Transparency in Research Administration
It is interesting to note that when I looked up the words transparent and transparency in my online dictionary there were a number of definitions relating to light passing through a substance. This is particularly relevant to the profession of research administration where we are required to shine a light on/through our standard practices and allow our customers (faculty, sponsors, institution leadership, and state and federal legislators) to better understand how we are good stewards of sponsored grant and contract awards.

The article written by my friend and colleague Susan Wyatt Sedwick in concert with Louise Nelson gives us insight into where our reporting requirements may be headed in the future as piloted through the Federal Demonstration Partnership under the innovative STAR METRICS program. Business and personal transparency is directly related to integrity and accountability as so eloquently presented by one of our newest Contributing Editors, Craig Reynolds. This very important and relevant connection between transparency and integrity is further reinforced by an article from one of our guest contributors, Dr. William Wiener at the Council of Graduate Schools. In academic medical centers we tend to think that export controls are not relevant to biomedical research, and I have been trying to convince the leaders in medical centers that export controls are important and relevant to our area of research. I, therefore, was very pleased to read the article which Steve Mackey from the University of Miami authored.

I recently visited Haiti with one of the medical teams from my institution and have an increased awareness about the importance of international relationships. So I was very pleased to see John Carfora’s interview of Martin Kirk and Dr. Kirk’s perspective on international research administration. NCURA has been able to forge an excellent relationship with our research administration partners across the globe due to the efforts of the International Neighborhood, the President’s Commission on International Research Administration, and the NCURA Ambassador Corps.

I am very pleased to present this edition of NCURA Magazine to you and point out that the caliber of authors is really stellar in large part due to the high standards of our Senior Editor, Jim Casey, the Co-Editors, and the NCURA staff. Many thanks to the authors and everyone involved in this issue.

Tom Wilson
NCURA Magazine Co-Editor
Graduate Programs in Research Administration

An Innovative Online Master’s Degree or Graduate Certificate for Sponsored Research Professionals

- Earn an academic credential in a specialized part-time program:
  - Master of Science in Management with specialization in Research Administration: 2 years, 36 credits
  - Graduate Certificate in Research Administration: 1 year, 18 credits
- Engage with a cohort of professionals in 7-week accelerated courses delivered fully online in an asynchronous format.
- Share knowledge and learning while expanding your professional network across the country.

Emmanuel College’s graduate programs in research administration are an academic opportunity for professionals currently working in sponsored programs. The innovative curriculum addresses critical knowledge areas including finance and accounting, compliance, legal issues and organizational behavior. Online courses, led by faculty experts, extend the reach of these programs beyond the research and health care hub of Boston.

The Faculty

Gretchen Brodnicki  
Dean for Faculty and Research Integrity  
Harvard Medical School

Webb Brightwell  
Grants and Contracts Officer  
Harvard University

Sharon Comvalius-Goddard  
Director of Grants and Contracts and Research Resources  
Schepens Eye Research Institute

Daniel Dangler  
Principal  
Authenticity, Inc.

Mark Daniel  
Vice President for Research Administration and Finance  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Anastacia Feldman  
Fiscal Officer, Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence Lab  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Patrick Fitzgerald  
Associate Dean of Research Administration  
Harvard University

Valeria C.C. Leite  
Senior Manager, Special Projects, Research Finance  
Partners HealthCare

Ye Chin Lee  
Director of Finance and Business Development  
Massachusetts General Hospital

Jill Mortali  
Director of Sponsored Projects  
Dartmouth College

Jennifer Puccetti  
Director of Administration  
Department of Social Medicine  
Harvard Medical School

Jeff Seo  
Director of Research Compliance  
Harvard Medical School

Chris Vericker  
Vice President  
Middlesex Savings Bank

Stephanie Wasserman  
Director of Sponsored Programs Administration  
Harvard Medical School
2011 Executive Leadership Program Participants

NCURA is pleased to announce the participants of the first NCURA Executive Leadership Program:

- Nancy Daneau, Deputy to the Vice President for Research and Director, Research Development and Assessment, State University of New York
- Winnie Ennenga, Director, Office of Grant and Contract Services, Northern Arizona University
- Mary Louise Healy, Assistant Vice President for Research, Towson University
- Joseph McNicholas, Director, Office for Research and Sponsored Programs Administration, University of Maryland, Baltimore
- Cathy Snyder, Director, Office of Contract and Grant Accounting, Vanderbilt University

The NCURA Executive Leadership Program offers NCURA members, who have demonstrated a commitment to NCURA through their proven leadership at the regional or national level, an educational opportunity designed to prepare them for consideration of senior leadership positions in the national NCURA organization. The program is NCURA-centric and expressly designed to develop those leadership traits considered necessary to lead our organization into the future and to ensure future leaders emerge with an understanding of NCURA’s organizational structure, goals, and objectives, as well as executive leadership principles, including recognized best practices of volunteer leadership.

Nominations for this program were sought from current and past leaders at both the regional and national levels. The candidates were selected by an ad hoc NLDC selection committee that included senior NCURA leaders. Under the management of NCURA’s Nominating and Leadership Development Committee, the program is being directed by NCURA past presidents, Pam Whitlock, University of North Carolina at Wilmington (retired); Jerry Fife, Vice Chancellor for Administration, Vanderbilt University; and former NCURA Board Member and founding leader of NCURA’s LDI, Garrett Sanders, Vice President, Sponsored Programs Administration, the Research Foundation of SUNY. The class will have three guest facilitators in addition to guest lecturers. At this writing, the ELP participants are well into their executive leadership journey.
Updates from NCURA’s Board of Directors Meeting

Operating under knowledge-based governance, the NCURA Board of Directors is a strategic, decision-making board. This operational approach was clearly evident when the Board began its meeting in February by reviewing NCURA’s strategic plan. A living document, the strategic plan is routinely assessed by the NCURA Board of Directors and modified as necessary to ensure it remains viable, innovative, and futuristic. This year, the Board specifically focused on the organization’s strategic assumptions (e.g., anticipated external trends and challenges), core purpose, core values, and big audacious goal (BAG), all designed to provide a roadmap for NCURA’s continuing growth and vitality over the next 10 to 30 years:

NCURA’s Core Purpose:
NCURA serves its members by advancing the field and profession of research administration.

NCURA’s Core Values:
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Inclusiveness
- Collegiality

Big Audacious Goal (BAG):
NCURA will be internationally recognized as the pre-eminent resource for professional development, knowledge and leadership in research administration.

To assist NCURA in measuring its progress toward achieving its BAG, the strategic plan includes descriptive indicators such as:
- NCURA will have a diverse international membership and more customers.
- How the association delivers its on-demand resources to members will feature increased use of technology.
- The organization will be providing new, advanced programming worldwide that is more tailored to its membership segment needs.
- NCURA will provide the best professional development programs for research administration.

The Board readily accepted that the definitions/descriptions for each category remain viable. Rich discussion – especially regarding strategic assumptions – ensued, achieved objectives were removed, and new objectives for future progress were agreed upon and included.

In order to best utilize the Board’s time together and allow for strategic discussion to organically occur, the use of a consent agenda was implemented. Like all boards, NCURA can spend an inordinate amount of time reviewing and approving past minutes and routine reports. Following the model of other high performing non-profit groups, implementing the use of a consent agenda allowed the Board to accept those routine reports as a single agenda item and approve with a single vote. Integrating a consent agenda resulted in the Boards being able to spend valuable face time on visioning and strategic discussion.

This visioning resulted in the Boards returning often to NCURA’s Core Purpose in the form of a question: What knowledge-based decisions can the Board make to better position NCURA to advance the field and profession of research administration today? In five years? Ten? Twenty?

The actions of the Board reflect answers to that question. NCURA will offer subscriptions to the NCURA Magazine to non-members. Additionally, a Student Affiliate status will be implemented for those individuals furthering their education. To be eligible, students cannot be employed full-time in the field and must provide documentation of their student status. Once confirmed, these individuals will receive full access to NCURA’s website and programming for twelve months, with the ability to “renew” for a second twelve-month period as long as they maintain eligibility.

NCURA’s Core Values support its Core Purpose. Recognizing the increasingly important role social media plays in NCURA collegiality and delivery modalities, the Board reviewed and accepted a Social Media Statement that affirms that NCURA embraces use of social media and other technologies that enable members to communicate and share in a professional manner. Additionally, the Statement details appropriate professional behavior to consider when engaging in social media. Such clarity is important; the NCURA Wikipedia page was recently updated and a Facebook group page for NCURA has been created.

To maintain excellence, the Board approved to implement the Professional Development Committee’s recommendation to include the NCURA Traveling Faculty Rules of the Road in the traveling workshop faculty package. These rules establish
As transparency has become a hallmark of the Obama Administration’s first two years in office, the newest refrain in Washington, DC, is reducing impediments to economic recovery; and the first targets are what many view as excessive government interference through over-regulation. A little background on the newest Washington, DC, debate seems in order.

If regulatory reform has become a hot topic in Washington, DC, it has been triggered, in part, by the Executive Order (EO) issued by President Barack Obama on January 18, 2011. EO 13563 appeared the same day as a Wall Street Journal editorial by President Obama looking “Toward a 21st Century Regulatory System.” (Obama, 2011) Extolling the virtues of free enterprise and entrepreneurial innovation, President Obama argues that the free market has worked because the US has balanced the “freedom of commerce” with reasonable regulations designed to protect health, safety, business and the public from abuse. The “proper balance” President Obama seeks is regulations that protect while promoting economic growth.

Executive Order 13563(2011) reaffirms the current Regulatory Planning and Review process established in 1993 by EO 12866 (1993). The current framework should sound familiar. For any proposed regulation, an agency must consider its cost/benefit, select a strategy that imposes the least burden, maximizes the benefit, and identifies performance objectives rather than specifying the manner of compliance, and, if possible, look to alternatives to regulation to encourage new desired behavior, e.g., user fees.

Consistent with the Obama Administration’s focus on transparency, EO 13563 adds an important emphasis on public participation in the rule-making process, calling for a more “meaningful opportunity to comment” on proposed rules and regulations by the public, in general, and those who would benefit and those potentially subject to the rule, specifically. The Order encourages making publicly available the scientific and technical findings that support the regulations as well.

Adding to the current system, EO 13563 establishes new principles and requirements for regulatory review. Agencies must consider ways to promote greater coordination and harmonization of regulations across agencies in addition to the combined effect of their regulations and those of other agencies on the regulated community. Agencies are urged to be more flexible and explore alternatives to direct regulation and/or mandates or prohibitions to achieve the same regulatory goal. EO 13563 returns to the President’s theme of scientific integrity (Obama, 2009) by requiring agencies to ensure objectivity through the use of science and technical information that is free from inappropriate influences. Finally, agencies are asked to identify, as appropriate, approaches to regulations that promote innovation.

Of real interest to all regulated communities, EO 13563 calls for a retrospective analysis of rules that may be “outmoded, ineffective, insufficient or excessively burdensome.” Agencies are to consider how “to modify, streamline, expand, or repeal them.” Each agency is required to develop and submit within 120 days of the EO a preliminary plan for the periodic review of its existing “significant” regulations, with a goal of an agency regulatory program that is more effective and less burdensome.

To guide the Federal agencies in meeting the challenges posed by EO 13563, Cass Sunstein, Administrator of the US Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs – the OMB office that reviews new regulations – issued a memorandum to the agencies providing guidance on the new principles and requirements incorporated in EO 13563 (Sunstein, 2011). Sunstein provides greater detail on what should be included in the agency plans for retrospective analysis of current regulations. The plans must describe how the public will participate in the process, including participation in how the plans are devised and the identification of candidate rules for modification or repeal. The US Department of Energy issued just such a request for information from the public on February 3, 2011, establishing a special link on its web page for submission of ideas (DOE, 2011). Agency plans must describe how priorities will be set for the analysis and include an initial list of candidate rules; include a plan for retrospective analysis of the quantitative and qualitative costs and benefits; and identify the structure and staffing that will be used for the analysis. Initial drafts of the plans are due to OMB within 100 day – the middle of May.

So what does all this mean for the regulated research community? It’s hard to predict. Much of the early focus has been on reducing regulations to encourage job creation – whether for small businesses or large corpora-
tions. The same day President Obama signed EO 13563, he issued two companion memoranda: the first, directing agencies with “regulatory compliance and administrative enforcement responsibilities” (Obama, 2011, Regulatory Compliance) to plan for public postings of their activities; the second, calling for a renewed commitment to limiting the regulatory burden on small businesses as required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act as one step to encourage job creation (Obama, 2011, Regulatory Flexibility).

This second memorandum – Regulatory Flexibility, Small Business, and Job Creation – was issued as Congress began to gear up and plan its schedule for the new session. Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), the Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, held a hearing on February 10th addressing “Regulatory Impediments to Job Creation.” This hearing featured testimony from “job creators” (business) calling for the elimination of regulations that prevented economic growth.

Complementing the Congressional hearings, the House adopted House Resolution 72 (H. Res. 72) on February 8, directing various House committees to inventory and review existing, pending, and proposed regulations with a focus on the regulations’ effect on jobs and economic growth.Introduced by Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX), the resolution defines thirteen initiatives with a focus on the regulations’ effect on jobs and economic growth. Introduced by Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX), the resolution defines thirteen issues or questions to be considered in the committees’ review. The list echoes President Obama’s Wall Street Journal editorial and EO 13563 – considering whether, or not, the regulations impede job creation; discourage innovation; harm economic growth, investment, or global competitiveness; and/or limit access to credit and capital. In addition to economic considerations, the House committees are directed to consider questions of cost/benefit and the creation of unfunded mandates and unnecessary paperwork and administrative burdens.

Returning to the question – what does all this mean for the regulated research community? It is still difficult to predict. Some proposed regulations may be delayed; current regulations may be modified; some may actually be eliminated. It will be worth taking advantage of opportunities to participate in the retrospective analysis of regulations not just with a goal of eliminating regulations but to identify opportunities for coordination and harmonization of regulations as well.

The review that may have a more immediate and specific impact on the regulated research community is the review of research universities that is being conducted by the National Research Council. The Council has been charged to answer the question, “What are the top ten actions that Congress, the federal government, state governments, research universities, and others could take to assure the ability of the American research university to maintain the excellence in research and doctoral education needed to help the United States compete, prosper, and achieve national goals for health, energy, the environment, and security in the global community of the 21st century?” This broad question has introduced a wide array of topics for consideration, including the impact of the 26 percent cap on administrative cost recovery on research universities as well as the regulatory burden faced by colleges and universities. Information on the Committee’s deliberations including transcripts of the meeting sessions is available on the NRC website. The Committee report is scheduled to be issued in May 2011.

That government is best which governs least. (Thoreau.)

References


H. Res. 72. 112th Congress. at http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c112:H.R.72:

National Research Council, Policy and Global Affairs, Board on Higher Education and Workforce, PIN # PGA-BHEW-09-01 at http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/bhew/researchuniversities/index.htm


Carol J. Blum is Director for Research Compliance and Administration at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR). Before joining COGR in 2001, Carol served Ohio University for ten years as associate vice president for research after three years at the Ohio Board of Regents as director of graduate and special programs. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Cincinnati. She has recently begun exercising the right side of her brain in art classes and continues to volunteer at the Washington Literacy Council and Washington Area (Reproductive Health) Clinic Defense Task Force.
The Literal & Figurative Costs

By Kristine M. Kulage and Ruth E. Torres

According to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) portal, transparency is defined as “the full, accurate, and timely disclosure of information” (1). In research administration, this translates into required accountability activities such as timely and accurate reporting of grant expenditures to funding agencies and tracking and reporting of faculty effort on research projects. Quarterly reports required on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-funded grants may only be the beginning of a new trend in transparency and accountability, ushering in an age when the government will require this level of reporting for all federal grants (2). There have already been multiple systems established to ensure that institutions, grant recipients, and government funding agencies are compliant with transparency regulations. Costs for designing and implementing these systems have been substantial, both in the literal and figurative costs of ensuring and administering working relationships with faculty members when requiring strict imposition of regulations. Costs for purchasing software and hiring additional personnel as well as immeasurable, figurative costs such as jeopardizing research administrators’ working relationships with faculty members when requiring strict imposition of these rules. This article briefly examines some of the literal and figurative costs of ensuring and monitoring transparency and accountability and asks the question: Is it worth it?

