount the positive, neglect your well-being, play the role of victim, or over-generalize one negative situation. An optimistic attitude will help you deal with prevailing circumstances with fortitude and patience. It is never too late to change, and that change may bring with it better health and a happier life.

Ann Marie Smith is the Clinical Research Operations Administrative Manager for the Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) at Michigan State University. Maria E. Valero-Martinez is Manager of the Office of Research Education and Training at the University of Miami.

We cannot choose how many years we will live, but we can choose how much life those years will have. We cannot control the beauty of our face, but we can control the expression on it. We cannot control life’s difficult moments but we can choose to make life less difficult. We cannot control the negative atmosphere of the world, but we can control the atmosphere of our minds. Too often we try to choose and control things we cannot. Too seldom we choose to control what we can … our attitude.

— John Maxwell (“Developing the Leader Within You”)

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND PRESIDENT OF THE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Western Kentucky University seeks an accomplished, forward thinking and entrepreneurial leader to serve as the Vice President for Research and President of the Research Foundation. This position reports directly to the President of the University. This position will lead the growth and ensure the robustness of the burgeoning WKU research community. The position duties are primarily focused on supporting faculty research, and creative activities and the economic development mission of the university.

For more detailed information please visit our website: vpresearch.search@wku.edu

All qualified individuals are encouraged to apply including women, minorities, persons with disabilities and disabled veterans.

Western Kentucky University is an Affirmative action/Equal Opportunities Employer.
Throughout my career, I’ve worked with international agreements from different perspectives. I’ve been a departmental administrator, a federal extramural projects specialist, and a contracting officer in a central administrator’s role. While my roles have been different, here are some of the lessons I’ve learned:

**BUDGETING CAN BE TRICKY**
We may have to deal in foreign currency, so make sure you have your allowable/appropriate costs included and calculated for US dollars. There may be less “cushion” with changing exchange rates. Also be aware that there may be costs you should include, but do not normally see, in our everyday projects. Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad projects are a perfect example of where I first saw those unusual budget items called “informant’s fees.” This budget item was used to describe translators, local guides, and sometimes gifts for those individuals the student might be meeting. Once I understood what that “gift” was, a very common way of saying “thank you for your time,” I didn’t see it much different from a McDonald’s gift card we might give to a human subject participant.

**NEGOTIATING CAN BE TRICKY**
Negotiating any agreement can be challenging. Regardless of the sponsor, we have to make sure we follow our institutional policies and procedures; for public universities, state law may play a bigger part. In Oregon, our state law prevents us from accepting certain clauses such as binding arbitration (it creates contingent debt). We always check to make sure the entity/entity’s country of origin is not “on the bad side” of any Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) lists. I dare say governing law is always interesting for all of us, but I think of time zones as my biggest challenge. When negotiating an agreement with someone in Vienna (Austria), I was coming into work at 5:30 in the morning so that I could reach them at the end of their work day. While e-mail is a great tool, I’ve found—just like with many industry agreements—a telephone call can sometimes be the best negotiating tool.

**AWARD MANAGEMENT CAN BE TRICKY**
As mentioned earlier, we may have to report and bill our costs in foreign currency. Exchange rates vary daily, so make sure you always check them. But just like any award, I know that if we have (1) budgeted correctly and proposed a clear description of work to be performed, and (2) negotiated a good agreement (including payment terms), then award management goes much more smoothly, I would much rather get everything in the best possible shape before award set-up.

There are other aspects of award negotiation and management that can be confusing in our global economy. Just what is an international agreement in our world today? Is it an agreement with an organization located overseas, or is it more than that?

As a good example, we’re currently negotiating an agreement with a U.S.-based oil company that has global operations. While it’s very exciting to work with a global enterprise, it brings up a whole new set of questions. While our primary contact is located in the U.S., the branch providing the funding is not. The agreement is asking us to follow governing law in a foreign country because the particular branch is not in the U.S. Even though it’s a U.S.-based company, following the laws of another country makes it tricky. The logistics of negotiating is a challenge as well. Again, our contact is in the U.S., but permissions need to come from the legal counsel in the office that has a 14-hour time zone difference. Luckily, our time zone difference with our foreign counterpart is a mere fraction of that difference.

This project gets even more interesting because the project involves migrating whales. While our work this year will keep us within U.S. waters for the most part, we may have to go into Canadian waters. Just to be sure, we will get all of the proper permits; if our Principal Investigator has to continue his work during the winter months, he will also likely need permits from Mexico. Next year, our Principal Investigator may be heading west. Then I suppose we’re working in international waters.

What about a project funded by a U.S. organization, but the work takes place overseas? I have very fond memories of an award supporting an archeological dig in Italy from my days at the University of Virginia. It was fascinating, and our regulatory world was a lot simpler then; however, there were still many hurdles to face—travel advances, travel vouchers, bringing home soil samples. A lot of permissions were asked for and received in order to perform this project. Good planning was critical.

We currently have a very large project from the U.S. Agency for International Development. Our Principal Investigator leads a multi-million dollar, multi-institution effort to help improve aquaculture in developing countries. This project requires a lot of local assistance and we even write subawards to international governments. While it sounds a little scary, I think the project has gone very well. We have been able to successfully negotiate these subawards, and successfully manage the awards. Again, good planning was critical.

As a federal extramural projects specialist at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I only dealt with a few international agreements. However, these agreements required additional approvals, some even going to the U.S. Department of State. Once again, good planning and good documentation was very important to obtaining the necessary approvals to get those awards made. My philosophy has always been to put a proposal, a funding package, or an agreement with the clearest information, the best justifications/documentation possible. It takes the focus to the right place—the science—and makes approval/acceptance so much simpler.

After thinking about these issues—budgeting, negotiating, awarding and managing—I believe that international agreements are more similar to domestic agreements than we commonly think. Keeping this in mind helps make international agreements a bit less intimidating.

Pat Hawk is Director of Sponsored Programs at Oregon State University, and chair of NCURA’s Professional Development Committee.
Several years have gone by since the implementation of Grants.gov. Electronic grant submission has forever changed the process for all involved. For better or worse, central administration is now responsible for submitting proposals. As a result, universities have instituted policies that require principal investigators to submit proposals anywhere from five to ten days prior to their agency due date. Many universities, including ours, require that the entire proposal, including the science, be submitted to central administration. Much debate is going on regarding the merits of this process. As a result, some institutions have implemented system-to-system submissions. This process is currently undergoing review at our university. Meanwhile, I have been piloting a program where I am delegated as a signing official. So, what exactly does that mean for me in the department? Well it means, I am back to the good old days.

Prior to Grants.gov, department were responsible for preparing, editing, and reviewing the entire proposal. The department would be working up to the last minute printing, collating, and mailing the copies. This often included nothing short of Olympian feats of running to the nearest Federal Express office to ensure an on-time submission. Do I really miss those days? . . . I do not think so!

So, having come full circle, I am back to preparing the proposal and ensuring its completeness. By taking the entire process back to the department level, that extra time that was needed at the central level is eliminated; and it gives PI those few precious days to continue to fine-tune the science portion of the proposal.

With that being said, it means more stress for me. Even with departmental polices' giving PI's deadlines, there is always that occasional last-minute submission. Although I personally championed this cause, it has inherent challenges.

Getting familiar with the process from the signing official's prospective has been the most challenging. Even if you have witnessed someone else submit a proposal, the pressure of doing it yourself for the first time is immense.

Also, there are little caveats when submitting a change/corrected application. Like waiting until you are absolutely ready to hit save and submit before rejecting the application. Rejecting the application alone causes the confusion. After about three calls/emails from the PI, I learned right away to go into great specificity about the rejection process. Even doing that, I still get calls and just have to tell them this is the email I told you to expect.

Another issue that I have encountered is getting a corrupted R&R Subaward Attachment. The subaward attachment was no longer a form, but literally a PDF printout of the extraction. The most stressful experience was receiving the final two documents, from the PI, at 4:57 p.m. It is difficult to guarantee an on-time submission in that case.

So, how did I get into the “driver’s seat”? Well, partly, just being in the right place at the right time. I had experienced a glitch in a Grants.gov submission. This initiated a meeting with the Director of SRS to discuss the situation.

I cannot stress to you enough the importance of having and maintaining a good relationship with your central administration office. Being a good leader in the field is not just leading those around you, but also having the ability to impact change upward as well. Building trust will only enhance your ability

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As we wind down the final days of 2009, Region I will close out the year with a sold out RADG (Research Administrator Discussion Group) meeting featuring Marcia Hahn, Director, NIH Division of Grants Policy, OPERA (Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration). We are looking forward to an exciting program. This is a very special session, as members of Region I were given the opportunity to send their questions in advance, and these questions will be addressed during the presentation. We are also looking forward to a great chance to network at our annual holiday reception immediately following the meeting.

The ballot for Region I members to vote to accept proposed changes in the Region I Bylaws went out Tuesday, December 15; the vote will be open for 30 days, closing January 14, 2010. The proposed changes include the addition of the position of Treasurer Elect, which will create a smoother transition from the current Treasurer to the incoming Treasurer; increase opportunities for volunteerism within the Region, and change the governance structure to conform more closely to other regions. In addition to the vote to add the position of Treasurer Elect, there are some other minor changes to move some procedural information from the Bylaws to the Administrative Policies, to reflect the actual practices of the region and to align Region I’s Bylaws with the National Bylaws. These proposed changes do not reflect any substantial changes to the current practices of the Region. Please vote, and encourage all of your colleagues to vote. These changes are important to improve and streamline Regional operations for our volunteers.

The new Advisory Committee for 2010 has been selected and new committee chairs have been appointed. The 2010 Advisory Committee will consist of elected officials: Sara Clabby, Secretary, Northeastern University; Franc Lemire, Immediate Past Chair, WPI; Bethanne Giehl, Chair-Elect, UMASS Medical School; Kevin Broderick, Treasurer, Dana Farber Cancer Institute; Tom Egan, Region I member to the NCURA Board of Directors, MIT; Susan Zipkin, Chair, Brigham and Women’s Hospital. The at-large members will be Vivian Holmes, Broad Institute; Tammy Raccio, Yale University; Pat Fitzgerald, Harvard University; Ben Prince, Meyers Institute; and, John Harris, Northeastern University. The 2010 Committee chairs will also serve on the 2010 Advisory Committee and are: Gary Smith, Mass General Hospital, Nominating Committee Chair; Joyce Ferland, Brown University, Awards Committee Chair; Karen Woodward Massey, Curriculum Committee Chair; Kris Monahan, Wellesley College, Volunteer and Membership Committee Chair; Denise Rouleau, New England School of Acupuncture Website Committee Chair; Stacy Riseman, Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, Site Committee Chair and Estelle Lang is our Region I webmaster.

The Website committee is looking for new members, no website experience is necessary. Please contact Denise Rouleau if you are interested.

We are also still looking for a Sponsorship Committee Chair. Please see the description on the Region I website; and, if anyone is interested in this position, please contact Susan Zipkin.

The Program Committee, led by Chair Elect Bethanne Giehl, is gearing up for the Spring Meeting which will be held April 25-28, 2010 at the Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel and Conference Center. This year’s committee is built on the mentorship theme, with the aim of bringing our budding new members and more senior members together to combine the strengths of experience and fresh ideas. We are very excited about this meeting and look forward to sharing more about the program in the next issue.

We would also like to thank everyone who volunteered in 2009, it has been a great year. We appreciate all of your hard work and hope to continue to work with you in the future. Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday and New Year!

Susan Zipkin is the Chair of Region I and serves as Director of Finance, Radiology Research, Brigham & Women’s Hospital.
step aside, Alex never hesitated and said “absolutely not, I will take care of everything until you return.” And she did. While I remained involved and participated in regional business via email, I want to thank you, Alex, for your support.