Institutional and Recipient Costs

At the forefront of transparency and accountability at academic medical centers is the quarterly reporting requirements of ARRA-funded grants. When these stringent reporting requirements were first announced, sponsored projects offices of the vast majority of institutions who received ARRA funds decided to centralize ARRA reporting rather than leaving it to individual schools, departments, or principal investigators (PIs).With only a few months to develop and implement a centralized reporting system, consulting firms and dedicated new personnel were quickly hired for the project. A forthcoming report from the Federal Demonstration Partnership, the cooperative initiative among 10 federal agencies and 119 institutional recipients of federal funds, should illuminate actual spending on ARRA quarterly reporting, which is projected to exceed $100 million.

At the institutional level, effort reporting is now a mainstay in transparency and accountability in research administration. Effort reporting is the mandated method of certifying to the granting agencies that the effort charged or cost shared to each award has actually been spent on the project. Online software systems, such as Effort Certification and Reporting Technology (ECRT) from Huron Consulting Group and Effort Reporting Software from Information Technology Works are two web-based software systems that are popular among research institutions across the nation. The short and long-term costs of such systems certainly take a bite out of the facilities and administrative cost recovery awarded with the grants for which effort is being reported.

On a much smaller level, department and division financial managers often provide additional customer service to funded faculty members by creating “shadow reporting systems” for financial reports. Many universities have outdated accounting systems which produce monthly spending reports using uncommon abbreviations and show funds in institutional spending categories that do not coincide with agency budget categories, causing inaccurate financial data to be reported in an untimely manner. These unreliable outdated financial reports make it difficult for faculty members to review, understand, and attest to the accuracy of grant spending. Since PIs ultimately hold responsibility for verifying their grant spending, financial managers often spend significant time and effort creating summary reports which translate how the funds were spent in a way that PIs can understand. This added benefit, though, incurs real departmental and college expenses in hiring additional administrative staff.

Government and Agency Costs

Fortunately, we cannot make the argument that the government is imposing expensive accountability regulations upon institutions when they do not require the same standards from themselves. Institutions can find comfort in the fact that the transparency rules placed upon them are not a unique burden, but one equally shared by the government and federal agencies.

One example is the FFATA legislation itself, which requires information on federal awards to be made available to the public via a single, searchable website (www.ffata.org). Institutions may be a large part of the process in gathering and submitting this information, but the costs of creating, maintaining, and assuring the accuracy of the FFATA portal must be extensive. Type in a simple search term such as “cancer” and you will find thousands of results across multiple categories, including contracts, grants, recipient names, cities, and zip codes. It’s easy to find how much federal grant money has gone where and for what with a few clicks of the mouse. It’s accountability at its finest, and transparency “gone wild.”

Another example is the Recovery.gov website (www.recovery.gov), which appears to be as robust as FFATA.org, but is limited to reporting information on how ARRA funds have been distributed across the nation. It also provides a place
of Transparency and Accountability

for whistleblowers to anonymously and electronically report incidences of fraud and spending waste. Again, the costs associated with developing, launching, and maintaining the accuracy of data on the website were certainly a significant but necessary piece of the ARRA pie.

The creation and launch of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT) within the last few years is another example of the government stepping up to the plate in transparency. This robust portal of reports, data, and analyses of NIH research activities is quite impressive and user-friendly, especially when compared to the archaic CRISP database. Certainly significant expense was incurred by the NIH through the process of translating CRISP data into the modern RePORT Expenditures and Results (RePORTER) interface, which now contains significantly more information than CRISP ever did. Yet much can be said about the usefulness of RePORT, both for institutions collecting data for their own internal reports as well as for the general public seeking information on how their tax dollars are spent to improve the health of the nation.

Finally, PubMed Central, the NIH free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature, is perhaps the most significant endeavor to emerge from new transparency requirements. Real costs are associated with university libraries offering faculty members training in precisely how to ensure their publications that result from federal funding are being properly submitted to PubMed Central.

The Ethics of Accountability and the Research Faculty

In addition to the obvious literal costs to establish accountability systems at the institutional, agency, and governmental levels, the demand for transparency carries figurative “costs” as well. In particular, the requirement of PIs to be fully accountable for how they spend their professional time and knowledgeable about how their research funds are spent raises a myriad of ethical issues. With time spent between conducting research, teaching, mentoring, scholarly dissemination, service, and clinical and administrative duties often overlapping and intertwined throughout any given day, how can faculty attest to their effort? And more importantly, are they equipped with the skills to do so accurately and confidently? Moreover, is it even possible to quantify faculty time? Is the creation of accountability standards that cannot honor all professorial responsibilities more harmful than helpful?

University officials require faculty members to be accountable not just for their scientific work but for the financial management of their projects. Should scientists be expected to serve as trained accountants, able to evaluate how costs are allocated? Lack of funding on the central administrative level often makes it difficult for the PI to access professionals who can aid in the accountability requirement, leaving some researchers to fend for themselves. With a lack of support and training, how ethical is it to place this burden on the PI? Ill sentiment and mistrust form as faculty members see central administration as “the enemy,” hoarding their indirect costs, limiting their research time with useless requests, and imposing financial and administrative responsibilities on them. These tightly regulated environments cause unnecessary stress, and when faculty members feel they are being asked to perform duties for which they are not trained, discontent builds. The result is an immeasurable but real “cost” to be paid — that of an environment of animosity and mistrust between faculty members, the administration, and the institution. In extreme cases, biomedical researchers may be driven to depart the university. In the face of meeting transparency and accountability requirements, administrators, leaders, and government officials should ask themselves: “Is this too high a price to pay?”

Is It Worth It?

Whether the costs of transparency and accountability are literal or figurative, the ultimate question remains the same: “Is it worth it?” Few would argue against the value and importance of providing searchable websites such as the NIH RePORTER tool and PubMed Central. Public dissemination of this information is simply the right thing to do. At the university level, one need only review recent institutional audits to see that investing funds to implement systems which assure transparency and accountability is the cheaper option (e.g., Northwestern University paid $5.5 million to settle issues related to problems with effort reporting on a contracts and grants base of $325 million; South Florida returned $4.1 million to the federal government to settle a number of charging issues, including effort reporting; University of California paid $2.1 million to settle an NIH salary cap limitation disallowance). Subsequent constraints placed upon the institution in question may cost them potential future funding. Universities also pay a steep price when audits reveal a lack of accountability: the loss of status, prestige, and a good reputation. Unfortunate byproducts of “forcing” researchers to be transparent are jeopardized working relationships, resentment, and mistrust. Institutions must work to buffer the effects of this reality by providing the administrative support, training, and guidance which faculty members need in order to effectively attest to their time, effort, and spending without imposing an excessive burden. And that’s something to strive for in the pursuit of making these efforts worthwhile.

References


Kristine M. Kulage, MA is Director, Office of Scholarship and Research, Columbia University School of Nursing and Biomed Corner Contributing Editor of NCURA Magazine.

Ruth E. Torres, MPA is Director of Finance, Columbia University School of Nursing.
If publication is the coin of the realm in research, then trust is the mint. Trust keeps the national research enterprise vibrant and continually growing. To wit, our faculty must trust that the work of their published colleagues is accurate and reliable if they don’t wish to replicate every study they read. And the tax-paying public and our representatives in Washington, DC, willingly appropriate funds to invest in our faculty's research trusting that the money is well spent, will enrich lives, create new knowledge, improve health, and so on. For the want of trust, sponsored research and the publications that result would be impossible!

With this in mind, the enlightened research administrator recognizes the importance of creating an environment where trust is expected, engendered, and thrives. We adhere to federal costing principles, deploy responsible conduct of research policies, and otherwise follow good research management practices because our profession – and the science we support – depends upon it. Moreover, our faculty expect behavior from us that warrants trust, just as they expect it from their colleagues. And the simple fact of the matter is that we are more effective and efficient in our jobs, and more fulfilled in our working relationships, when there is trust between our colleagues and customers (i.e., faculty, students, and sponsors). We make better decisions, develop and implement policies with fewer impediments, roll out new initiatives with less resistance, and collectively deal with change with more resilience and grace when we trust one another.

How then does one create a trustful workplace? Commitment to transparency and integrity is the key.

Transparency
A commitment to transparency is a commitment to making relevant information accessible and readily understood. When it comes to business information, research administrators are accustomed to being transparent. We broadly disseminate policies, findings, funding data, and more. One need only consider various federal reporting requirements (e.g., FFATA), NIH Data Sharing Plans, and the prospect of audits and Freedom of Information Act requests to understand that at least a minimal degree of transparency is needed in research administration. The public trust requires it. Beyond this, each of us, as appropriate to our roles and responsibilities, should have access to the information we need to do our jobs and to the information that ultimately shapes our work environments. In this respect, simple access to information may suffice.

Transparency and Integrity: The Keys to Trust

By Craig Reynolds

This level of business transparency is a necessary prerequisite for trust, but it is not sufficient. As research administrators, we must also continuously exhibit personal transparency. Regardless of how many times we share with faculty, say, the data that drives a policy decision on F&A distribution, we will not be trusted if we do not also share those relevant personal considerations that have been brought to bear in making the decision. To truly engender trust we must:

Be Fortcoming: When we regularly volunteer information, while respecting the limits imposed upon us by expectations of confidentiality and standards of propriety, we create opportunities for trust to grow. Personal transparency means that we do not shy away from delivering unpleasant news or having difficult conversations. Failure to do so opens one up to charges of being secretive or evasive and, therefore, suspect. While it’s admittedly never fun, we all know from personal experience that people prefer being informed over being kept in the dark. Just as important, when you have knowledge that informs your behavior or thinking but you cannot share, then you should be transparent about that as well. Tell your colleagues or faculty that you cannot share, but explain that you will be forthcoming as soon as circumstance permit. Know that frank, straight talk is almost always appreciated if it is delivered with tact and diplomacy.

Whenever possible, we must also be explicit about what motivates us. What do we hope to achieve in any given situation? Colleagues and customers will be wondering anyway, so why not preempt the speculation? If you followed a certain line of reasoning when issuing a policy verdict, say so. Be explicit and share your rationale. Harder to do, but equally important, is to be
forthcoming regarding any limitations in your skill-set, gaps in your knowledge, or biases you may have. While it may seem counter-intuitive, confessing that you’re not perfect actually bolsters your credibility.

**Be Open:** Personal transparency also requires that we be open to others. Communication is a two-way street and, if we are going to be forthcoming, we must allow the same in others, actively seeking out what our colleagues and faculty think, feel, and know. Soliciting expertise and input demonstrates both a self-aware humility and respect for your counterparts. You needn’t necessarily agree, but you must be receptive and appreciative of what others have to say. You will make better decisions as a result. Value what others contribute and show as much in word and deed. When criticism comes your way, be accepting without being punitive or thin-skinned. An openness to others in an environment free from worries of reprisal or ill will not only helps establish trust but encourages mutual transparency.

**Be Authentic:** Personal transparency also requires that one be authentic and true to one’s own character. As Paul W. Larson writes, “People become their authentic selves by knowing at a deep level their own personality traits, learned behaviors, values, beliefs, and motives. They integrate these to form their unique personal model for human interaction.”

A lofty goal, perhaps, but worthwhile. We’ve all heard it said, “I can spot a phony from a mile away,” and there is truth in the comment. Your faculty and colleagues will know straight away if you are not authentic. Worse yet, they will be less likely to trust you. Only when you let pretense drop away and be your own true self does the possibility of genuine trust become real.

**Integrity**

When it comes to establishing trust amongst colleagues and customers, an unwavering dedication to integrity is just as important as personal transparency. Integrity is more than just adhering to a moral code of right and wrong; it manifests itself in what others observe as a consistent and conscientious commitment to honorable behavior. As noted in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, one definition of persons of integrity is that they “embrace a moral point of view that urges them to be conceptually clear, logically consistent, apprised of relevant empirical evidence, and careful about acknowledging as well as weighing relevant moral considerations. Persons of integrity impose these restrictions on themselves since they are concerned, not simply with taking any moral position, but with *pursuing a commitment to do what is best* [emphasis mine].”

Hopefully, the following suggestions will be simple reminders of what our parents taught us years ago. To engender trust we must:

**Be Honest:** Trust requires that others have faith that what you say is true. Without this faith, open lines of communication are severed; respect and credibility are fatally undermined. Of course, we all expect honesty from one another and feel betrayed and offended when deceived. Rest assured your colleagues and customers will feel likewise. Nothing is more toxic to your personal integrity than a lack of honesty. An environment of trust in the workplace that took years to build can be destroyed in only seconds through a single act of dishonesty.

**Be Moral:** A former colleague of mine whom I greatly admired and respected was fond of the saying, “It’s more important to do the right thing than to do a thing right.” If you wish to be genuinely trusted, you must have a reputation as a research administrator who is just, who stands up for what you believe is right, and who is committed to equity and fairness in your personal and business transactions. Sometimes this means going to bat for your faculty against a sponsor or institutional policy, sometimes the opposite. When combined with personal transparency and honesty, taking a stand will earn the trust (however grudgingly) of friend and foe alike.

**Be Accountable:** Personal and business transparency without accountability is toothless. Similarly, integrity in the absence of accountability is meaningless. Trust in the workplace requires that we all hold ourselves personally accountable for our actions. Accountable research administrators take ownership of their professional responsibilities, follow through on their commitments, and keep their promises. Moreover, they freely admit their mistakes and offer to make amends when appropriate. They hold colleagues equally accountable, but do not look to assign blame or publicly criticize. They seek to learn from the errors of yesterday in order to improve the practices of tomorrow. Trust requires colleagues and customers know that you are answerable to them at the end of the day.

**Trust**

The true currency of research administration is trust. The awards we manage on behalf of our faculty are essentially proxies for the public trust. The faculty, staff, and students we serve, and the institutions of which they are a part, rely on us to act as faithful stewards of that trust. Ours is indeed an important and serious responsibility. By carrying out that responsibility with transparency and integrity we can create an environment where trust and the profession of research administration flourish. While there are some limitations on just how transparent we can be (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA), we can minimize the instances when relevant information is withheld without cause. Conversely, we should recognize that there are no limits to integrity – and we should endeavor to lead our lives accordingly. To be sure these are high standards, but they are worthy of our very best efforts. Trust me.

Craig Reynolds is Chief Administrator of the Department of Biological Chemistry at the University of Michigan Medical School and has been a member of NCURA since 1997. In addition to being a regular workshop and concurrent session presenter, he has served NCURA as Program Co-Chair, 52nd Annual Meeting Program Co-Chair, 2010 Region IV Annual Meeting Program Co-Chair, and a member-at-large on the Region IV Board of Directors. He is a graduate of the NCURA Leadership Development Institute class of 2007. Prior to arriving at the University of Michigan in 2009, Craig was a Research and Program Officer in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at Central Michigan University for 11 years. During 1999-2000, he held a temporary assignment as Information Assistant/Program Manager in the Office of the Assistant Director for Computer and Information Science and Engineering at the National Science Foundation, and from 1991 to 1997 was administrator of the General Robotics and Active Sensory Perception Laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.


A long time ago in an office of research far, far away, research administrators submitted paper copies of proposals to their sponsors. We reviewed budgets, submitted proposals, and set up awards with relatively small amounts of paperwork. Those were simple times, but over time life changed, with new requirements and regulations for sponsored research becoming more numerous and complex. Today, words like monitoring and transparency are part of the daily life of a research administrator. One of the more recent requirements has come to us from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the form of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) requirements.

On January 4th, 2010, NSF implemented a new requirement for training researchers in RCR. This requirement was a result of the America COMPETES Act of 2007, which was passed as part of the nation’s effort to invest in innovation through research and development and to ensure the nation’s competitive position in the world by improving math and science education. Section 7009 of the Act states, “The Director shall require that each institution that applies for financial assistance from the [National Science] Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible conduct of research to undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and IRB members, and related personnel. Furthermore, developing our own RCR training allowed us to incorporate our own institutional policies and procedures into the training. Developing the training went fairly smoothly, but implementation required additional time and financial resources, which the university had to bear. In addition to the training developed, the university also purchased the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) RCR online training, which has a similar set of modules, but allows for a more customized training experience based on the trainee. The university accepts the completion of either training as fulfilling the RCR requirement and allows our students and postdocs to choose which training they prefer. Once the development and implementation components of the plan were finished, all we had left was tracking the trainees. We found this to be the most complicated portion of the RCR requirement and required significant creativity on our part. It was our intention to develop a payroll report that would select only NSF funded projects and to include only those job classifications required to be trained. Unfortunately, we discovered our software was unable to produce such a report, which came as quite a surprise and created many obstacles we had to overcome to ensure compliance.