The 2010 Regional Program Committee, chaired by Jared Littman and Cheryl Williams (Co-Chair) at the helm (sorry…you will also have to endure my jargon this year), is well into the planning and program selection phase. Regional Chair-Elect Martin Williams and I were overwhelmed by the number of volunteer requests we received for the Committee. With the number of volunteers and requests for sessions, this year’s spring meeting will be another wonderful opportunity for education and networking. This year’s theme, “Reinvestment: Sowing the Seeds of Research Administration” demonstrates that all research administrators continually educate themselves no matter how long we have been working in this rewarding area of the education sector. So please make plans to join us in Princeton, NJ April 25 – 27, 2010.

As stated above, we are truly fortunate to have a region with so many members willing to volunteer their time. In my short time as your Chair-Elect, I have struggled to find a way to track, reach out, and even acknowledge all the folks who so graciously offer and/or commit their time to the region. If there is one initiative I will complete during my tenure, it is the development of a tool which will capture our volunteer history that we can pass from administration to administration each year. This will be an undertaking; however with the right group of volunteers, it can be done. There will be more to follow on this subject, but in the mean time, please head to our website (http://ncuraregioniii.org/) and complete our newly established volunteer request form.

Hopefully by now, everyone in our region has voted for the sites of the 2011 and 2012 regional meetings. During the national meeting, we narrowed down the sites for our future meetings to Buffalo, NY; New York City, NY; Gettysburg, PA; and Wilmington, DE. After we tally the votes in January, the two locations that receive the most votes will be the locations for the two upcoming spring meetings. This will allow us enough time to negotiate the best price for both sites. Moving forward, we will complete the same process for the site two years in the future. This will ensure we always have two locations under contract and folks can plan accordingly.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for this outstanding opportunity to serve you and I can’t wait to meet everyone at this year’s regional meeting.

Joseph Sullivan is the Chair of Region II and currently serves as Manager of Pre-Award Systems and Administration, Carnegie Mellon University.

REGION III

Southeast

Can you believe it’s already 2010? Where did 2009 go? It was a busy year with stimulus funding and new federal guidelines, a new president for our country and lots of changes in leadership and endowments on our campuses. We’ve also weathered an economic crisis, in which many of us saw our departmental budgets shrink and some valuable research administrator positions go unfilled while others were furloughed or lost their jobs.

Being a member of the NCURA community is more important than ever. We do more than lean on each other and have a good time; we share our knowledge and experience that, when pooled together, can help us all to be successful.

REGION IV

Mid-America

Spring Fever!

Springtime for Region IV means gearing up for our annual meeting. This year, Region IV is heading to Omaha, Nebraska from April 25-28, 2010. The theme is “Recovery Through Discovery.”

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For more information, visit www.ncuraregioniv.com

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Regional Corner continued

Our NCURA friends and the city of Omaha are sure to make this meeting a wonderful opportunity for professional development and networking with colleagues.

The conference hotel is the Embassy Suites - Downtown/Old Market, ideally located in the heart of Omaha’s historic Old Market district, near the Holland Performing Arts Center, Orpheum Theatre, and Qwest Center. Several businesses call the area home, as do Grace University, Creighton University, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Surrounded by unique shopping and entertainment choices, the hotel is sure to offer Region IV’s guests a great stay.

This year’s Program Committee is chaired by Christa Johnson, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Mary Laura Farnham, University of Nebraska, Omaha; and Craig Reynolds, University of Michigan, are serving as co-chairs. They, along with the program committee, are working hard at organizing an outstanding meeting.

Professionals responsible for pre-award, post-award, research compliance, biomedical research, ERA and more will find what they need in a host of half-day workshops, concurrent sessions, and discussion groups.

We will welcome keynote speaker Thomas E. Gouttierre, Dean of International Studies and Programs at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), and Director of the Center for Afghanistan Studies at UNO.

For more conference information and updates visit the Region IV website at http://www.ncuraregioniv.com/

Nominations
We will be presenting regional recognition awards in April at the Spring meeting. Please recommend a deserving colleague for the following:

• Distinguished Service Award
• Kevin Reed Outstanding Professional Award
• The Spring Travel Award
• The Special Merit & Distinction Award
• Meritorious Contributions

Elections
Region IV is also looking for leaders. Please consider serving your colleagues as a member of the Board of Directors. Please review the following positions to see which may be the best match for your talents and experience. More detailed descriptions of each leadership position can be found in the Regional Administrative Procedures (in the governance link) and a list of Nominating Committee Members appears on our website.

Nominations are open for the following leadership positions:

• Chair Elect
• Secretary
• Treasurer Elect
• Regional Board Members (2)

In addition, there are a variety of opportunities in the region. If you are interested, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Mindy Weaver from the University of Cincinnati, at weavermm@ucmail.uc.edu for more information.

Your participation in any capacity will not only enhance your professional development, but it will build and nurture the camaraderie of our vibrant group of colleagues available for advice and support. After all, Spring is in the air for Region IV. We hope to see you in Omaha!

Jaynee Tolle is Chair of Region IV and is a Senior Grant Administrator at the University of Cincinnati. Natalie Goodwin-Frank is Chair of the Region IV Communications Committee and is the Manager of the Photosynthetic Antenna Research Center (PARC) at Washington University.

REGION V
Southwestern
www.ncuraregionv.com

The New Year is here and it brings along with it a changing of the Board. We thank our outgoing Secretary Linda Golden who has served in the position for the past 2½ years. We greatly appreciate all the hospitality she has provided for us. We would also like to thank Matt Berry for his service on the National Board of Directors and our Regional Ad Hoc Board members Brett Henry and Ty Lane whose terms are also expiring. We welcome our new Secretary, JoAnne Palmer, Texas State University—San Marcos; and, incoming Ad Hoc Board Members, Trisha Allen, Sam Houston State University and Cheryl Anderson, UT Southwestern Medical Center – Dallas. Also on January 1, Debbie Newton, University of Tulsa, will begin her service as the Region V Member of the National Board of Directors; Kay Ellis, UT Austin, will begin representing the Region on the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee; and, Reggie Grim, UT Austin takes over as our Volunteer Coordinator.

This year’s elections will be coming up soon. Nomination Committee Chair, Hollie Schreiber, OSU, along with her committee members Gary Carter, Baylor and Trish Allen, SHSU will be sending out a call for a new Chair Elect, Treasurer, and two new Ad Hoc Board Members. You may nominate another member or self nominate for these positions. I hope you consider serving in these positions, as it is a great way to get connected and meet others in the Region and at the National level.

The Awards Committee Chaired by Kay Ellis will also soon be putting out a call for the Distinguished Service Award and Quinton S. Matthews Travel Awards to the Regional Spring Meeting. The travel awards are available to two individuals in the amount of $750 to offset the cost of attending the Spring Meeting.

Marianne Woods and her program committee are well underway with the planning of the Spring Regional Conference. This year’s conference “Riding the Wave: Research Administration and Economic Recovery” will be held at The Sheraton Beach Hotel, South Padre Island, TX on April 25-28, 2010. Be sure and watch the Regional Website at www.ncuraregionv.com for registration and program information.

Gail Davis is the Chair of Region V and serves as Director Contract and Grants and Proposal Administrator at Lamar University.
One of my favorite activities during the winter months is to dream about spring. This year I’m wondering what it will be like in Newport Beach, California during the third week of April. That’s when Regions VI and VII convene their joint Spring Meeting—April 18th to 21st. This thread of thought reminds me to make sure I’ve registered for the meeting at the Region VI website, http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura, and made my hotel reservations at the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa using the link on the Region VI website. I’m also reminded to volunteer to help with registration, evaluations, assembling packets, or a number of other activities on the volunteer website: http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/regional_meetings.aspx. And should I fly or take a road trip? But I digress—I hope you are able to join your Region VI and VII colleagues at this year’s spring meeting in Newport Beach, California. The workshops and concurrent sessions promise to be informative, engaging, and thought-provoking. And the networking opportunities and camaraderie will be outstanding.

As was announced at the annual meeting in October, it’s a pleasure to introduce the new officers-elect whose elect terms began January 1, 2010 and whose terms will begin January 1, 2011. Chair-Elect is Jeri Muniz, University of Southern California; Treasurer-Elect is Mich Pane, Stanford University; and Secretary Elect is Joseph McNicholas, Loyola Marymount University. Leisa Rodriguez, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, was elected to the Regional Advisory Council. Please join me in welcoming Jeri, Mich, Joseph, and Leisa and thanking them for their willingness to serve our region by leading. Welcome!

As this is my last Regional Corner article, I want to thank the 2009 officers, Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) members, and standing committees for their hard work and terrific ideas.

- The 2009 officers were Treasurer Sue Abeles, University of California, Los Angeles; Secretary Ann Hannigan, Stanford University; Chair-Elect Sinh Simmons, University of Washington; Treasurer-Elect Csilla Csaplar, Stanford University; and Secretary-Elect Maggie Grascavage, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.
- In addition to the officers, RAC members included Past Chair Bruce Morgan, University of California, Irvine; Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute; Nancy Lewis, University of California, Santa Barbara; Kimberly Small, Washington State University; and Kim Calvary, Oregon State University.
- Ann Pollack, University of California, Los Angeles, chaired the Awards Committee. Assisting on the committee were Dan Nordquist, Washington State University; Csilla Csaplar, Stanford University; Kevin Stewart, University of California, Santa Barbara; and Vincent Oragwam, California State University, Bakersfield.
- Joseph McNicholas, Loyola Marymount University, chaired the Membership and Volunteer Committee. He was assisted by Wanda Bowen, University of Alaska, Anchorage; Mali Stuart, University of Washington; Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute; and Gale Yamada, University of Hawaii.
- Ted Mordhorst, University of Washington, chaired the Nominating Committee and was assisted by Katherine Ho, Stanford University, and Richard Seligman, California Institute of Technology.

- Linda Patton, California State University, Fullerton, chaired the Education and Professional Development Committee and was assisted by Dawn Boatman, Portland State University; Debbie Ann Caulfield, University of California, San Francisco; Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute; Cecelia Manoochehri, California Institute of Technology; Joyce Nims, University of Oregon; Homey Seligman, California Institute of Technology.

Great colleagues like these who volunteer their time and expertise to lead our region contribute greatly to the overall profession of research administration. Friends, your efforts and willingness to serve the Region VI membership are appreciated. It has been a privilege to serve as your chair this past year; See you in Newport Beach in April!

Julie Guggino is Immediate Past Chair of Region VI and serves as Associate Director of Research at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington.
How to Work with Internal Audit:
Leveraging Internal Audit for Success

by Raina Rose Tagle, Kimberly Ginn, and Ashley Deihr

Beyond “Gotcha:” The Role of Internal Audit in Today’s University

Who doesn’t have a horror story about interacting with auditors? Tales abound of auditors who showed up unannounced and demand to have hundreds of pages of documentation photocopied, questioned legitimate expenses due to lack of knowledge, or re-filed the department’s documentation in the wrong order. Internal auditors are sometimes perceived as the “bad guys” or “watchdogs,” leading many university personnel to be uncomfortable with or wary of working with internal audit.

But there is good news! A paradigm shift has been occurring over the past few years in how internal audit professionals operate. In fact, if you play your cards right, modern internal audit departments can be pleasant to work with, and even helpful. If you haven’t already, sometime in your career you will almost certainly interact with internal auditors, so why not make the best of it?