To overcome our software difficulties, several measures were put in place to provide a system of checks and balances, such as structuring our tracking plan so that information doesn’t all come from a single source, which is beneficial should a source of data be inaccurate or unresponsive. In the earliest days of tracking RCR training, we created an Excel spreadsheet that allowed for tracking the most important information, such as PI, award number, project dates, account numbers, and required trainees. Within this first year, we have realized the spreadsheet won’t be adequate to monitor the volume of awards, accounts, and trainees our institution has. Depending on your institution’s size, a spreadsheet could be an adequate method of monitoring, but if your institution receives a substantial amount of NSF funding, it’s likely you’ll need a more sophisticated system. As we began to outgrow the spreadsheet method of tracking, we’ve started exploring other methods of tracking, such as a basic Access database to more sophisticated software systems that can be purchased from various vendors. These options will allow us to track more information and ensure compliance as our portfolio continues to grow.

A major drawback to our current system is that it’s labor intensive. When a new award is received, an email is sent to the PI, department

---


2 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative: https://www.citiprogram.org/aboutus.asp?language=english
head, and business manager to inform them that the project has the RCR requirement. After the original email, departmental business managers receive periodic requests for payroll reports for accounts that have an RCR requirement. When these reports are returned by the department, the Office of Research staff analyzes the information in comparison to what has been previously entered into the tracking sheet to identify anyone being paid on the accounts and if they’ve completed the RCR training. Since personnel (especially undergraduate students) can be hired at any time over the life of the project, each account must be examined numerous times over its life to ensure any new hires fulfill the RCR requirement. You can never assume any project will reach a point where it no longer needs monitoring. Along with the original and periodic business manager emails, quarterly reminders are sent to all faculty with NSF awards containing the RCR requirement asking them to ensure all of their students and postdocs have completed the training.

So, what other options does an institution have? There certainly isn’t a silver bullet for monitoring RCR compliance. Some institutions have considered making RCR training a requirement for all faculty and postdocs, but that doesn’t come without complications of its own. For faculty and postdocs, RCR training could be a condition of employment. But, having any requirement as a condition of employment shifts the burden of compliance to the human resources department, which is no more likely to have available resources for tracking than the office of research. Additionally, any employment requirement can lead to an argument from individuals who don’t “need” the training. Since NSF doesn’t require RCR training of faculty and some disciplines are highly unlikely to receive NSF funding, new hires may see this condition as an undue burden.

Some institutions have all graduate students take an RCR course as a requirement for graduation, but if this requirement isn’t already in place, changing the curriculum is likely to require approval from the graduate school council, various curriculum committees, possibly the state’s higher education commission, etc. to implement the change. But, even if all of the faculty and postdoctoral researchers were trained as a condition of employment and all graduate students were trained as a requirement for graduation, there are still thousands (or tens of thousands) of undergraduates who may or may not ever step foot into a research laboratory. Finding a way to accurately track undergraduate researchers may be the most difficult tracking obstacle you’ll face.

While some institutions are trying the “train everyone” approach, others are hoping to monitor RCR training in an entirely automated manner. There are quality systems available that are very useful for tracking the accounts and individuals who need RCR training. Some online training programs can be completely interfaced with your existing financial or personnel software. The online training program can talk back and forth with your institution’s software to generate lists of who is being paid off specific accounts, who has already been trained, and most importantly, providing a list of who is being paid and hasn’t yet been trained. But, there are drawbacks to these systems if your institution does not already have them in place. First, the institution must be willing to pay the initial software costs as well as the annual maintenance fees associated with the software. Given the current economic status of most institutions around the country, this option might not be feasible for your institution. Second, many of us have learned through prior experiences that software programs don’t always interface with your current systems as well as advertised, which could leave you with a whole new set of issues to deal with.

We cannot discuss monitoring without mentioning how crucial it is that we remember that automated systems is data integrity. While these systems may be wonderful and make our lives much easier, they can only do what they’re programmed to do. Therefore, it is vital that someone periodically examines the records to ensure everything is running smoothly.

Now that institutions across the country have implemented their RCR plans and monitoring is underway, the question is, “What does the future hold for RCR training?” It is our belief that requirements of RCR are likely to expand and monitoring may become even more challenging. Several federal agencies have no formal RCR training requirement at this time, but they may in the near future. Currently, NSF provides a great deal of flexibility in their RCR content and delivery requirements, allowing institutions to decide what is appropriate, but they and other sponsors may follow the way of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and include more challenging requirements, such as mandatory face-to-face training, established recurring training schedules, career level specific training, and training for all project participants regardless of funding source. All we can hope for as research administrators is that sponsors have some type of consistency in their requirement and that the research administration community continues its long established practice of exchanging ideas and the lessons we’ve learned with one another.

David Smelser is a Sponsored Programs Administrator at The University of Tennessee–Knoxville and has worked for 7 years in various university research settings, from the laboratory to the university Office of Research. His primary roles include proposal development and administering awards from a variety of sponsors.

Miriam Campo is the Director of the Sponsored Programs office at the University of Tennessee–Knoxville and a long time NCURA member. She has over 25 years of experience in Research Administration. Miriam’s responsibilities have included all aspects of pre-award at the central research office level, as well as pre- and post-award for an environmental engineering research center.

---

There exists a sacred trust between the public and those who engage in science and social science research. The public ascribes the highest intentions to researchers, including honesty, altruism, and objectivity, and therefore considers scientists and their institutions to be trustworthy and thus worthy of being held in the highest esteem (Science and Engineering Indicators, 2002).

When scientists and their institutions are found to be guilty of research misconduct, typically defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism (FFP), the confidence in research is badly shaken. These breaches of integrity can result in a loss of respect for the individual researcher and for his or her institution. Science is a collaborative activity that builds upon and adds to the discoveries of those who have come before them. When the results of research are called into question, the research that follows may be invalidated and many hours of work as well as accompanying funding may have been wasted. In some cases, the falsification or fabrication of data can result in conclusions that are erroneous. This could harm individuals who are given treatments based upon false information, such as in pharmaceutical research.

Therefore, instances of research misconduct anger the public and set in motion regulatory activities that attempt to set the record straight. Today there is a greater emphasis on ethical conduct of research due to three factors: 1) an increasing number of reported violations; 2) external pressures on academic research relating to forces between academic, commercial, and governmental sectors; and 3) the potential for abuse springing from different values in countries around the world (The Council of Graduate Schools, 2008).

Based upon the need to ensure strong research integrity, two of our federal agencies have put forward requirements aimed at educating new scientists. Towards the end of 2009, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) both announced implementation of ethics training requirements. As part of the America Competes Act, NSF stated that each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education must describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research for undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project. NIH stated that it now requires all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH training, career development award (individual or institutional), research education grant, and dissertation research grant to receive instruction in responsible conduct of research. The NIH policy also applies to any other NIH-funded programs supporting research training, career development, or research education that require instruction in responsible conduct of research as stated in the relevant funding opportunity announcements. Together, these two announcements have ushered in a new era of accountability and have established a proactive stance designed to prepare our next generation of researchers.

The announcements have caused universities to consider the best means of educating students, post docs, and other researchers on research integrity issues. While there are a plethora of resources online and available commercially, the best insights come from examination of real life examples and discussions of ethical principles between those learning to engage in research and experienced research faculty.

The development of training programs is best accomplished through the leadership of those who oversee research at our universities. It is therefore necessary for administrators and staff in offices of research and sponsored programs to take the lead in developing programs in research integrity. Our familiarity with the pre-award structure, compliance issues, and post award monitoring activities puts us in a place to know the issues, the faculty who have expertise, and to have the authority to implement programs that will impact our newest researchers.

I contend that we also have natural allies in offices or schools of graduate studies. Graduate deans and their staffs have a deep interest in preparing students and new researchers for active research careers. There is a natural synergy between research offices and sponsored programs when it comes to supporting research activities. Much of the research of our faculty would not be possible without the help of graduate research assistants and post docs. Graduate schools have purview over most of the colleges across the university and the responsibility to prepare graduate students for their future roles as faculty members.

Many universities have taken formal steps in this area by establishing programs to prepare future faculty (PFF). This is a movement that has sprung from a decades old realization that faculty members need to be prepared for their roles in academe. The movement began with concern over a lack of training for students who served as teaching assistants within colleges and universities (Wulff and Austin, 2004). As early as the 1960’s, Nowlis, Clark, and Rock (1968) wrote: “It is sometimes wryly noted that college teaching is the only profession requiring no formal training of its practitioners.” In the 1970’s, universities began developing programs to prepare teaching assistants for their roles in the classroom. In the late 1980’s, the Pew Charitable Trusts championed a series of conferences on this topic (Chism & Warner, 1987; Lewis, 1993; Nyquist, Abbott, Wulff, and Sprague, 1991). During this time a knowledge base was developed on preparing teaching assistants.
The success in preparing teaching assistants led in 1993 to the development of programs to prepare future faculty for their eventual role as college and university professors. This effort began when the Pew Charitable Trusts provided a grant to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), to incorporate PFF training within 17 universities. A second phase was later developed to further institutionalize the programs and spread the awareness of such programs among other universities. In the third phase, disciplinary societies became partners through a grant from the National Science Foundation to CGS working with the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Many of these universities continued their PFF programs long after the grant funding ended. The PFF programs have become highly successful with hundreds of additional universities modeling their programs after those developed by the original grantees. The programs provide instruction and experience that assist students in becoming effective teachers, active researchers, authors, grant writers, advisors, mentors, users of the most effective technology, and academic citizens who contribute to the department, the university, and their professions (Wulff and Austin, 2004).

In 2008, CGS saw the need to move more directly into recommending program components that would arm students with the information they would need to conduct research in an ethical manner. CGS held a competitive grant competition entitled “Project for Scholarly Integrity” to enable universities to evaluate methods of providing responsible conduct of research and integrity in professional scholarship, education, and research. The project was based upon two prior pilot projects on how to launch an effective Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) program and its resulting monograph, Graduate Education for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2006), that describes best practices in developing such programs. The new project in 2008 involved five universities that were selected to pioneer various approaches to best prepare students in research integrity. From the resulting activities it was clear that an important step in this process is to survey the faculty and students at the university to determine the climate regarding research. Information from this climate survey can help inform the type of instruction that is needed. Further information on the climate survey and the interventions that were evaluated will be available in an upcoming monograph entitled Graduate Education for Research and Scholarly Integrity: A Comprehensive Approach, available through CGS in late 2011.

Programs to prepare early researchers should contain modules in the following areas:

1. Data acquisition, management, sharing, and ownership
2. Conflicts of interest and commitment
3. Human subjects
4. Animal welfare
5. Research misconduct
6. Publication practices and responsible authorship
7. Mentor and trainee responsibilities
8. Peer review
9. Collaborative research

While online training may be an excellent means of providing materials relating to each topic, the most effective approaches also include discussions between students and early researchers with more experienced research faculty. Case studies from items in the news often lead to the most effective interaction and learning.

While compliance with the FFP research misconduct standards comprise the three major areas that are totally forbidden, they make up only a small portion of what can constitute behaviors detrimental to scientific inquiry. There is a need to address a broader range of value-based issues and establish a balance between compliance and the more complicated value laden practices such as laboratory practices, generation and use of data, financial considerations, and ethical dilemmas. While compliance issues are usually clear cut, and decisions relating to their implementation are easily understood, value-based issues are more ambiguous and require an understanding of ethical principles that will help one make the best decisions. In regard to these issues, there are often different courses of action that can be chosen and one must learn how to analyze each approach in order to choose the one that creates the most benefit and does the least harm. As part of the values-based approach, instruction in ethical decision making and deliberation processes are essential.

In conclusion, research administrators and their staffs can be most effective in developing programs when they establish partnerships with graduate schools. Together, they can create a climate of research integrity on campus and establish programs to address both FFP and other values-based issues. The best programs incorporate content knowledge and discussion of real life examples.

Bibliography


William Wiener is the former Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Dean at Marquette University. He is currently Dean in Residence at the Council of Graduate Schools, an organization with the goal of supporting graduate education by developing best practices, studying demographics and serving in an advocacy role.
Yikes! It is the Friday before a holiday weekend at 4:00 p.m. and you’ve just drafted your out of office message. The moment before you shut down your computer, you receive an email from your Dean asking you to help with a fraud investigation of a prominent researcher in your area. “What now?” you might be thinking. “What am I going to have to do? How can I help the institution and still find time to enjoy the holiday?”

Assisting in a fraud investigation can seem overwhelming. However, there are specific steps that you can take throughout the process to help you and the project team work smoothly together, maximize your efficiency, and complete a thorough investigation. In our last article, entitled “How You Can Help: Preventing Fraud in Sponsored Research Activities,” published in the January/February issue of NCURA Magazine, we discussed the myriad of ways in which fraud can occur in a research institution and how you, as a research administrator, can identify the warning signs of fraud and help to minimize the risk of fraudulent activity at your institution.

In this article, we focus on the next step: What happens when you don’t catch fraud on the front end? You won’t always be able to do so. We review how a typical fraud investigation unfolds, your potential role in each step of the process, and how you can most effectively fulfill your responsibilities.

How Can You Help in a Fraud Investigation?

Once a potential fraud has been uncovered, whether through your suspicions about documentation that was sent to you, an anonymous hotline call, or anomalies identified by your auditors, some form of internal investigation will be initiated. As a research administrator, you are in a unique position to assist in these types of investigations. At your fingertips, you have general sponsored research knowledge and, possibly, specific information about the researcher in question and his or her work. Below, we outline how you can use this specialized knowledge to positively impact the outcome of each stage of a fraud scenario.

Step One: Allegation

When a centralized office is made aware of a potential fraud, one of the first steps is assembling an appropriate team to investigate the complaint. This task may be performed by internal audit, the office of general counsel, or an external investigator. A successful fraud investigation requires the collaboration of numerous parties. When determining team size, the goal is to keep the team small enough so that the accused party’s name is not blemished, yet large enough to have the
right experts on hand. In total, you most likely would be interacting with two to six people, including:

- Office of General Counsel
- Compliance Office
- Key Management Personnel
- Subject matter experts, such as a forensic accountant or a researcher in the same field as the suspected fraudster (to vet investigation findings)

During this phase, you may be involved in an introductory meeting where the investigation team explains the allegations and requests documentation or information from you. The most important thing you can do at this stage is to simply be open and honest with the investigators. Keep in mind that they are investigating a specific allegation of fraud; they are not “out to get you” or your colleagues. Withholding, or not proactively sharing, information, either purposefully or inadvertently, can lengthen the investigation or give the appearance that you or your department are hiding something.

**Step Two: Planning**

Once the investigation team has decided that the allegation has merit, the team will develop an investigation plan, and may ask you to assist in executing this plan, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation Team Action Step</th>
<th>How You Can Assist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perform background review on the researcher and his or her work (e.g., review the relevant sponsored research contracts).</td>
<td>Provide documents for review and/or discuss these documents in the context of the allegation or concern (e.g., award documentation, purchasing files, and/or conflicts of interest reporting).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop roles and responsibilities for the investigation.</td>
<td>Ask specifically how you can support the investigation during this phase, so that you can fully understand your role and required tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a timeline for the investigation.</td>
<td>Based on your understanding of your role, evaluate your current workload and determine what can be re-prioritized, postponed, or shifted to others in light of the pressing potential fraud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a work plan, including identifying what interviews should be held, what questions should be asked, and what follow-up activities should be performed.</td>
<td>When addressing your specific areas of responsibility, consider: • Asking: Who is the custodian assigned to safeguard original documents? • Understanding: What are the next steps for each allegation? • Providing: A list outlining the status of each investigation task that you have been assigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish communication criteria.</td>
<td>Make sure you are kept informed of what is going on in the investigation. Ask to be involved in weekly status meetings or have a designated key point of contact to which you can go with questions and additional information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step Three: Investigation**

Fraud investigation procedures can vary significantly, on a case-by-case basis, depending on the allegation. For example, procedures performed for an allegation related to a financial fraud can differ from those for an allegation related to a human resource issue. In addition, not all allegations of fraud will necessitate a full blown fraud investigation. Investigators will generally begin their work by performing document review and interviews that do not necessitate raising concern with the accused party or throughout the organization. For example, let’s say that there is an allegation that a researcher had hired an unqualified, related party to support certain grant activities. At the onset of an investigation, the investigation team may proceed and ask you to assist in the following ways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation Team Action Step</th>
<th>How You Can Assist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review personnel files to see if any of the individuals on the grant are listed as a relative or beneficiary of the researcher.</td>
<td>Provide the relevant grant’s personnel information (e.g., an organizational chart detailing who is on the team that supports the grant work); discuss your understanding of the role of each employee who is working on the grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review procurement files to determine whether the work in question was competitively bid</td>
<td>Provide procurement documentation; discuss your understanding of the researcher’s explanations for selecting certain vendors and making certain purchases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the researcher’s resume to identify a prior employment relationship with the potentially related party</td>
<td>Discuss your understanding of the researcher’s prior experiences and interactions with the party in question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the researcher’s LinkedIn social networking profile for other connections to the potentially related party</td>
<td>Respond to questions that the investigation team might have regarding specific individuals noted during this review. Share any concerns you may have had in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review email communications (please note that, due to regulatory considerations, this may not apply to non-US locations). Inboxes can contain revealing information and, since university mail is generally the property of the institution, taking this step can be a non-intrusive way of corroborating an accusation.</td>
<td>Answer questions that the investigation team might have regarding specific individuals, purchases, or types of research tasks noted during the email review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate automated systems records. For instance, if an alleged wrongdoing takes place in a secured facility, check access card records and video surveillance systems to understand which individuals were onsite during the time in question</td>
<td>Discuss your understanding of why and when individuals might be accessing a specific lab or software system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the investigation team decides that there is sufficient credibility to the allegation to justify continuing its investigation, the team will then perform more detailed work, including additional document review and interviews. If not, the team will return to the informant and share that, while the initial concerns were not found to be substantiated, the informant’s candor and insights are appreciated. The team will see if there is other information that the informant can provide and explain that the organization takes the issue in question very seriously. If you or someone you work with was the informant, this can be a difficult situation. You should (or should encourage others to) continue to share material information that could be relevant, even if the investigation team does not conclude that the initial allegation merits a full investigation.