This article is the first in a three-part series that examines best practices in working with internal audit, including hints for making the experience go more smoothly (and hopefully, for staying out of trouble!). This first article provides background on the profession, contrasts the goals of traditional and more modern internal audit functions, and reviews types of internal audit projects and how these projects can actually be helpful. In the second article, we will describe the nuts and bolts of the internal audit process and provide terminology for “talking the talk” when interacting with internal auditors. The third article will provide specific ideas for leveraging internal audit to help your department, whether your institution’s internal audit model is traditional or more modern. Look for the second and third articles in upcoming issues of NCURA Magazine.

Traditional versus Modern Approaches to Internal Audit

In recent years, “modern” internal auditors have expanded their focus beyond just having “findings” in the form of inappropriate expenses or inaccurately recorded costs to proactively assisting organizations with enhancing internal controls, increasing efficiencies, and optimizing processes. These internal auditors collaborate with auditees to understand how things happen today, what could go wrong, and what needs to change to strengthen internal controls, keeping in mind the goals of the department and the need to be as efficient as possible with limited resources. These auditors will summarize “observations” regarding risks to the auditees, make “recommendations” for enhanced internal controls or efficiency measures that could mitigate the risks, and assist departments in making necessary changes. “Modern” internal audit departments are designed to help, and we aim to give you the tools you need to leverage their skills to the benefit of your department and institution.

With all of this said, we understand that “modern” might not exactly describe the internal auditors you have encountered, and, in comparison, your internal auditors may seem stuck in the Stone Age. But hope is not lost! These articles will give you tips to deal with other types of auditors, too. You may even get some ideas to help your internal audit function come into the new era of auditing!
Internal Audit Engagements

It is important to remember that internal auditors do more than just financial audits (although this is still an important part of their job in order to protect the assets of your organization). Internal auditors perform several other types of engagements, as well. It is sometimes possible for a department to request an audit. Understanding the various types of audit activities may help you to get the most out of the experience:

- **Compliance Audits**: Reviewing a department or process to assess compliance with relevant internal policies and procedures, as well as external regulations. For example, internal auditors might review the institution’s cost-sharing policy for compliance with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21 and National Institutes of Health and other sponsor requirements.

- **Operational Audits**: Reviewing a department or process to identify ways to make it work better or to use fewer resources. For example, internal auditors might review the operations of the procurement department to validate that the best choices are being made to save the university money, while still making purchases in a timely manner.

- **Risk Assessments**: Looking at everything that could go wrong in an institution (including the possibility of missed opportunities), and determining what the biggest risks are. Internal audit generally performs an entity-wide risk assessment on an annual basis to provide the foundation for its annual audit plan; however, it may also perform a risk assessment for a school or department. For example, prior to performing a financial audit at the medical school, internal auditors might perform a risk assessment in order to determine what departments are more likely to have something go wrong, and then focus audit efforts on those departments.

- **Fraud Investigations**: Examining allegations of fraud and performing a variety of audit procedures, including detailed testing, interviews, and analytical assessments, to determine whether fraud has occurred, how it occurred, and what amount of money and other assets were involved. For example, internal auditors at many institutions are responsible for investigating allegations made via the university’s anonymous hotline.

Positive Impacts of Internal Audit Engagements

Each of these types of engagements can have positive impacts, both for the university as a whole and for the department being reviewed. At an institution-wide level, internal audit can provide a comprehensive and concise view of risk throughout the organization, help management and administrators to balance competing priorities with limited resources, and provide practical advice for streamlining processes and strengthening internal controls.

At a departmental level, your internal auditors can also provide valuable assistance by:

- Helping to identify fraud, waste, or abuse in your group that could be jeopardizing your mission or wasting resources. If one of your researchers were stealing valuable equipment, you'd want to know, right?

- Reviewing your processes and internal controls, and sharing relevant recommendations to improve efficiency and compliance in your department. You may be pleasantly surprised to find that, rather than adding additional bureaucratic levels, an audit could actually include recommending the removal of unnecessary controls!

- Having a strong voice that gets management's attention, support, and funding for changes such as additional resources, enhanced processes or better systems via internal audit’s usually direct reporting relationship to senior management and the audit committee of the board of trustees. For example, your internal auditors might recommend that your department cannot function effectively without an additional administrative FTE. Wouldn’t it be nice to get some additional help?

We hope that you will start to put some of this knowledge into practice – not only to survive the audit process but also to add value to your organization.

Raina Rose Tagle is a Partner at Baker Tilly Beers & Cutler. Kimberly Ginn is a Senior Manager at Baker Tilly Beers & Cutler. Ashley Dehr is a Manager at Baker Tilly Beers & Cutler.
Introduction

Increasing university-industry (U/I) collaboration in a knowledge-based international economy is an economic and social imperative.

This paper discusses the creation of a “Culture of Yes!” by looking at the principles of contracting and discussing several case studies. This discussion is also framed by current economic conditions and the present state of research in American higher education. Lastly, some points are made about the social imperative and the broader picture.

University-Industry Partnerships in General

Much has been written elsewhere about the state of U/I partnerships in the United States; suffice it to say, the state of these partnerships is probably best characterized as stable but certain challenging issues remain, such as intellectual property (“IP”). At the National Academies in Washington, D.C., both the University-Industry Partnership Project (2003-2006) and the University-Industry Demonstration Partnership (“UIDP,” 2006-Present) have made harmonizing and increasing U/I partnerships a priority.

For the purposes of this paper, it is important to note two available publications that were deliverables of the University-Industry Partnership Project: Guiding Principles for University-Industry Endeavors (“Guiding Principles”) and Living Studies in University-Industry Negotiations (“Living Studies”). The former outlines basic guiding principles for long-lasting, effective partnerships; the latter provides living (case) studies of successful and not-so-successful partnerships. One can learn as much from problematic relationships as from the successful ones.

These publications are available for downloading at the National Academies web site: www.nationalacademies.org/pga/guirr.

Case Studies

While the reader is encouraged to peruse the Living Studies publication, two particular case studies from that publication are worth mentioning here:

1. **Federal programs encouraging multilateral partnerships.** The Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) program at the National Science Foundation (NSF) is an excellent example by virtue of its strong suggestion and/or requirement that universities partner with companies, governmental bodies, non-profit organizations, and school districts, etc. in order to create the mechanisms that will lead to an increase in knowledge and societal wealth. The author was part of a team that wrote a #1-ranked PFI proposal in 2003 and served as a member of the IP management team on the subsequent grant. Later he served as a PFI panel reviewer. The author saw firsthand how important it was to break down the walls that separate academia from other important institutions in society. This need for harmonization and partnership, however, needs an equal partner in methodology and goals. It is not enough to bring people together; building partnerships with clear methods and goals is equally important.

2. **Master agreements with universities.** A number of medium and large industrial firms have in place master agreements with larger research universities. Of course, the rationale behind master agreements is that once you have a master agreement in place, all the subsequent paperwork between the parties will be smaller and simpler (often via task orders for example, etc.). Of course, experience says that nothing is ever easy, so university and industry representatives must be cognizant to the specifics of each particular situation. And some of the most vexing dimensions of these partnerships — such as IP — are not completely covered in such master agreements.

These case studies, although brief, illustrate the importance of a nuanced approach to U/I partnerships. This ability to be mission sensitive yet specific is made even more important by the increasing internationalization of national economies and higher education. Coupled with increasing competition across national borders for research funding, it is patently clear that the old ways of relating to the other party will not work in the future.
Underlying these examples is the need to have mission compatibility between the organizations. While academia and industry have differing missions in many ways, creative professionals in both sectors can find the ways to make the missions similar enough to allow partnerships to blossom.

**Contracting to Increase U/I Partnerships**

Shifting from the broader perspective to more technical matters, it is clear that the art and science of contracting merits some comments as this area is integral to harmonizing and increasing U/I partnerships.

Having been a research administrator for 15 years and an attorney for nearly 20, the author offers the following success tips to the reader:

1. Gather as much information from your negotiating partner (adversary?) as possible.
2. Do more listening than talking. Hearing is not enough. Truly listen.
3. Negotiate for the long term, e.g., past the particular contract. You never know what the future will bring.
4. Meld the missions of the parties into the contract. If the missions do not mesh, the odds of ultimate success decline.
5. Have empathy for your negotiating partner. Understand where they are coming from and what is important to them, and then work toward a win-win situation.
6. Negotiation is the art of compromise. Exacting an additional pound of flesh out of your partner may make short term sense but at the expense of the long term. What is important to your organization?

These suggestions are meant to facilitate success at the technical level, but these technical points need to be consistent with larger institutional and policy goals. This also illustrates a larger point, that team building is critical whether you work for a company or a university.

**The Social Imperative/Broader Picture**

The social dimension is a topic rarely spoken about in discussing U/I partnerships. Why is that? Primarily because the principal focus is on the transaction itself and/or the policy reasons for such partnerships. With the current perilous state of the American economy (and one coupled with international dimensions), it is important that such partnerships be an integral part of the broader policy moves towards rebuilding the American economy for long term success.

One illustration of this concept is the linkage of university-industry partnerships to education in high schools and colleges, and to teaching civics in these venues. The linkage between research and education is real and has been written about extensively over the past few decades. In fact, the argument can be made that U/I partnerships in America would not exist in the form that they do but for the democratic, pluralistic, and federalist nature of the U.S. political system. These linkages are there if you look deep enough. The linkage between democracy, capitalism, and the missions of universities and industry is quite compelling and merits further investigation.

**Conclusion**

This paper discusses the complex nature of U/I partnerships, primarily but not exclusively through principles of contracting and case studies. By considering these relationships through this kaleidoscope of complexity, one can appreciate how important they are for universities, industry, government, and society. Add the international dimension, and you have one fascinating topic.

While academia and industry have differing missions in many ways, creative professionals in both sectors can find the ways to make the missions similar enough to allow partnerships to blossom.

**Additional Reading:**


James Casey is Director of Contracts and Industrial Agreements at The University of Texas at San Antonio and is Senior Editor of the NCURA Magazine. This article originally appeared in the proceedings of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) annual meeting, Nashville, TN, November 2009.
Broadcast Workshop Series
Live Via Digital Satellite or on DVD

January 26, 2010

Managing Financial Requirements of Awards

Awards for extramural funding carry a variety of requirements and restrictions. Appropriately administering awards will require policies and procedures and, potentially, electronic systems to meet a myriad of financial and administrative responsibilities. This program will focus on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars related to financial and administrative issues for universities and non-profit organizations. The session will also address issues related to financial management of grants and contracts from various sources while sharing recent developments and best practices.

Moderator: Jane Youngers, Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
Panelists: Rob Barbret, Director of Sponsored Programs, Controllers Office, University of Michigan; Tracey Fraser, Senior Director, Financial Services, California Institute of Technology; Lisa Gentry, Assistant Dean, Finance & Administration, College of Education, University of Arizona

March 23, 2010

Critical Issues for the Department Administrator

Successful administration of sponsored projects starts with the Department Administrator. With all of the rules, regulations, and audit scrutiny, effective day-to-day management is critical. This program will discuss strategies for proposal budgeting, managing and monitoring expenditures, PI effort, procurement card use to avoid cost transfers. This program will also address the different strategies necessary for managing different types of sponsored awards e.g., contracts vs. grants. The program is designed to share best practices and tools required by departmental administrators who support sponsored projects, including those involved with proposal preparation, those who originate or approve transactions on sponsored accounts, and those who review or monitor expenditures on sponsored projects.