As work continues, it is important to note that investigations are often uncomfortable. The information gathered can be invasive and highly personal, such as spending patterns and personal emails. An investigation could also necessitate understanding the accused perpetrator’s motivations for committing fraud, such as financial problems caused by a messy divorce, or a secret gambling addiction. You can help by providing any background information that you have that may be relevant and keeping all of the investigation-related information that you learn in confidence. That means sharing materials and knowledge only on a need-to-know basis as directed by the investigation team.

**Step Four: Closeout**

So what happens once the suspected fraudulent activities have been confirmed? Often, you will need to work with the investigation team to create a corrective action plan. A corrective action plan consists of a list of remedial activities, each of which should be implemented within a finite time period, be measurable, and have a responsible owner. As a research administrator, executing some portion of the corrective action plan will likely be your responsibility. We also recommend that you ensure that the plan is being monitored, and work with management to facilitate regular updates to fulfill their requirements for monitoring. Engaging an independent, objective third party in the monitoring efforts can help to accelerate progress and identify gaps in a corrective action plan.

There may also be outside parties who need to be notified. Reporting findings to the government, when appropriate, is an important step. Legal counsel will most frequently be responsible for keeping the government informed. The corrective action plan can help keep the institution’s relationship with its funding agencies strong.

But not every investigation has a yes-or-no conclusion. Many investigations lead to dead-ends, and some don’t even get that far. More importantly, you have now involved many parties who want explanations and justifications for their troubles. There are several “survivors” of investigations to consider – those accused, those accusing, those questioned, and those exonerated – in addition to the perpetrators and victims. Nebulous findings aren’t uncommon, but it is important to communicate to those involved that there will be questions left unanswered and knowledge that cannot be shared. This works differently at each institution, but this communication is an important step towards preventing theory and conjecture from causing further harm to those involved. As a research administrator, you may have individuals coming to you with questions. You should work closely with management to understand and share the message that is appropriate, and inform the team when its message needs to be tweaked.

**Conclusion**

Investigations often are untimely, strenuous, and exhausting. How they are handled can have lasting effects on an institution. Recovery from a fraud or an allegation of fraud is much easier when investigations are conducted properly. Your input throughout the process will enable the team to more fully understand the allegations, ask the right questions, interview the right people, review the best documents, and come to a conclusion regarding the allegation.

So, the bottom line is that you’re not defenseless when it comes to fighting fraud and, when necessary, participating in investigations. Follow these guidelines to ensure that researchers at your university can focus their efforts where they should: on tackling the unknowns in research.
Associate Director – Post Award Services
Position Open February 15, 2011 Until Filled

Exceptional opportunity for an individual with significant grants/contracts management experience in higher education to join the University of Utah’s Financial and Business Services department. This new position, created in response to outstanding growth in research awards, reports to the University’s Controller and works closely with the Associate Director of Cost Accounting and Analysis to assure compliance with federal and sponsor regulations and to support faculty in their research endeavors.

The successful candidate must possess the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:
- Bachelor’s degree, minimum, is required in accounting, business administration, or equivalent
- Six years of progressively more responsible management experience in higher education focusing on the administration of grants and contracts
- Master’s degree is strongly preferred
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Ability to speak clearly and engagingly in small and large groups
- Ability to work collaboratively with various constituents
- Demonstrated pattern of continuing professional development in grants administration; involvement in various association committees at either the regional or national level is strongly preferred
- Expertise in various federal regulations including A-21, A-110, and A-133
- Knowledge of cost accounting, effort reporting, letter of credit, financial reporting, etc.
- Ability to lead a large and diverse staff effectively; ability to establish performance metrics and expectations
- Demonstrated ability to lead change in a complex and fast paced environment
- Experience working with internal and external auditors
- Willingness to relocate to Utah

About the University of Utah: Founded in 1850, the University of Utah is the state’s flagship university. The University boasts several professional programs including schools of medicine, law, architecture, and nursing. The Health Sciences Center includes the hospitals and clinics, the Huntsman Cancer Hospital and Institute, burn trauma units, and AirMed helicopter transport for critically ill and injured patients. The University enrolls approximately 30,000 students. Sponsored research awards totaled approximately $450 million in the most recent fiscal year. The University is also home to the State Museums of Natural History and Fine Arts as well as two professional theatres and an arboretum.

The Salt Lake Valley is home to the Salt Lake International Airport. Eleven world class ski resorts are located within an hour of the airport. Utah is home to five national parks visited by people from around the world. The University is located in the foothills of the Wasatch mountains. For the cultural enthusiast, Salt Lake City is home to numerous arts venues including the Utah Opera, Ballet West, repertory dance theatres, outdoor concert venues, and more. The state is family friendly with opportunities for camping, hiking, the Utah Hogle Zoo, Discovery Gateway Children’s Museum, and the Clark Planetarium.

Applicants may express their interest by applying online at http://www.hr.utah.edu/careers/application-process.php. In addition, we will be interviewing during the NCURA FRA 12 conference in San Diego on Saturday, March 5, 2011. Applicants interested in meeting with us at FRA 12 should e-mail the Controller at Theresa.ashman@admin.utah.edu no later than Tuesday, March 1, to schedule an interview. Candidates may contact Theresa Ashman after March 1 via e-mail or by calling 801-581-5077 to inquire as to the possibility of an interview during the conference. Scheduling priority will be given to candidates who had expressed an interest on or before March 1. After the conference, candidates should apply online via the website noted above.

Equal Employment Opportunity
The University of Utah is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. Upon request, reasonable accommodations in the application process will be provided to individuals with disabilities. The University of Utah is committed to diversity in its workforce. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.
The world of research administration is changing almost as rapidly as the research we support. As we face increasingly tighter fiscal constraints locally, uncertainty at the federal level and the disappearance of ARRA funding, the organizations whom we serve and our peers who are in this “quicksand” playing field with us must grapple with the challenges of the economy, complex and ever changing regulations and goals set for us at all levels. For research administrators, mentoring continues to emerge as a viable alternative to conferences and other more costly professional development opportunities.

Traditional and Non-Traditional Methods of Mentoring

Traditional peer-to-peer relationships meet these individual needs, but increasingly there are also less traditional ways to mentor, such as via professional organizations; via higher ranking, more experienced managers; via similar organizations – i.e. university to university/similar positions; networking; group mentoring arrangements where a more senior leader will work with several high-potential learners; etc. Using an outside organization can be beneficial when the office is small. For those of us in the research administration environment, this can be the case more often than not even at large institutions. By using peers from surrounding institutions, one can further enhance their knowledge and career despite having limited resources close at hand. Professional organizations, peer institutions, and sometimes even our sponsors can serve as excellent resources.

The Value of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring enables one to be introduced into an organization, to be educated in a career for which, until recently, there was no formal training and to stay abreast of the massive amount of information that must be mastered. This said, our organizations increasingly recognize the value of mentoring and rush towards implementing formal and informal mentoring programs. They are beginning to view mentoring as a developmental stream, a reality of the workplace and an alternative to off-site trainings/conferences.

Mentoring is first and foremost a relationship that meets the intrinsic values of the mentee and the mentor resulting in enhanced leadership skills and traits, wisdom and maturity that can lead to satisfying life experiences and objective decision making. It is all about the mentee, and the mentor has to view themselves as a caring friend, a role model and nurturer. After all, the mentee has entered into the relationship because he or she views the mentor in a special way, as someone the mentee respects and looks to for advice.

Selecting a Mentor

When people seek out others to mentor them, they desire:

- Sponsorship that opens doors
- Coaching
- A measure of organizational protection
- Opportunities for greater visibility in the institution
- Challenging assignments that stretch one’s capabilities
- Role modeling of appropriate behaviors and values
- Counseling
- Support and acceptance
- Friendship that makes one feel secure and appreciated

Zachary (2009) proposes a criteria-based decision-making model to selecting a mentor in order to make the most of the relationship:

1. Identify your goal – examine your background and career path and determine why you want

a mentor and what is it that you want to achieve from the relationship.

2. Create a list of criteria – identify those qualities that you would like to see in your mentor without having someone in mind yet.

3. Determine qualities that are “must haves” – from the list you generate, select two or three qualities that would make or break the relationship.

4. Rank the remaining criteria or “wants” – rank order the remaining criteria you want to see in a mentor in the order of relative importance to you, basically assigning them a weight.

5. List possible options – Brainstorm a fairly comprehensive and open-minded list of possible mentors, taking into consideration that they do not need to work in your own organization.

6. Eliminate options that don’t meet the “musts” – if an individual in your list does fare well against your must have criteria, eliminate them as an option, as they will not make a good mentor for you at this stage of your career.

7. Rate each option against the “wants” – rate the candidates against the other criteria using a numeric scale. Weigh the scores based on the ranking previously assigned to each quality.

8. Make the decision – if you have made an honest assessment of your candidates against your list of criteria, the decision can be as simple as totaling the scores and determining who came on top?2

9. Along the way a third party should be checking in. Make sure regular meetings are being held/attended, what the participants feel is working and what is not and what else could be done/changed to enhance the relationship.

10. Foster acceptance through listening

11. Ask curious questions vs. accusatory ones

12. Support and advice are gifts, both offered freely to be received with the understanding that they are just that – advice – it is up to the mentee how they will use this wisdom

13. A mentor should bolster self-direction and independence – growth

Establishing a Healthy Mentee-Mentor Relationship

No matter what form of mentoring relationship is entered into, it should be a relationship from which both parties can learn, grow, share experience, and provide empathy and mutual support. Each form of mentoring relationship has its advantages and disadvantages. At a point in time when training budgets are dwindling, travel/conference dollars are tight, and loyalty isn’t what it once was, it might be necessary to enter into a mentoring relationship that is dynamic and may take on multiple forms across time to provide the most benefit. No matter what relationship(s) are entered into, it needs to be dynamic and evaluated/re-evaluated across time. As soon as it is recognized the relationship is not working, it needs to evolve and change.

It is important for a mentor to appreciate the mentee, their background, what they bring to the table and what they can themselves garner from this relationship. The mentor should not try to change the mentee into becoming “you.” It must be a relationship built on trust and viewed as a deliberate exercise in knowledge enhancement, sharing of wisdom by coaching and counseling that meets the mentee’s intrinsic and extrinsic values and expectations. As a mentor, one should approach the relationship with caution. While immediate work related gains like content expertise and skills of the mentee can be shaped, the mentee is looking to the mentor to contribute to her or his personal growth as well. Mentors should make every effort to relate to their mentees’ personal aspirations and assess early on in the relationship their ability to meet the mentee’s expectations. The mentoring relationship, whether formal or informal, must clearly establish expectations and be alert to signs of failure.

A supervisor and employee mentoring relationship is more complex and often fails because both parties fail to make clear distinctions between performance expectations and mentoring expectations. As a supervisor mentor, it is important not to make commitments that cannot be fulfilled, for example promotions, title changes, or raises. It is critical the mentor and mentee understand successful mentoring experience can lead to satisfying professional development and career paths, but it does not necessarily equate to promotions and pay raises within the work unit or the organization.

After the relationship is established, the most common error is walking away. There are no set guidelines, no check-ins, no change as the relationship and participants grow and develop no additional insight/opinions, etc. If the relationship does not meet the needs and goals of the mentee the relationship will fail. Change and growth has to manifest itself through ongoing dialogue, response to growth, response to outside factors, etc. If this doesn’t occur, it is highly unlikely the relationship will achieve positive results.

It is critical for both the mentee and the mentor to buy into the relationship based on a deep-rooted sense of mutual respect and caring. For mentoring to succeed, it has to mean something personally to both the mentor and the mentee. It is very easy in our profession of research administration for the mentoring enthusiasm to quickly fade away. There are a multitude of stressors which face us on a day-to-day basis. To enter into this relationship – this agreement –whether in the one on one scenario or a group scenario, all parties have to buy in and commit. An informal contract where both/all parties sign provides a healthy formalization of the relationship. Once an agreement is entered into, goals and strategies should be established. They should not be “etched in stone,” but rather be a basis for the relationship to work and grow from.

One must remember that a mentor-mentee relationship is just that – a relationship. That said, for any relationship to work it should be equal, open, sharing, without judgment, and ever changing. The relationship needs to be open to change and expansion beyond its original nucleus. Always think and move within and outside the box to best grow, learn, develop, and reach and exceed your goals.

Margarita Cardona is a Certified Research Administrator and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and Master of Science degrees in Chemistry and Materials Science. She is served as the Director of Sponsored Programs at the University of Baltimore since 2008.

Govind Narasimhan holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and is the Associate Director of Research Finance in the Division of Cancer Medicine at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Randi Wasik is a research administrator for the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Washington. She received her BFA in Music Performance from Carnegie-Mellon University and MBA from Texas Christian University.

All three are members of the LDI class of 2010
Transparency extends beyond seeing through physical objects and applies more metaphorically to seeing through processes, behaviors, or intentions. When used in a social context, transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability. While the federal government is working toward fiscal transparency of government funds, the concept of transparency can be applied to many other areas of our work. Research administrators at PUIs don’t develop, implement, and evaluate sponsored research policies, procedures, and systems of support in a vacuum – we seek feedback and advice from our stakeholders to ensure that their views are heard and their needs are met. This transparency is critical to the day-to-day operations of a PUI where a very small staff, perhaps even a solo professional, is the point of contact for all things sponsored research within an institution.

Strengthening relationships with faculty may very well be the most critical foundation in building transparency, creating a culture of communication, and enhancing an office’s operations and support to an institution. But where does the PUI research administrator begin to build relationships with faculty and to engage faculty in an office’s operation? Making the effort to gain an understanding of faculty perspectives, the challenges PIs face, and the opportunities available to them at a PUI may shed light on ways to engage faculty more deeply, an important factor in building transparency.

The realities of faculty pressures are brought to light, or made transparent, when we consider a day in the life of a PUI faculty member. Faculty members don’t work nine to five jobs; they work, or think about work, day and night. A noon time meeting may sound like a good idea, but for many faculty this would be inconvenient and even impossible: they may be in the lab, in the classroom contributing directly to the institution’s focus on teaching, or in the field (with or without students).

PUI faculty teach from four to eight courses per year, whereas faculty at research intensive institutions may teach only one or two courses. Teaching involves more than showing up and lecturing off the top of one’s head, (although we might all recall a professor or two from our college days who did just that). Teaching, among other things, requires planning for classes, meeting with students, and consulting with community agencies to find projects and viable service-learning opportunities. PUI faculty members often teach hundreds of students per year and their institutions do not typically have teaching assistants to grade work or give introductory lectures.

One of the benefits of attending a PUI is the focus on educating undergraduates and the personal attention that students receive from their professors. Key aspects of this attention are student-focused activities like academic advising and mentoring undergraduate student work; these take time, a lot of time when done well. Outside of the student-focused activities, a faculty member attends departmental meetings, accepts committee assignments, finds time to write publications and present her work, and balances work and family commitments. Research and the administrative bureaucracy that accompanies it are of a varying level of priority and commitment for any given faculty member.