Moderator: Patricia Hawk, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs, Oregon State University
Panelists: Samantha Westcott, Grants Manager, Division of Biology, California Institute of Technology; Lillie Ryans-Culclager, Director, Engineering Research Administration, Stanford University; Aimee Howell, Assistant Director for Finance and Administration, University of Maryland Center for the Advanced Study of Language

June 15, 2010

Non-Financial Research Compliance

Given the continuously changing research environment, central and departmental administrators have had to equip themselves with the latest information in order to respond to and manage their institutional research efforts. Research administrators must familiarize themselves with the various research compliance areas that will impact their daily activities, such as research integrity, conflict of interest, protection of human subjects, care and use of animals in research, use of hazardous agents and recombinant DNA.

To assist with daily decision-making, this program will include information on regulatory requirements and recent developments in relation to research compliance. Institutions can benefit by learning how others are adapting to the continuously changing research environment.

Moderator: Robert Lowman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Panelists: Jilda Garton, Associate Vice Provost for Research and General Manager of Georgia Tech Research Corporation, Georgia Institute of Technology; Jamie Caldwell, Director, Office of Research Services for the Health Sciences, Loyola Medicine, Loyola University Chicago; Sharon DeFarse, Senior Financial Analyst, Clinical Science Unit, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Georgetown University Medical Center

September 21, 2010

Negotiating Federal Contracts and Pass-Through Awards

Award negotiation encompasses a scope of activities between proposal submission and award acceptance. The successful negotiation of federal contracts and federal pass-through subcontracts is becoming increasingly complex due to a range of issues — such as troublesome terms and conditions, export control concerns, and new legislation regarding privacy protections, to name just a few. This session is designed to benefit individuals involved in negotiating agreements with federal and federal pass-through entities, as either prime awardees or subawardees, and will include some discussion of complex federal grants and cooperative agreements.

Moderator: David Richardson, Associate Vice President for Research, The Pennsylvania State University
Panelists: Vincent A. “Bo” Bogdanski, Assistant Director, Office of Sponsored Programs, Colorado State University; Michele Codd, Administrative Director, Institute for Software Integrated Systems, Vanderbilt University; Randall Draper, Director, Office of Contracts & Grants, University of Colorado at Boulder

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With Great Opportunities Come Great Responsibilities: ARRA

by Miriam Alma Campo

Just when we thought we had it all together and were on top of the electronic submission platforms and reporting... when Grants.gov’s growing pains had started to wane, and the research administration arena was seemingly stabilized (if that is ever possible), we sat back and admired how far we had come since our paper submission days and thought the worst was over... in came the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and all of its additional reporting requirements.

Like most of you in the research community, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville welcomed the additional funding opportunities and funds that came with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. However, with great opportunities come great responsibilities, as we quickly learned when September 30, 2009 arrived, and we were faced with the first reporting period for the ARRA funding we had received.

Having ten calendar days to fulfill the reporting requirements seemed like a long time, especially for those of us who work in the pre-award side of the house and are used to receiving proposals with very short turn-around times. However, ten calendar days to fulfill the extensive requirements imposed by ARRA was not quite the same. Meeting the reporting requirements for the ARRA funds we had received presented a tremendous challenge to our research administration. Not only because of the short turn-around time, but also because of the extensive amount of information required, of which, the vast majority had to be obtained from the Principal Investigators (PIs).

At the Knoxville campus, the responsibility of complying with the ARRA reporting fell on the Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA) office. Carol Malkemus, Director of SPA, and her staff quickly went to work to develop the best way to capture the information required from the faculty, subcontractors, and vendors to ensure that the reporting would be done accurately and in a timely manner.

In order to make the deadline, it took teamwork from a number of areas across the campus. Sponsored Programs (SP) (pre-award) was responsible for identifying the projects that were awarded with ARRA funds. Then SPA personnel followed, notifying the PIs and their business managers/departmental accountants of the special reporting requirements needed to comply with the guidelines received in the notices of award. SPA also developed training materials and provided workshops on the ARRA reporting requirements, clearly defining what the PIs’ responsibilities would be in the process.

According to Carol Malkemus and Jan Bordeaux, an accountant in the SPA office, the ten-day reporting period was certainly not the only issue at hand. There were many overall challenges to complying with these requirements. Carol and Jan indicated that the lack of clear direction in the instructions on what information should be included and how to report it did not help an already onerous task. One of the major issues affecting all the ARRA recipients was not having clear guidance on how to account for jobs created. Another challenge was the lack of personnel to achieve everything that needed to be accomplished in this short turnaround time. Finding capable, temporary help to perform this type of work was not an easy task, even with the current high rate of unemployment. As a result, the tasks fell to the already overburdened SPA staff, which had to put their regular quarterly reporting aside to accomplish the ARRA reporting first.

FederalReporting.gov at first appeared to be simple and easy to use, but it was soon discovered that there were some major glitches. Jan stated, “The Excel spreadsheet that was required for each ARRA award took up 1 megabyte of computer disk space.” This is equivalent to a typical book volume in text format of 500 pages, 2000 characters per page. “The very size of the Excel spreadsheets alone caused our common drive to shut down,” stated Jan. The spreadsheets could not be altered for fear they would not upload correctly, preventing the SPA staff from being able to create a template form to distribute to the PIs, subcontractors, and vendors.

In addition, the guidelines provided by FederalReporting.gov lacked pertinent information. Problems were encountered with the “Infrastructure” fields; reports were rejected for not using “alpha characters” in the narrative fields, though the awards were not for infrastructure projects and the fields had been left blank. “If only there had been more helpful instructions given, these errors could have been avoided,” said Jan. One of the biggest frustrations for her was with the FederalReporting.gov’s Help Desk. She contacted them by phone and email, but received very little guidance as the Help Desk team was still trying to learn the system too.

Another challenge with the FederalReporting.gov website was the delay in receiving the email confirmation that the report was accepted. When the first few reports were submitted, the confirmations came immediately, but by report 14 and all those that followed, the email confirmations took several hours to arrive. It was apparent that as more people were utilizing FederalReporting.gov, the system had reached its capacity to handle the workload and response times slowed.