Transparency vis-à-vis faculty begins with: a) understanding and validating your faculty and stakeholders’ perspectives; b) building relationships by providing regular and multiple modes of communication; and c) providing opportunities to engage faculty in designing and implementing systems of support. Taking a moment to reflect and consider faculty perspectives and validate the realities of faculty stresses and multiple priorities may...
Being transparent means putting all of your cards on the table and taking control of how and in what context errors and omissions will be viewed. If fear of transparency is a concern, then the leadership of the institution should revisit its objectives with regard to compliance. Leaders should encourage staff to identify errors, misunderstandings of processes, or simply lack of knowledge on a topic. This is not an opportunity to scold, but one from which all can learn. When mistakes are made they should be researched and the findings shared with the rest of the office. This reinforces a unified understanding of rules, regulations, and processes and sends the message that mistakes are okay as long as we learn from them.

Just as we would encourage someone on the staff to share a new method for streamlining processes and providing better support, we should also encourage a colleague who has identified a gap in their professional development to share this information and their strategy to rectify the situation. Transparency requires a strong leader who will protect staff who come forward with problems. Working in a small office requires one to have a thick skin, an appreciation of the benefits of openly correcting errors, and the persistence to seek and gain the support of institutional leaders.

The process of undergoing an audit teaches us the value of transparency. When there are missteps, we must clearly identify the problem, mitigate the issue (stop whatever it is that is being done wrong), create a procedure or policy to ensure that it never happens again, highlight this new procedure or policy in the file, and document the process for the audit trail. If an auditor finds this file, his or her first question should be, “Has this practice stopped?” followed by, “How have you ensured that it will not be repeated?” If this transparent process is adopted, then it is clear that the office is not trying to hide anything. In fact, the office will have already answered the two most pressing questions about the problem.

Being transparent is about the limitations of being human and a willingness to do the best work possible within the confines of time and change management. The nature of research administration is constant change and we must be vigilant in our efforts to keep up with that change. PUI’s have limited human and financial resources to assist with change. As a result, research administrators at PUIs must prioritize their actions to ensure that their offices are as transparent as can be. Transparency builds trust with faculty and gains the support of institutional leaders.

Kris A. Monahan, MPA, is the Director of Pre-Award Services, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College. She is a doctoral candidate in the joint PhD Education program of University of Rhode Island/Rhode Island College. She has more than ten years experience in teaching and research administration positions at Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions. She is currently Chair of the Region I Volunteer Membership Committee and member of NCURA Region I Program Committee, Awards Committee, and Advisory Board. She also currently serves as a member of NCURA’s PUI Neighborhood Committee.

Anne M. Pascucci, MPA, CRA has been in research administration since the early 1990’s. Her experience ranges from major research institutions such as the State University of New York, Central Administration in her work at the Rockefeller Institute to nonprofits such as AIDS Care Ocean State and now most recently to starting her own consulting business focusing on both research administration for predominantly undergraduate institutions and nonprofits. She is a Certified Research Administrator since 2004 and recently received her Certification in Nonprofit Studies from Rhode Island College.
The funding environment is growing progressively more complex. Competition for research grants is mounting, multidisciplinary research is quickly becoming the norm, international projects are on the rise, funding programs have increasingly strict criteria and technology helps overcome geographic obstacles. Research administrators in the United States and research managers, as they are often referred to in Europe, are at the center of this change. Moreover, if they continue to adapt well to the changing environment, there is a significant opportunity to become increasingly recognized as critical to the success of advancing research.

To exchange insights of the new funding environment and its implications, Elsevier hosted a series of roundtables in the second half of 2009. Research administrators gathered during a meeting of the NCURA in Panama City, Florida and roundtables were hosted in conjunction with the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA) during the organization’s annual conference at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. The resulting discussions offered valuable insights into how research management professionals are navigating the changing landscape – on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Changing Nature of Funding

Funding opportunities, already under pressure, began to dwindle with the global economic downturn. Despite earlier stimulus programs, recent budget cuts to science in Europe and expected federal cuts in the United States keep many researchers and university executives awake at night.

Furthermore, U.S. research administrators report that most federal agencies evaluation criteria increasingly include multidisciplinary and collaborative research projects, as well as, ultimately, a potential impact on society. Research administrators must push scientists outside their comfort zones to explore adjacent fields of expertise and widen their network of collaborators. In addition, funding bodies are encouraging applicants to partner with industry. Different programs (e.g. within the NSF and the European Commission) require an industry co-investigator on projects.

The Ripple Effect of Collaboration

The benefits of collaboration range from sharing resources and equipment to increased funding potential, successful project outcomes and prestige. Many U.S. participants noted that working with universities across the country is commonplace and increasing international collaboration has become a part of the strategic research plan of their university.

The strategic focus on international work was echoed in Europe, where some institutions are looking to double international collaborative funding from the current levels: between five and fifteen percent of overall external financial support.

Overall, international funding was recognized in both Europe and the U.S. as a door opener for applying and winning other projects – creating the relations and momentum necessary for long-term success.

Understanding the Challenges

The intricacies of collaboration give rise to new challenges for research management professionals; with different parties at the table the number of interpretations, expectations and practices is growing exponentially.

For example, a significant amount of paperwork must be coordinated in any collaborative project, ranging from official sign offs such as approvals from the university’s research office, to the development and submission of bios, letters of support and budgets. Collaboration across institutions, borders and disciplines makes the paperwork even more daunting.

While EARMA participants agreed that extra paperwork surrounding EU funding is sizeable, it was noted that the perception of the paperwork is often worse than the reality. This is particularly true when universities have strong research management offices that handle the administrative elements. As a solution, several participants suggested actively educating scientists about the processes and available support.

Another real challenge of international collaboration is coping with the language barriers and cultural differences that arise when multiple countries are involved in a project. Additionally, there are often significant variances in practices, compliance as well as legal, IP and accounting systems in each country.

On a more strategic level, participants identified a need for more careful coordination of proposals as quite often different researchers end up competing against each other when there existed a better opportunity to join forces. Coordination becomes a necessity even with limited submission programs, a practice that seems to be growing within the U.S.

Best Practices for Funding Success

Future success requires research management to wear many different hats; from facilitating collaboration and building bridges between fields and across continents to navigating an ever changing regulatory environment. Roundtable participants shared best practices for taking on this role:

Building Trust Through Knowledge Participants on both sides of the Atlantic acknowledged that building a sense of trust with researchers is critical. It is important to fully understand the professional and personal interests of researchers, stay up-to-date on funding organization news and maintain strong relations with program directors in order to alert scientists to opportunities and changing processes. An in-depth understanding of proposal requirements is
particularly critical for complex international funding opportunities.

Participants agreed that it is important to battle the perception that paperwork, required for international funding, is impossible. By serving as a translator and voice of calm, research managers and administrators can help prepare the administrative elements of proposals, review and offer input on the overall content.

**Fostering Collaboration** There was broad agreement that researchers are particular about whom they work with. While most know the people within their field, they find it harder to identify and rely on peers in other disciplines, creating a barrier to multidisciplinary collaboration. As projects built on pre-developed relationships are more likely to be successful, participants shared ways to foster collaboration.

One research manager shared an example of effective networking at his institution. Internal faculty, scientists from other universities and industry representatives are invited to speak to a large audience for five minutes a bit like speed dating. Afterward, the group chatted over food and shared a few drinks. As a result, many new relationships were created.

Another key takeaway from the events was that collaboration cannot be forced. 'Chemistry' is imperative to success, and these types of events offer an opportunity for such relations to develop.

Technology tools were also referenced as important, such as helping faculty build electronic profiles. One participant noted that while most senior researchers have mature networks of colleagues, junior faculty often lack familiarity with the right players. As a result, institutions can keep a virtual rolodex to help faculty find appropriate collaborators. In addition, national networks, such as VIVO are instrumental to linking potential collaborators.

Furthermore, in order to manage collaborative proposals it is important to bring professional project managers and proposal development managers on board.

**Strategic Insight** With increased competition for funding, research management professionals have an opportunity to help ensure that the strongest possible proposals are submitted. Many reported involvement in the development and selection processes and identifying opportunities within their institutions to pursue a joint proposal.

Another potential strategic growth area is tracking and reporting outcomes of collaborative projects. Currently, the number of collaborative ongoing grants is reported, but research managers agreed that total funds received as the PI as well as the sub-PIs would be worth tracking in the future. EARMA participants also agreed that scholarly output of collaborations was worth measuring for institutional leadership.

One research administrator referenced an NSF program underway with four different agencies that requires an evaluation of the partnership from beginning to end, which may set a precedent for the future.

By implementing better tracking metrics and success rates, research administrators can increase efficiency and determine best strategies for the future.

**Building the Right Team and Enhancing the Profession** Beyond skills, research managers agreed that “high energy,” networking abilities and a team approach are critical. As one EARMA participant pointed out, you need to look at the human resources you have and how you can piece them together, adding individuals where necessary, to build a successful team.

Addressing the need to continue to professionalize the research management role, training and certification at the national level and global level were discussed. Robust training programs are important in order to have certified research managers so institutions can be assured that new hires understand the basics.

Others suggested that it is up to each institution to improve its research management environment and that it is up to the research managers themselves to facilitate the exchange of ideas through support offered by associations such as NCURA. With regards to international research administration, prime learning opportunities include the NCURA’s International Neighborhood or the joint NCURA-EARMA International Research Management Fellowship program which facilitates the exchange of research management practices across the globe.

**Vision of the Future**

Research management professionals are ready to take their institutional funding to the next level by nurturing the development of broader peer networks for their scientists and identifying and simplifying cross-discipline and cross-border funding opportunities. They also realize the potential this work has to elevate their institution’s position on the global research stage as a recognized leader in a given field or specialty.

Working more closely with institutional leadership, research administrators, and managers envision themselves offering valuable insight to their organization’s research strategy. They also recognize the opportunity to serve as a bridge—conveying institutional goals to the researchers and working together to make them a reality.

Research administrators and managers collectively agree that the time is right to play a more strategic and integral role in guiding their institutions to funding success and research leadership, and that this role is as much an art as a science.

Josine Stallinga is responsible for market development for SciVal, Elsevier’s suite of solutions in research performance, planning, and funding. Closely monitoring research funding developments around the globe, Josine has been involved in investigating user needs and workflows of different stakeholders of the funding process. She also served on the Program Committee for the 2010 NCURA annual meeting. Josine holds an M.A. in business economics and minors in American Studies and South Asian studies from the University of Amsterdam.
Opportunity doesn’t always present itself at the most convenient time. Such is the case of the timing in the summer of 2009 when the opportunity arose for the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) to serve as the pilot for an innovative data collection activity by the Federal government. You may recall that coincides with the time period for the windfall funding event under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Like our colleagues at the FDP meeting the previous May, we were in full blown panic mode trying to figure out how to accomplish not only processing of these unanticipated proposals and awards but how to fulfill the overwhelming and landmark reporting requirements. Julia Lane, Director of the Science of Science and Innovation Policy Program at the National Science Foundation and John Voeller, working with Dr. Beth Noveck, of the Office of Science and Technology Policy presented the concept for STAR METRICS - Science and Technology for America’s Reinvestment: Measuring the Effect of Research on Innovation, Competitiveness and Science. For more information on this multi-agency venture led by the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), visit the website at https://www.starmetrics.nih.gov/. Whether it was sheer luck, genius or madness, time will tell, it seemed a perfect fit for the FDP and the FDP launched the campaign to assist in the recruitment of participants in the pilot project.

The FDP solicited participants through a webinar and institutions provided the necessary information for consideration. Representatives of the STAR METRICS leadership team chose the targeted group of participants with the goal of having participation from institutions (both public and private with various financial systems) represented and embarked on a whirlwind marketing tour across the country to finalize commitments. Even though this came at an incredibly busy time, colleagues from our sponsored projects, accounting, payroll and human resources departments agreed to participate in a four-hour presentation. Every person in attendance knew this was too important not to pursue and our incredibly inquisitive technical staff rose to the challenge and agreed to support the effort.

Preparation Information on Awards was quite straightforward. This report provided three primary pieces of information for each award: the unique award number (created by concatenating the CFDA number and the sponsor’s project number together), the recipient account number (we used the award’s expenditure account number from our chart of accounts), and the overhead charged during the period being reported. The pilot was planned via conference calls. Julia and company were exceedingly collegial in listening to our concerns and taking into consideration our input resulting in a successful demonstration of the proof of concept. As the FDP moves forward with the second phase recruitment, we were asked to share insights into the technical requirements in hopes that perspective will allay some trepidation regarding the burden of providing the technical support for participation.

Technical Considerations – The IT Perspective

The STAR METRICS team provided broad definitions of the information ideally sought. We agreed to deliver the following four reports for our first tier federally-sponsored research grants and contracts on a quarterly basis:

- Information on Awards
- Information on Individuals
- Information on Vendors
- Information on Subcontracts

Preparing Information on Awards was quite straightforward. This report provided three primary pieces of information for each award: the unique award number (created by concatenating the CFDA number and the sponsor’s project number together), the recipient account number (we used the award’s expenditure account number from our chart of accounts), and the overhead charged during the period being reported. The unique award number served as an external key for use by STAR METRICS, while the recipient account number is the internal key for our accounting system’s information. Since our accounting system uses only two expenditure codes to represent overhead transactions, we cre-
Another hurdle for STAR METRICS reporting.

Similarly, for Information on Vendors and Information on Subawards, we used our expenditure codes to differentiate whether the payment was to a subcontractor or to a vendor, and summed the expenditures by recipient. For both of these reports, we needed to provide a DUNS number to identify the recipient. STAR METRICS then used this DUNS number to plot the economic impact based on the recipient’s location. However, since we did not have the DUNS number available for many of our vendors, we were instructed to put the Zip code into this field, prefacing it with a ‘Z’ so the STAR METRICS analysis would recognize as such.

Information on Individuals was the trickiest report to prepare. It provided salary information for all employees paid by federal awards, including the occupational classification, FTE status, and the proportion of earnings allocated to each award for each person. In implementing our effort reporting system, we had already developed business rules to identify salary expenditures according to the guidelines in OMB Circular A-21 so we used the same rules as the basis for creating our extract for STAR METRICS.

The biggest challenge on Information on Individuals was that the records needed to be depersonalized, yet we still needed unique identifiers for each employee which would be consistent across reporting periods. This was necessary so that STAR METRICS could report on employment trends over time. Social Security numbers, of course, were absolutely off limits for this purpose but even our internal identifier could be linked back to an individual too easily. Fortunately we found an existing unique and persistent identifier in an existing University system that we could use without the need to develop and maintain a crosswalk table specifically for STAR METRICS reporting.

Another hurdle for Information on Individuals was computing the proportion of earnings allocated to each award. To make this calculation, we first needed to select every payroll transaction for each individual paid by sponsored awards, not just the payments made on the target accounts. We used each person’s payment on a specific award as the numerator and the sum of the individual’s payments as the denominator of the equation. In submitting the final report, we filtered out non-sponsored accounts manually, so we added columns to the report that could be used for filtering in Excel, with notations in the column headers that the column should be removed before submitting the report.

At first we thought including the occupational classification information on Information on Individuals might be challenging, since our HR system contains very granular data about classifications, and this information is not directly mapped to expenditure codes. However, the STAR METRICS team requests detailed occupational classifications that they then code and send back for validation. After discussions with the STAR METRICS team, we used the expenditure codes on salary transactions to map to the categories. In a similar vein, determining the FTE status from the data we had available could have been quite complicated, so STAR METRICS agreed to a very simplified method in which student payments were marked as .5 FTE, and all other payments were 1.0 FTE.

One consideration that arose late in development was how to handle sensitive research including research conducted by our classified units. As an institution, we decided to withhold information about these activities, a decision supported by the STAR METRICS team. This meant that each of the reports needed to be modified to omit these projects. Since we don’t have a field in our database specifically flagging all of these projects, we have put a business process in place to identify them before the reporting period so the IT team can modify the reports to delete them. Please note that salary on classified projects must still be picked up by the Information on Individuals report so that the computation of proportion of earnings allocated to award will be accurate. The classified projects are then filtered out manually before report submission.

After preparing these reports, our business experts needed to validate the information. To facilitate this process, we provided a single month’s information, which was compared to the General Ledger. In addition to comparing aggregate amounts on accounts, the person validating selected a sampling of entries from each report to examine them in depth. This was an important element to ensure that the information we provided could be tied back to other existing reports and financial schedules.

Preparing the initial reports took approximately 30 hours, which included time obtaining data definitions and requirement clarifications from the STAR METRICS team. Submitting our quarterly updates require about 5 hours of staff time, most of which is spent identifying and removing sensitive research projects from our final submission. Without that step, the quarterly submissions would take less than an hour to prepare.

Summary

At the most recent FDP meeting, several speakers from federal agencies warned that Congress believes the information provided for ARRA awards is useful and that ARRA reporting in some form is here to stay. We have now moved on to developing systems to collect data required for reporting under the Transparency Act and pondering what additional reporting mandates may be looming in our future. While we are not arguing that providing this information sheds light on the impact and benefits to society of federally funded research, there is an imperative need to simplify and consolidate these onerous and unfunded reporting mandates. STAR METRICS offers us that opportunity and we urge every institution to join Phase 2. This is your opportunity to have a voice in the process.

Louise Nelson is Senior Software Developer/Analyst at The University of Texas at Austin, has supported research-related software systems since 1999. She began her career in research administration as a grants administrator at The Johns Hopkins University. Susan Wyatt Sedwick is Associate Vice President for Research and Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects at The University of Texas at Austin with responsibility for both pre- and post-award research administration. She is currently serving as chair of the Federal Demonstration Partnership and co-chair of the FDP STAR METRICS steering committee.
In 2009, the hot topic in the federal government, educational institutions, and research administration offices throughout the country was the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In conjunction with the ARRA, the Obama administration has placed a focus on transparency. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), originally signed on September 26, 2006, was issued in order “to empower every American with the ability to hold the government accountable for each spending decision and to reduce wasteful spending in the government”. On August 27, 2010, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued final guidance for the federal agencies on the Requirements for Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (Transparency Act) Implementation for financial assistance funding mechanisms (see https://www.fsrs.gov/documents/OMB_Guidance_on_FFATA_Subbaward_and_Executive_Compensation.Reporting_08272010.pdf). In this article, we provide a brief overview of the key components to the Transparency Act and then look at the opportunities and challenges in meeting these additional reporting requirements.

Overview

The FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) is the reporting tool used to capture and report subaward data, including executive compensation on first-tier subawards, to meet the FFATA reporting requirements. The subaward information entered in FSRS will then be displayed on www.USASpending.gov associated with the prime award furthering Federal spending transparency. The reporting system can be accessed through www.fsrs.gov or www.esrs.gov and each site includes a detailed user guide and user demonstration. Many fields self-populate when initial subaward information is entered. In addition, a batch upload option is available for organizations with larger quantities of data and access to more sophisticated information technology (IT) resources.

One of the more challenging requirements of the Transparency Act is the need to report the executive compensation of senior officers on subawards. Executive compensation reporting includes the names and total compensation of each of the five most highly compensated officers of the subrecipient for the calendar year in which the award is awarded only if the following qualifications are applicable:

(i) In the sub recipient’s preceding fiscal year, the subrecipient received the following in Federal support —

(A) 80% or more of its annual gross revenue; and

(B) $25,000,000 in Federal awards;

and

(ii) The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the senior executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Therefore, most universities in the NCURA community may be exempt from this reporting requirement. You will want to verify this exemption with your research administration offices.

Grants vs. Contracts

Details regarding the reporting requirements on subawards depend on whether the award was issued as a grant or a Federal contract. If an initial Grant award was made on or after October 1, 2010, in the amount equal to or over $25,000, the prime awardee must report the subaward and executive compensation (if required). If the initial Grant award was below $25,000 but subsequent modifications were made to result in a total award equal to or over $25,000, the award would be subject to reporting requirements. If the initial award amounts to or exceeds $25,000, but subsequent modifications were made to de-obligate the amount where it falls below $25,000, then the award continues to be subject to reporting requirements of FFATA. On any sub-award of $25,000 or above, the prime awardee is required to file a FFATA subaward report by the end of the month following the month in which the sub-grant is awarded. Therefore, it is more than likely that this new requirement affects nearly all institutions’ research administration offices.

Prime Contract Recipients awarded a Federal contract or order that is subject to Federal Acquisition Regulation clause 52.204-10 (Reporting Executive Compensation and First-Tier Subcontract Awards) are required to file a FFATA subaward report by the end of the...
Finding Opportunities

Our Pre-Award and Post-Award research administration offices continue to encounter challenges each time we are faced with new federal regulations. ARRA forced everyone to quickly assimilate team members from various offices in our universities to review the upcoming regulations and prepare accordingly. Simultaneously, many universities continue to reduce their operating budgets, resulting in slower or eliminated electronic systems implementations, reduction in staff members, and limited travel for training opportunities. However, the systems implemented, teams assembled, and lessons learned from ARRA reporting can be used to fulfill the FFATA requirements.

Close Communication Communication between Pre-Award and Post-Award offices is imperative in order to facilitate the FFATA reporting process. Everyone, both prime awardee and subrecipient, needs to understand the requirements and the reporting process and maintain consistency. In addition, Pre-Award offices must increase up-front coordination with the Post-Award office, research departments, faculty, and information technology.

Systems Some universities are fortunate to have electronic data systems and skilled IT professionals who can implement system-driven reporting capabilities. The systems implemented for ARRA reporting can be revised in order to fulfill the FFATA tools. However, systems are only as good as the data ("garbage in equals garbage out"). Users who input data that is used for FFATA reporting, such as prime award data or subrecipient data, must understand the requirements and their importance. Subsequently, subrecipients who provide data to prime awardees must understand the requirements and their importance.

Processes Regardless of the size of your university, Pre-Award and/or Post-Award offices may implement non-system processes that don’t “break the budget”. For example, an office might have color-coded “FFATA” subrecipient files that are highly visible to any administrator. Staff should be cross-trained with multiple backups, alleviating reliance on any single administrator in order to ensure your university is compliant with the FFATA requirement. Again, clear communication across all responsible parties is imperative.

Networking Once again, networking across the country is important in order to keep up with the ever-changing regulations and maintain consistency with the interpretations of new guidelines. If your travel budget is limited, and you are unable to attend the federal agency updates provided in Washington, D.C. throughout the year, you may joint any one of the numerous research administration list serves that are available, including the NCURA neighborhood list-serves (join by e-mailing info@ncura.edu). Participating in a network will allow you to view other universities’ questions, responses, and advice. It provides a community especially needed for those smaller institutions with one-person offices.

Conclusion

As we transition through ARRA and FFATA reporting, it is evident that the continuous process of reporting will not be something that we can expect to go away. There will continue to be a request by the federal government to report on the results of our research. In turn, this will place significant demands on universities. After all, our universities did a great job meeting the demand to report on ARRA. Likewise, universities will strive to be compliant and fulfill the same obligations for FFATA.
Export Controls

Exemptions & Custodial

By Steve Mackey, Director of Research Policy

Introduction

Export controls are governed by three major regimes of U.S. export regulations that may impact research and instruction at U.S. institutions of higher education: Export Administration Regulations (EAR) administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce, International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) administered by the U.S. Department of State, and country-specific sanctions and embargoes administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury.

Universities have a long standing history of academic freedom which is often used as the basis in justifying exemptions from export control restrictions in both the academic and research arenas. The primary exemptions used in a university setting are the Fundamental Research Exemption (FRE) and/or the Education Exemption. Both are well understood by most institutions and used to exempt much of the activities underway. While these exemptions are broad and cover many research and education activities, they are often misused in assuming there are no export control requirements for equipment used in a faculty member’s activities. One of the biggest mistakes a faculty member, administrator, or institutional official can make in dealing with export controls is the assumption that these exemptions extend beyond the exempt activity to the equipment used in that activity.

An area often overlooked in considering export controls is the custodial control of equipment, information, or software (technology) that is or may be subject to export control even under these exemptions. Custodial controls can be thought of as being responsible for ensuring the technology (subject to export control) is not exported through theft, shipping, or other means of inappropriate disclosure, such as deemed exports. Meaning an export can happen through sharing the controlled equipment or information with a foreign national, even if the item never leaves the country.

The Department of Commerce (DOC) defines technology as:

“Specific information necessary for the ‘development,’ ‘production,’ or ‘use’ of a product. The information takes the form of ‘technical data’ or ‘technical assistance.’” (U.S. Government, 2009)

DOC defines the Deemed Export Rule as:

“An export of technology or source code (except encryption source code) is ‘deemed’ to take place when it is released to a foreign national within the United States. See §734.2(b) (2) (ii) of the Export Administration Regulations (EAR).” (US Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security)

While deemed exports are not defined in ITAR regulations, the principle still applies, but is considered and referred to as a “permanent export.”

How Does This Affect Us?

What this means to your institution may be best illustrated through an example. One institution uses a small gas turbine engine to teach students about alternative fuels and the impact of various mixtures on consumption rates and thrust output. While the activities conducted are exempt from Export Controls, the equipment utilized remains controlled. The faculty member and the administration are responsible for ensuring they control the equipment for as long as it remains at the institution. The Export Control Office implemented a Technology Control Plan (TCP) outlining the security plan and disposal requirements for the equipment when it has reached the end of its useful life. It cannot simply be sold to the local scrap metal yard and written off. There’s a decommissioning process that must be adhered to as outlined in the TCP. While the teaching activities enjoy the freedom of Education Exemption, the institution and faculty member remain responsible for the custodial control of the equipment.

Another research institution utilizes highly sensitive military grade equipment. While the research conducted by the team is exempt from export controls under FRE, the equipment must be controlled. In this instance the PI required a license because foreign nationals working at the host institution had access to and were using the equipment in a collaborative agreement (Deemed Export rule). In addition to the license, the institution and PI implemented a TCP outlining additional custodial controls for the equipment when it was not in use that included locked cabinets, checkout logs, and security cameras. While the research was exempt from export controls under FRE, the PI and institution still had custodial control responsibilities and licensing requirements. In these examples, the research and teaching activities were exempt from export control, but still required either additional controls and/or licensing.
What Can Be Done?

What can be done to help ensure that your faculty retain their FRE and Educational Exemptions, but still have strong custodial controls? As with any compliance program, a combination of training and awareness and a robust system of checks and balances are key elements in program effectiveness. While not all inclusive nor appropriate to every situation and institution, the following actions can help to close the risk gap associated with export controls.

Training and Awareness:

- Train your faculty to avoid making assumptions about exemptions. Your export control office likely conducts training sessions on a regular basis. During these sessions, use real-world examples appropriate to the audience. For example, you would not want to use a “controlled substance” example with faculty working on wind resistant materials used in construction.

- CITI Export Control Certification: Is your institution a CITI participant? If so, the modules are free. Encourage or require faculty who are engaged in activities using controlled information to take the Export Control Modules available in CITI. Visit the CITI webpage at: [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org) for further information.

Checks and Balances through Institutional Partnerships:

- Purchasing: Work with your purchasing department to incorporate procedures for purchase agreements that include checks for export control clauses and restrictions.

- Legal and Technology Transfer: Work with your Legal and Technology Transfer departments to review contracts, MTA’s, and other agreements for export control clauses or restrictions on publication rights.

- Faculty: Ask your faculty to check existing equipment, handbooks, and vendors for export control restrictions on items already purchased and in use in their classrooms and/or labs.

Facilitate Disclosure:

- If something of concern is identified by a faculty or other member of the institution, make it easy for them to report the details.

- Resist overreacting. Yes, export control violations can and do carry serious repercussions; but do your home-work and make a calm, measured response. When something is identified, refer it to your institutional export control office. Allow them time to make a determination. It’s likely that an exemption applies, no violation has occurred, and corrective action is simply to implement a TCP. In instances where an inadvertent export may have taken place, they know what corrective actions are appropriate for the situation.

Wrapping It All Together

Remember, while most of the work being conducted at your institution enjoys the Fundamental Research or Educational Exemptions, there are custodial control concerns. Work with your export control office to ensure that your faculty and researchers are properly trained, partner with other institutional offices to incorporate checks into their daily procedures, and making disclosure simple and controlled. These are essential steps to take in addressing the inappropriate use of the Fundamental Research or Education Exemptions. Most importantly, do not assume these traditional exemptions absolve your faculty or institution from custodial control responsibilities.

References


Steve Mackey is the Director of Research Policy at the University of Miami. In addition to managing the university Export Control Program, Steve is responsible for all research policy issues. Some of his projects include work on the Embryonic Stem Cell Research Oversight (ESCOR) Committee, conflict of interest, scientific misconduct, information security, clinical research billing and compliance, Clinical Trials Management System (CTMS) integration, and strategic planning. Prior to joining the university in 2003, Steve spent time as an IT project manager, chief business official in a public school district and 12 years overseas in the U.S. Air Force. Steve can be reached at (305)-243-9545 or via e-mail at smackey@med.miami.edu.
Transparency’s Impact on eRA

By Rebecca Puig

Have you been keeping track of the number of reporting websites that have emerged over the last two years? At last count, at least seven sites (FSRS, FederalReporting.gov, Research.gov, E-Verify, Recovery.gov, ClinicalTrials.gov, Star Metrics) have emerged, all designed to provide the public with information regarding current and ongoing federally funded research projects.

Reporting requirements vary by site, from monthly to quarterly to end of project. Some systems are extremely user friendly, with more than adequate user documentation; while others lack even the most basic FAQs. With each reporting cycle come a new set of guidelines and a list of additional data elements that are needed. The majority of these reporting requirements can be managed centrally by the Sponsored Research offices, while others require that the data be entered by the researchers.

The most recent addition to the collection of reporting websites is the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward Reporting System (www/fsrs.gov). At the January 24-26, 2011, meeting of the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), Karen Lee, Controller at the Office of Management and Budget, provided the audience with an overview of the system. She touched on issues such as, “If you cannot find your prime award on the website you should not try to add it, but contact the agency directly instead. This usually means that the agency has not loaded the award into the system.” “The Federal Government will pre-populate the Prime Award information,” Lee stated, and she stressed the importance of requiring that your subawardees register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). By registering, subawardees can ensure that when their nine-digit zip codes are entered into FSRS it will pre-populate their contact information. (Lee, 2011)

Since many of you may be reporting for the first time this month, here are a few quick tips to using the FSRS system. From the main website (www.fsrs.gov) look for the “Log In or Register Now” box, click on the “Awardees” icon to either log in or register your organization. Once you have registered, you will need to review and agree to the standard Terms and Conditions for using the website. Under the FFATA banner, you will see a navigation bar. The “Profile” tab allows you to review and edit your institutional information. The “Worklist” tab is where you will navigate through lists of contracts and grants to identify those that fall within the reporting requirements. These lists can be sorted by Award Number, Top Level Federal Agency, Agency, or Type. The last tab allows you to “Create/Review Reports.” A single FFATA report or a Batch can be uploaded through this feature. To perform a “Batch” upload, you can select either the Excel or XML templates for reporting. There are two classifications of templates as well; one is for contracts and one for grants. If you are creating a single report, there are step-by-step instructions that will walk you through the process.

Overall, the FSRS website is very intuitive. There are several presentations available online at http://www.usaspending.gov/learn?tab=FAQ#30 that provide a broad overview of the reporting process. Updates to the FSRS website are also chronicled here.

Reference:
Lee, K. January 24-26, 2011, meeting of the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), Washington, DC.

Let the reporting begin!

URLs cited:
E-verify: http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6da/?vgnextoid=75bce2e261405110VgnVCM100004718190aRCRD&vgnextchannel=75bce2e261405110VgnVCM100004718190aRCRD
FederalReporting.gov
FFATA: fsrs.gov
Research.gov
Star Metrics: https://www.starmetrics.nih.gov/

Rebecca Puig has been at University of South Florida (USF) for over twenty-two years and joined the field of research administration in 1999 as a computer programmer analyst for the Division of Patents & Licensing. In 2000, she joined the Division of Sponsored Research to serve as an Electronic Research Administrator and has served in various capacities within the Division since that time. In 2010, she was appointed Director of USF’s Division of Sponsored Research and is responsible for all pre-award activities. She holds an MS in Entrepreneurship in Applied Technologies and will be pursuing her PhD in the fall of 2011.
I first met Martin Kirk at the 2010 Conference of the International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) in Cape Town, South Africa, and we immediately became close colleagues and friends. Dr. Kirk currently serves as Director of Research Services at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, Canada, where he also oversees sponsored research administration ($550 million in funding) and research compliance. Dr. Kirk is also Vice President of the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators (CAURA), as well as CAURA’s incoming President-elect. He previously served as Associate Vice President for Research and Director of Research Services at the University of Calgary, and prior to that assignment spent five years as Manager of Environment, Health and Safety at the University of Calgary. Dr. Kirk has also worked for Imperial Oil, and for Alberta Sulphur, a university-industry research firm. Dr. Kirk earned his Ph.D. in applied chemistry from the University of Calgary, and a B.Sc. (honors) in chemistry from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland.