There is a general consensus that the overall intended transparency of ARRA funds is a good idea in concept, but implementing such a short turn-around time, especially in a reporting system that had not been used before, was challenging and definitely presented a hardship for those who had to comply with it.

Miriam Alma Campo serves as Director of Sponsored Programs, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
NCURA Magazine Announces First Senior Editor

James Casey, director of contracts and industrial agreements at The University of Texas at San Antonio, has been appointed the first senior editor of NCURA Magazine effective January 1, 2010.

This new position has been necessitated by the transition during the past couple of years from the former Newsletter to the subsequent development of the Magazine as a premier publication in the field. This position provides overall leadership during the yearly publication schedule and is in addition to the three current co-editors. In this position Jim will continue to solicit and publish articles written by senior leaders within research administration as well as in areas related to the field.

Jim is looking forward to seeing the continued growth of the publication: “The Magazine has developed remarkably well over the past couple of years and is increasingly seen as a “go to” publication by colleagues in the field of research administration and related areas. It has been a distinct privilege to be intimately involved in the development of the Magazine.”

Kathleen Larmett, NCURA executive director, and managing editor of NCURA Magazine adds: “There has been a natural progression for both the magazine and the positions that support it. Jim’s past experience as editor of the RMR along with his experience during the transition from newsletter to magazine makes him a natural for the position of senior editor. Beyond that, Jim knows where to find the news and is dedicated to making sure the membership receives the latest information. I look forward to working with Jim in this exciting new position as we work to make this the best magazine in the industry.”

For the past three years Jim has served as senior co-editor and co-editor. This past year, he served as the main editor for the biomedical, capital view, and international sections. In addition to his Magazine duties, he is a member of the Professional Development Committee. He is a former chair of the International Neighborhood, former member of the International Commission, former editor of NCURA’s scholarly journal Research Management Review (RMR), former member of the Board of Directors and a 2009 Recipient of the NCURA Distinguished Service Award.

If you would like to write for the Magazine or have ideas you want to discuss, email Jim at james.casey@utsa.edu.

MIRIAM A. CAMPO is the Director of the Sponsored Programs office at the University of Tennessee Knoxville campus. Miriam is responsible for pre-award. She is currently a member of the eRA Neighborhood Subcommittee and has been in Research Administration for 25 years.

JEAN CODY is the Assistant Director, Post Award, in the Office of Sponsored Programs at The University of Texas at San Antonio. She is a graduate of Texas Christian University and has been at UTSA since August 2008. Prior to working at UTSA, Jean held various post award positions in research administration at institutions including the University of North Texas and Tulsa University. She also worked as the Grants Coordinator for the City of Stillwater, Oklahoma, where she identified and wrote grants in addition to post award administration.

ASHLEY DEHHR is a Manager at Baker Tilly Beers & Cutler. Ashley is a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Fraud Examiner who focuses on higher education and internal audit consulting. Her experience includes assessing compliance with Office of Management and Budget Circulars and other government regulations, as well as providing advice on implementation of best practices and performing risk assessments. She regularly conducts investigations regarding suspected theft or misuse of funds on grants and contracts.

VERNON FERRELL is the Department Grants Manager for the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Cincinnati. He has proudly served the department since September of 2004.

KIMBERLY GINN is a Senior Manager at Baker Tilly Beers & Cutler. Kimberly is a Certified Internal Auditor who consults with higher education and research institutions on internal audit, research compliance issues, and grants administration processes. She has over ten years of experience and routinely conducts grant and compliance audits of higher education institutions, academic medical centers, and other not-for-profit entities. In addition, Kimberly has experience in conducting investigations regarding theft of federal funds on grants and contracts with a focus on investigating financial and research misconduct.
A Departmental Diary continued

to get the job done. When you find yourself in a pickle, like a PI's needing to get something out the door, your good relationship with central administration will allow for greater flexibility and ease some tension.

Even though I was in the right place at the right time with regard to the Grants.gov issue, it was ultimately my relationship with central administration that allowed me the opportunity to make life easier for my faculty.

Clearly, the single biggest advantage to departmental submission is that it streamlines the process for the PI. By not having to submit to central, they gain an additional five days or so. They love it! We do ask for five days to review everything else? There have been a few exceptions, but for the most part this has worked well.

One of the biggest advantages for me, at the department level, is that this gives me the chance to correct everything from budget issues to the animal protocol if necessary. Prior to this, I was getting the proposal an hour before having to submit to central administration and then had to address all the problems with the proposal while central was conducting its review. In a perfect world, the proposal would be completed in its entirety weeks before it is due. I haven’t actually experienced that world yet, . . . if you ever do, please let me know what it’s like.

I think we have made great strides since the department started submitting proposals, but we still have a way to go. Maybe this is just one solution, and a system-to-system process is good alternative. Any solution that ultimately helps the PI focus on the science is a good one. Regardless of how perfect the grant submission process is, it is the science in the grant that is going to get it funded.

Vernon Ferrell is the Department Grants Manager for the Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of Cincinnati.
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San Antonio, TX.....................................................March 3–5, 2010

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New Orleans, LA.................................................March 15–17, 2010

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REGIONAL MEETINGS
Region V/VII (Western/Rocky Mountain)
Newport Beach, CA.............................................April 18-21, 2010
Region III (Southeastern)
Memphis, TN.........................................................April 24-28, 2010
Region II (Mid-Atlantic)
Princeton, NJ..........................................................April 25-27, 2010
Region I (New England)
Portsmouth, NH...................................................April 25-28, 2010
Region IV (Mid-America)
Omaha, NE............................................................April 25-28, 2010
Region V (Southwestern)
South Padre Island, TX..........................................April 25-28, 2010

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

NEXT ISSUE: MARCH/APRIL 2010

DEADLINES:
Submission of Articles to Contributing Editor: February 4, 2010
Submission of Articles to Co-editor: February 11, 2010
Submission of Advertisements: February 18, 2010

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