(1) Question: Martin, please tell us a little about how you became a university research administrator?

I spent a very rewarding 12 years in research after completing my Ph.D., and during that time had the opportunity of working for two years with Imperial/Exxon in an industrial research position. I enjoyed working in the lab and teaching, but just hankered for a more people-oriented career. I enjoyed the energy and innovative atmosphere of the university research world, so research administration offered the ideal opportunity to share in the excitement while enjoying a more active, people-focused role.

I had a great boss (around 1998) who offered me the opportunity of working half time for the Vice President of Research (VPR) without charging for my time. It was a wonderful opportunity to try out a role in research administration. I quickly became an assistant to the VPR and later Director of the Office for Research Services, and then I was appointed Associate VPR. As is often the case, a combination of good bosses and role models, a keen attitude, a bit of luck, and you find yourself in a great career!

(2) Question: What do you see as CAURA’s vision for the next 3-5 years?

My recent trip to the NCURA conference in Washington, D.C. provided a great opportunity to view what success in building a top quality research administration association looks like. In the next 3-5 years time, CAURA will have:

• Attracted many more members on the basis of providing value to the membership.
• A stronger sponsorship base that helps provides sustainable funding to CAURA.
• Developed a much improved offering of professional development opportunities that meet the diverse needs both in terms of member experience and subject expertise.
• Developed stronger regional branches of CAURA throughout Canada.
• Stronger relationship with the Federal funders and take a more effective advocate role on behalf of members/institutions.
• A more strategic role/voice in the national innovation policy setting arena.
• Productive and strategic partnerships with our sister organizations: INORMS, NCURA, SRA, EARMA, ACU, ARMA, ARMS, etc.

(3) Question: To what extent is the global economic slowdown impacting public and private funding of university-based research throughout Canada?

We have not seen a tremendous impact on funding with the global economic slowdown. Federal funding programs have taken a “business as usual” approach and we are on a steady state/keep up with inflation course. The univer-
sity system has requested a 4% increase for the three key federal funders this year. Industry funding is also about the same as before at about 10% of total research revenue for UBC.

(4) Question: How is federal innovation policy evolving in Canada and what is the impact upon research funding and research administration?

We are seeing a definite reorientation in innovation policy in Canada. Beginning in the mid 90s we saw a large increase in research funding through programs like Canada’s Foundation for Innovation (http://www.innovation.ca/en) and the Canada Research Chairs Program (http://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/home-acceuil-eng.aspx), along with substantial increases for core research funding agencies such as Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (http://wwwSSHRC-CSRGC.ca/), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/), and our Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/).

Around 2005-2006, a focus on research partnerships with industry became the new model for research funding programs. For example, programs like the Centres of Excellence for Commercialization and Research (http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/NetworksCentres-CentresReseaux/CECR-CECR_eng.asp) and the business-led Networks of Centres of Excellence (http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/NetworksCentres-CentresReseaux/BLNE-RC EE_eng.asp) became typical of the new brand of industry partnership research funding programs.

A special committee named the Science, Technology and Innovation Council was also created to define national research strategic priorities (http://www.cstitc-sticti.ca/eic/site/sticti.nsf/eng/Home). Most recently (Oct 2010) another expert panel was established to study all federal support, and the panel published an important progress report that readers can view at http://rd-review.ca/eic/site/033.nsf/vwapa/Consultation-Paper.pdf/$file/Consultation-Paper.pdf.

In sum, we are certainly well into a research funding era where partnership with industry is very important, as is a much stronger accountability to successfully communicate the benefits of research to society and focus on areas well beyond the traditional boundaries of technology transfer.

(5) Question: How has the global financial meltdown impacted research funding/administration:

In Canada there have been significant amounts of money spent on stimulus spending, but mainly on large capital projects. Research funding has been in a steady state through these challenging times. Our federal government, unlike that in the USA, does not seem to think we can innovate our way through this current mess. Luckily, Canadian banks are in fairly good shape but it will still be several years until we get back to a balanced federal budget.

(6) I am sure our readers would like to know the extent to which, in your opinion, Canadian research administration differs from that in the USA?

The biggest difference between US and Canadian research administration concerns resourcing. Our federal grants are accompanied by 20 cents on the dollar of indirect costs/overheads, so we struggle to keep pace with supporting the growth of research when our real cost of supporting research (overall) is more like 50 cents on the dollar. The thresholds for compliance are also higher in the USA. Recent site visits from US federal agencies have demonstrated exactly how intricate compliance is with US funding agencies. Researcher support is more extensive in the US and new researchers arriving in Canada are always amazed at how many of the “administrative” tasks are carried out by the PI here!

The number and complexity of research funding sources are also higher in the USA, which means that our research and sponsored projects operations have to be expert in managing funding programs from international sources as well as from Canadian sponsors. Likewise, foundations, are much more prevalent in the USA than in Canada.

(7) One last Question: Any final thoughts or ideas you would like to share with NCURA members?

A few final thoughts:

1. At the INORMS conference we both attended in Cape Town in 2010, I chaired a session on research outcome metrics and the plenary speaker was Bill Trochim from Cornell. He is a world expert on research evaluation and he presented some superb research on research outcome metrics. As we discussed research administration, Bill suggested that we (as research administrators) had a huge role to play in the interface with researchers, and as such we had the potential to cause either great efficiencies in research administration or otherwise. He urged us to develop robust metrics for research administrative efficiency and to monitor them and work to drive out inefficiencies in our various interactions with the research community. Personally, I think he is right and I know researchers in Canada and the US spend far too long on administrative tasks. I’d like to see us as a profession work together to develop a basket of efficiency metrics that we all agree on. We would then monitor our performance and really work hard to drive towards more efficient administration and a more productive research community. We also should work with the funders to drive out unnecessary administrative processes. I read that the average researcher in the US spends 50% of their time on administrative (non-research) activities. Imagine the research productivity gain if we could reduce the administrative burden/delay, etc, by just 5%.

2. A final thought is that CAURA and NCURA members have many common issues, challenges and opportunities. We really ought to work harder to identify opportunities to partner and leverage our activities.

3. A final, final thought is just “thank you” for this opportunity, and to extend a warm invite to your members to connect with CAURA/myself whenever the opportunity arises! We have our national conference coming up in Ottawa in May (lovely time to visit our capital city) and NCURA members are very welcome!

We thank you, Martin, for a terrific interview. Dr. Kirk can be reached at martin.kirk@ors.ubc.ca.

---

Dr. John M. Carfora is Associate Vice President for Research Advancement and Compliance at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and co-author of The Art of Funding and Implementing Ideas: A Guide to Proposal Development and Project Management (Sage, 2010).
Call for Traveling Workshop Faculty

Are you a veteran research administrator who likes to teach? Do you enjoy sharing your knowledge and expertise with colleagues? Are you looking to give something back? The Professional Development Committee invites members to consider applying or nominating colleagues to serve as faculty for our traveling workshops. NCURA currently offers four traveling workshops:

- **Departmental Research Administration Workshop**
- **Financial Research Administration Workshop**
- **Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop**
- **Sponsored Project Administration Level II Workshop**

Faculty appointments are three year terms beginning January 2012. These prestigious positions include a required adult learning styles training this fall and a workshop observation prior to teaching. An honorarium is provided for each workshop you teach. NCURA reimburses all travel costs. More details including the application/nomination and recommendation forms will be available in the call for faculty later this spring.

Please contact PDC Chair Pat Hawk at patricia.hawk@oregonstate.edu with any questions.

PRA 5

Our Kind of Town — NCURA’s Fifth Annual Pre-Award Research Administration Conference Heads to Chicago!

NCURA’s fifth PRA Conference, *Creating a Solid Foundation: Building Blocks to Research Success*, will take place July 24-26, 2011, at the historic Hilton Palmer House in Chicago, Illinois. Program Committee Co-chairs Glenda Bullock, Washington University in St. Louis, and Dianne Horrocks of Idaho State University have recruited a talented and experienced group of NCURA members to fashion an innovative learning event guaranteed to equip you with both the tools you need to succeed and the opportunity to make new connections with colleagues from across the country and beyond. Members of the committee are: Kathi Delehoy, Colorado State University; Mary Daley Greenwood, NICDR, NIH; Julie Guggino, Central Washington University; Kathleen Harris, Texas Tech; Vicki Krell, Arizona State University; Denise McCartney, Washington University in St. Louis; Debbie Newton, The University of Tulsa; Kathleen Taggart, Creighton University; Joe Taylor, Huron Consulting; Jaynee Tolle, CTI Clinical Trials; Carol Zuiches, University of Chicago; Ben Prince, University of Massachusetts Medical School of Worcester; and Bruce Elliot, Northwestern University.

Workshop Co-chairs Michelle Powell of the Georgia Institute of Technology and Tricia Callahan of Miami University will increase the number of pre-conference workshop selections this year, affording attendees the opportunity to attend both morning and afternoon sessions.

When asked what they believe are important take-aways from the upcoming conference both Bullock and Horrocks agreed on two things: making sure people have a solid understanding of the pre-award process and increasing their network of colleagues. Bullock noted, “You need a solid foundation. If there are problems at the beginning of the grant process, those problems will follow you all the way through the life of the grant! We want to make sure everyone knows how to start out the right way.” Horrocks agreed and added, “Beyond leaving the conference with a full toolkit, we want to make sure everyone has added at least one new email address or phone number. When you leave, we want you to have a new go-to colleague that will be a resource for you long after the conference has ended.”
Since stipends paid for services rendered are considered wages under IRS regulations, it’s really important to make sure that the investigators who tend to use the terms “salary” and “stipend” interchangeably understand the difference between the two. Per the March 1, 2007 Policies and Practices: Compensation, Effort Commitments, and Certification issued by the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR), “…if a graduate student is receiving compensation (salary) for services performed on a grant, this effort should be certified. If the student is receiving a stipend, the conventional wisdom is that this is educational assistance (i.e., student aid), and this activity need not be certified through an effort report.”

Potentially ambiguous term number two is “participant support.” While reviewing budget justifications, I often see the term “participant support” used when what is probably more appropriate is “subject payment.” Human subject payments are typically small payments made to individuals who are taking part (notice I didn’t say “participate”; it was close though) in a research project as a human subject. These costs are typically listed in a proposal budget under “other direct costs” and can be subject to F&A costs depending on your negotiated rate agreement. Participant support costs are usually stipends, subsistence allowances, registration fees, supplies/manuals/training materials paid to, or on behalf of, those who are attending meetings, conferences, symposia, training activities and workshops. These costs are an excludable category and are generally not subject to indirect costs.

The last idiom that comes up periodically is “tuition remission.” What exactly does this mean and is it the same thing as “tuition?” From my perspective, the two are not interchangeable terms although they are often used that way. “Tuition Remission” usually refers to the process by which the institution foregoes collecting the full tuition for a graduate research assistant appointment. There is no intent to collect the value of the tuition charge from the student on tuition remissions. Per OMB Circular A-21, Section J.10.f.(2): “Fringe benefits in the form of employer contributions or expenses for social security, employee insurance, workers’ compensation insurance, tuition or remission of tuition for individual employees are allowable, provided such benefits are granted in accordance with established educational institutional policies, and are distributed to all institutional activities on an equitable basis.” Tuition remission is often treated as part of the compensation paid to a graduate student working on a sponsored project. On the other hand, “tuition” is typically considered the amount of money charged to students for instructional services. Tuition may be charged on a per-term, per course, or per-credit basis. Therefore, while they sound similar, they are usually budgeted differently on a proposal, expensed differently on a sponsored account, be subject to F&A costs if part of graduate student’s compensation (fringe benefits), yet not be subject to F&A if part of a training grant or fellowship. Knowing the difference between the two, and being able to describe that clearly to a PI is important so that, for ex-

---

**COMPLIANCE WATCH**

**SNAP-R Changes**

The Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), US Department of Commerce, implemented their new on-line registration and self-management system on February 9, 2011. Electronic registration will be required beginning March 31, 2011. The system allows new registrants to receive a Company Identification Number and create an account in just a few minutes, in contrast to the 7 to 14 days required with paper submissions. Despite this improvement in service, registration with BIS remains free of charge. Registration is required to submit export or re-export license requests, commodity classification requests, encryption registrations and agricultural license exception notices through SNAP-R; paper submission is not allowed.

BIS has also added an Account Administrator role in SNAP-R. The Account Administrator will be responsible for updating institutional information and assigning roles for new users from their institution. New institutional registrants will need to designate an Account Administrator during the registration process. Current SNAP-R users have the opportunity to designate themselves as their institution’s Account Administrator, so if your institution has multiple SNAP-R users you’ll need to make an institutional decision regarding the appropriate person or position to assume these responsibilities.

Kelly Hochstetler is the chair of the Compliance Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director, Office of Export Controls, at the University of Virginia.

---

**DAN WATCH**

**Understanding Terms Used in Departmental Research Administration**

Isn’t it interesting that my twenty plus years experience in the field of Research Administration have not yet inured me to the fact that the use of a single word can cause simultaneous amusement and creative cursing? Why, you ask? Because that word can mean completely different things to the various parties involved.

Off the top of my head, I can think of 3 terms that are often misused or at least interpreted differently by faculty and research administrators. The first one is stipend.

To a research administrator, the term “stipend” typically refers to payment for an individual (student or non-university employee) who is attending a conference/workshop or to someone on a training grant or fellowship. Since stipends paid for services rendered are considered wages under IRS
ample, you aren’t charging tuition on a research project (usually not allowed) vs. on a training grant (allowed).

The take-away message? Communicate clearly and often with your investigators as you work with them to develop their proposals. Knowing and using the correct terminology in the appropriate situation will help you, your research faculty, and your sponsored projects office in the long run.

Vicki Krell is a member of the Departmental Administration Neighborhood Committee and serves as Research Advancement Supervisor, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University.

PAN WATCH

Pre-award research administrators have been officially tasked with responding to the post-award reporting requirements mandated by Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) since July 8, 2010, the birthdate of Federal Acquisition Regulation clause 52.204-10 (Reporting Executive Compensation and First-Tier Subcontract Awards).

The reporting requirements for Federal contracts that contain the FAR clause have been implemented in three phases, where (1) until September 30, 2010, any newly-awarded subcontract needed to be reported if the prime contract award amount was $20,000,000 or more; (2) from October 1, 2010, until February 28, 2011, any newly-awarded subcontract needed to be reported if the prime contract award amount was $550,000 or more; and (3) as of March 1, 2011, newly awarded subcontracts must be reported if the prime contract award amount is $25,000 or more. Reporting is required for any subcontract greater than or equal to $25,000.

Check out the article in this issue of NCURA magazine entitled “Transparency Equals Opportunity,” coauthored by current Pre-Award Neighborhood Committee Member Denise Moody (of Princeton University) and past Pre-Award Neighborhood Committee Chair Robyn Remotigue (of Mississippi State University) for further information on FFATA’s implementation for both Federal contract and grant awards, as well as timely discussion of ideas for further innovation as institutions continue to evolve to manage these additional reporting requirements.

Kevin Stewart is a member of the Pre-Award Neighborhood Committee and serves as Senior Sponsored Projects Officer, Office of Research at University of California - Santa Barbara.

PUI WATCH

PUI Committee Establishes Mentor Program

PUIs are exciting and rewarding places to work, but for those who have worked in a more research intensive school and moved to a PUI or those who are new to research administration, there is much to master. The PUI Neighborhood Committee heard from newer PUI neighborhood members that there was often a need to talk “off the listserv” with others who have been working at PUIs for some time. The PUI committee listened and responded by establishing a PUI mentor program in 2011.

The PUI mentor program is designed to match those with five years experience in PUIs with someone newer to PUI world. The purpose is to connect new NCURA members or members who are new to PUIs with mentors who want to be ambassadors for NCURA by being a resource for colleagues and support in the everyday challenges and opportunities of working at a PUI.

Recruitment for the program began at NCURA’s Annual Meeting in November. The response from those desiring a mentor has been overwhelming. We have pairs matched for this inaugural year, with more would-be mentees on a waiting list. Interested in sharing your knowledge by being a mentor? Please contact ssouthwick@keene.edu or kmonahan@wellesley.edu

Sally Southwick is a member of the PUI Neighborhood committee and serves as Associate Director, Office of Sponsored Projects & Research, Keene State College and Kris Monahan is a member of the PUI Neighborhood committee and serves as Director of Pre-Award Services, Wellesley College.

eRA WATCH

Here is some of the latest news from the eRA neighborhood.

NSF has released special instructions for entering the Primary Place of Performance (PPOF). You may encounter an error message stating that a “valid zip code is required” especially if your institution has created additional zip+4 numbers that are not officially recognized by USPS. In order to avoid this issue, NSF recommends that you enter the zip code of the street address of the university or business, which can be obtained by searching http://usps.com by the street address.

NIH has recently released two new “All About Grants” podcasts one explaining the requirements for Responsible Conduct of Research training and another discussing the relationship between application due dates, cycle dates, and award dates. See http://grants.nih.gov/All_About_Grants/index.htm for these and other podcasts.

Want to learn more about NIH and NSF current issues?

Vanderbilt University will host the NSF Regional Grants Conference March 21-22 in Nashville, TN. Registration and details can be found at https://www.signup4.net/public/ap.aspx?EID=NATI358E&OID=50.

Arizona State University is hosting a NIH Regional Seminar April 27-29 in Scottsdale, AZ.

Florida Atlantic University is hosting a NIH Regional Seminar June 22-24 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Registration and details for the NIH Seminars can be found at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/seminars.htm.

Sally Egloff is a member of the eRA Neighborhood Committee and serves as the eRA Program Manager in the Office of Research Administration and Advancement at the University of Maryland.
The NCURA Annual Meeting Planning Committee met in January and is already hard at work at planning the November 2011 Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will once again incorporate a strong thread for International Research Administration and offer a variety of concurrent sessions, and solution discussion groups and workshops. This year the International Track is being led by Norm Hebert, Director of International Research Administration, Brown University. Also, the NCURA - EARMA Fellowship Program evaluation teams completed their reviews of the beta phase of the fellowship program. Both groups submitted their reports to the Ambassador Corps and the NCURA Board of Directors. The Board recently met and approved the Fellowship Program and also approved awarding up to five $2,000 travel awards. There will be a call for both Institutional Hosts and for Fellows forthcoming — keep an eye on your e-mail and the NCURA website. We are delighted to report that NCURA’s ongoing commitment to international research administration remains strong!!!

Denise Wallen is chair of International Neighborhood Committee and serves as Senior Fellow, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico.

FRA WATCH

NIH makes updates to 2 key electronic reporting systems

eRA Commons to use the FFR (in lieu of the FSR) as of 2/1/2011. NIH has implemented the expenditure data portion of the Federal Financial Report (FFR) in the eRA Commons. The transition to use of the FFR for reporting expenditure data includes new reporting dates for annual FFRs, and the reporting of cumulative (life-to-date) data only. Due dates of final reports will remain unchanged and will continue to be 90 days after the project period end date. The system will permit revisions to previously submitted cash expenditure reports. Any revision must be submitted in the original format, i.e., revisions to FSRs submitted prior to February 1, 2011 must be submitted as FSRs, and revisions to FFRs must be submitted as FFRs.


xTrain is mandatory for all submissions of PHS 2271 Statement of Appointment of PHS 416-7 Termination Notices as of 1/1/11. xTrain provides program directors/principal investigators, university administrators, and trainees the ability to electronically prepare and submit PHS 2271 Statement of Appointment forms and PHS 416-7 Termination Notices associated with institutional research training grants, institutional career development awards, individual fellowships and research education awards. T32, T34, T35, T90, TL1, TU2, T15, K12, KL2, KM1, R25 and R90 awards can now utilize xTrain. After January 1, paper appointment forms and termination notices will not be accepted. Paper submissions will be considered noncompliant and grantees will be required to resubmit appointment forms and termination notices electronically using xTrain.

http://era.nih.gov/services_for_applicants/other/xTrain.cfm

Brian J. Sevier is the chair of the FRA Neighborhood Committee and serves as Associate Director, Contracts and Grants at the University of Florida.
that traveling workshop faculty are, in essence, contract employees for NCURA and adherence to NCURA’s high standards of conduct regarding conflict of interest and confidentiality is expected.

Also with an eye toward excellence, NCURA will be adding an additional tutorial on intellectual property in the coming months. This addition will complement the current tutorial offerings: Subawards, Federal Contracting, and Clinical Trials.

As for NCURA’s Big Audacious Goal, our international members will now experience affirmation and inclusiveness with the creation of an International Region, and the EARMA-NCURA Fellowship Program will have “beta” removed. The Call for Fellows will be updated accordingly and, in addition to seeking sponsorships for the Fellowship Program, NCURA will offer a monetary award to partially offset expenses for up to five Fellows selected.

While not yet implemented as an action item, guidelines on advertising and sponsorships were discussed and are anticipated to be finalized in the weeks ahead. Also on the horizon is NCURA’s website redesign effort. Noticeable changes may not occur for several months, but the new website approach is envisioned to be broad and inclusive, and clearly focused on member value.

The Board of Directors meeting was highly productive. Much was accomplished. While moments of levity were sprinkled throughout, the Board was focused and worked toward consensus. I shared with the Board that I’d recently heard that the Chinese character for change is actually made up of two separate characters: one for hidden danger, the other for hidden opportunity. While I’ve since learned that this interpretation may in fact be more urban myth than reality, I remain steadfast in my belief that NCURA shall thrive from taking a visionary approach that balances hidden opportunity with hidden danger. It is an exciting time to be an NCURA member!

Annual Meeting Changes Starting in 2013

Outstanding sessions and networking opportunities keep you and 2,000+ research administrators coming to Washington every year for NCURA’s Annual Meeting. Starting 2013, you can bring the family, too! The 55th Annual Meeting in 2013, and future annual meetings, will be held in August! This move significantly rolls back sleeping room rates and invites you to bring the family and enjoy summertime in Washington!

It’s always easy to pack your days with fun, free things to do in Washington, DC - and it’s even easier during the summertime, when free and bargain-priced concerts, performances, festivals and more abound.

In Washington, DC, you’ll enjoy access to fascinating, FREE attractions and historic sites. Touch a moon rock, marvel at the Hope Diamond, view Dorothy’s Ruby Slippers or explore Native American culture at the Smithsonian Institution’s fifteen Washington, DC area facilities. Discover treasures like the Gutenberg Bible at the Library of Congress, the only daVinci painting in North America at the National Gallery of Art and historic documents like the Declaration of Independence at the National Archives.

Away from these celebrated federal sites, Washington, DC unwinds into a fascinating network of neighborhoods where visitors discover trendy boutiques, hip bars and restaurants, plus art galleries, historic homes and lush parks and gardens. Shoppers love the store-lined streets of Georgetown, while jazz music fans won’t want to miss a trip to U Street, where Duke Ellington played his first notes. The city’s international character shines through in its Adams Morgan and Dupont Circle neighborhoods, two prime destinations for eclectic dining and nightlife and the historic center of the city’s embassy community.

The arrival of several new eateries has made the nation’s capital a prime destination for dining out, with many of the city’s top tables located in the downtown Penn Quarter neighborhood. DC is also earning new recognition as a thriving performing arts town, with 65 professional theatre companies based in the metropolitan area presenting edgy world premieres and celebrated Broadway musicals throughout the year.

Thanks to DC’s pedestrian-friendly streets and its safe, efficient public transportation system—including Metrorail and the hip, new Circulator bus—it’s easy to get from your hotel to Washington, DC’s attractions.

So plan to bring the family, stay and enjoy the city for NCURA’s 55th Annual Meeting in 2013 and beyond!

Future Meeting Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>August 4 – 7, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August 10 – 13, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August 2 – 5, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>August 7 – 10, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August 13 – 16, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>August 5 – 8, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>August 2 – 5, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>August 7 – 10, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>August 13 – 16, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>August 5 – 8, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anyone with a teenager has probably heard “Do It Live.” For my son, the phrase usually relates to a road trip —“Dad, we’re just gonna “Do It Live.”” That means, “…not sure how we’re getting there, how we’ll eat, or where we’ll sleep - but we’re goin’…” As research administrators, don’t we do that too? Something new crosses our desk. We don’t have a clue how to do it, but we answer, “Sure, I’ll make it happen!” We “Do It Live” because we know it needs to be done and it needs to be done NOW. Agreements need signatures NOW, proposals need to be submitted NOW, a budget must be prepared NOW, an expenditure transfer needs to happen NOW, a protocol approval needs to happen NOW, FFATA needs to be reported NOW, chemicals need to be purchased NOW…

Research administrators need to be flexible, nimble, and responsive. As a group, we are quite good at this. It is here we see the payoff for our willingness to “Get Involved.” Staying involved, both within our university and within the research administration community means we have the skills, the most recent information, and we know the right people. Involvement in NCURA, through volunteerism, is one way to build a network of experienced research administrators who may have encountered a similar dilemma. It is our involvement in community that enables us to effectively roll up our sleeves, figure it out and figure it out quick. NCURA is committed to encouraging professional development through service, and we have many opportunities to “get involved.”

Readiness to “Do It Live,” eagerness (most of the time) to “Do It Now,” and willingness to “Get Involved” are valuable characteristics, both expected and appreciated, by our faculty, staff, administrators, and students (even if without much fanfare). The 2011 Annual Meeting Program Committee (the AM53 Team) wants to recognize these important traits and the benefit they bring to research across the nation. As a group, we are not satisfied with the status quo. We’re always looking for “something more.” We intend to offer “something more” at the 2011 National Meeting on November 6-9 in Washington D.C.

So who is the AM53 Team? Let’s start with the Program Co-Chairs, Bruce Morgan, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Research Administration for University of California - Irvine and Kallie Firestone, Senior Compliance Specialist, MIT (yes, she is an Auditor!!). We are represented Coast to Coast, West to East. They are competent, experienced, thoughtful, enthusiastic, committed team players who Do It Live, Do It Now, and Get Involved!
Bruce and I first presented together back in 1996 with our Godfather, Dick Seligman. We did a workshop on subcontracting (and yes it was in sunny Hawaii). Kallie started her illustrious career at Washington State, then the University of Washington, Vanderbilt, and now MIT. I am a lucky guy to have Bruce, the California Surfer/Alpine Skier Dude and Kallie, the “No Holds Barred, but Keep Calm and Carry On” research diva from Boston on the AM53 team.

And there are others, all Rock Stars, on our AM53 Team – check out the list below. We are a group of individuals who, like you, want to work better, faster, stronger. We are creating a program that provides sessions and workshops that will “grow you a little” or “grow you a lot,” depending on your needs. These growth opportunities will be filled with learning, networking, sure tips, practiced ways and experienced speakers; all facilitated to take the important points home and put them into action. “Do It Live, Do It Now - Get Involved” recognizes the important role of research administrators and provides the tools we need to do our jobs and do them well. Of particular note, is our Get Involved Track where NCURA members can submit Concurrent Session ideas for review by the AM53 Program Committee for inclusion in the annual meeting. If you want to step-up and take the challenge of speaking at the national meeting send an email to getinvolvedAM53@ncura.edu and we’ll point you in the right direction.

Another addition to the program involves the Senior Track - we are changing it to the Senior Management Track for research administrators with significant responsibility in their duties whether on the job for a few months or many years.

One of the great things about the NCURA Annual Meeting is the chance to connect and learn from each other. From our Keynote speaker to Dinner to Dancing, we’ve come up with some great ideas to give everyone the opportunity to Get Involved!

NCURA 2011 Team Talent Search - As a fun part of our “Get Involved” theme, we are searching….searching for NCURA Talent. We’ve all heard talk of our Star Researchers - we want to find our Star Research Administrators. We are challenging our NCURA Institutions to Get Involved. Convince your office or institution to put their groove on with a skit, dance, cheer, rap, song, lip sync, or whatever your creativity can muster, please enter our star search competition find guidelines and submission information at:

We issue both a challenge and an invitation – “Do It Live”… “Do it Now”… “Get Involved”... join us at AM53 to strengthen your skills and build connections with your peers. Our 2011 National Meeting on November 6-9 in Washington D.C. will have everything you need to be professionally developed, and everything you need to enjoy being developed. Let’s make this year the best ever!!

AM53 Program Committee

Angela Wishon, University of Colorado Denver - Compliance
Dave Clark, Washington State University - Compliance
Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomed. Research Inst. - Departmental
Jennifer Crockett, Columbia University - Departmental
Beth Seaton, Western Illinois University - Federal
Cynthia Dwyer, National Institutes of Health - Federal
Suzanne Liv Page, University of Miami School of Med. - General - Clinical
Norm Hebert, Brown University - General - Int’l
Steve Hansen, S. Illinois University.Edwardsville - General - Senior Mgmt.
Mark Davis, Attain, LLC - General - Senior Mgmt.
Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico - Human Capital
Sue Rivera, Case Western Reserve U - Human Capital
Leslie Schmidt, Montana State University - Post-Award
Joe Gindhart, Washington University - Post-Award
Kevin Stewart, University of California-Santa Barbara - Pre-Award
Nancy Daneau, State Univ. of NY at Stony Brook - Pre-Award
Joseph McNicholas, Loyola Marymount University - PUI
Heather Offhaus, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Workshop
Toni Shaklee, Oklahoma State University - Workshop
REGION I: New England
http://web.mit.edu/osp/www/ncura

As I began preparing for my year as Chair I was deeply moved (and thrilled) by the depth of commitment and professionalism of all of the members of Region I. Many members, new and “seasoned” alike have stepped forward to work together to continue the successful work of Region I.

Generally, the beginning of a new year brings change to the Chairs for the Region I standing committees. This year we have a mix of new and returning Committee Chairs.

Sara Clabby has agreed to serve the Region this year as the Chair of the Awards Committee. At this time, she and her committee are reviewing the nominations for the FRA Travel Award. The recipient will get a much-needed break from the weather in New England when they journey to San Diego, CA.

Kris Monahan will continue as the Volunteerism and Membership Committee (VMC) Chair. Kris and her committee have updated how Region I supports the growth of our members and volunteers. The Region I Mentor Program now includes a “Question of the Month” email interaction. They have also launched an Online Volunteer Form for members interested in becoming more involved in regional activities, and the Spotlight on Volunteerism, which is currently featuring the Spring Meeting Presenter.

Karen Woodward Massey will return this year as Curriculum Committee Chair. Barbara Richard has volunteered to lead the subcommittee responsible for planning the RADG (Research Administrators Discussion Group) sessions. Our November, December, and January workshops: “Essentials of Sponsored Research Administration”, “Essentials In Action”, and “Current Topics in Research Administration” sold out and received excellent evaluations. These three workshops, and others to be announced, will be offered again in New Haven, CT on May 15, just before the Region 1 Spring Meeting. If you are interested in bringing one or more of these workshops to your institution, please email curriculum@region1.org. And stay tuned for an E-blast soon (or check ncuraregion1.org) about the March Research Administrator’s Discussion Group (RADG) on subrecipient monitoring with Mary Mitchell from Partners Healthcare and Alan Long from Harvard University.

Spring Meeting planning proceeds apace! Pat Fitzgerald, Co-Chair Nancy Kendrick from Yale University, and the Program Committee are hard at work planning a great meeting. Mark your calendars for May 16-18 at the Omni Hotel in New Haven Connecticut. We’ll be sending an email to Region 1 members as soon as early bird registration opens and a preliminary program is posted at ncuraregion1.org.

We are also very fortunate that Nuala McGowan has graciously agreed to Chair the Sponsorship Committee again this year. Nuala’s tireless efforts contributed substantially to the overall success of the Region and the 2010 Spring Meeting.

The Site Committee will continue under the direction of Stacy Riseman. Initial efforts are underway to identify a site for the 2012 Spring Meeting. This is always a fun time for me. Inevitably, many suggest that we “return to Newport, Rhode Island”. I was not part of NCURA for the Newport meeting, but the stories of the meeting (power outages, castles, champagne & lobster) have made it “legendary”.

Other opportunities abound in the region for members to be actively involved in our programs. If you have suggestions or wish to volunteer for any the committees for Region I please visit the Region I website at www.ncuraregion1.org.

Bethanne Giehl is Chair of Region I and serves as Associate Director of Grants and Research Funding at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

REGION II: Mid-Atlantic
www.ncuraregionii.org

If you haven’t yet registered and made your hotel reservations for the Spring Meeting in New York City: today should be the day! Setting Our Sights on the New World of Research Administration will be held at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge in historic Brooklyn Heights, a wonderful, trendy and brownstone-filled area of the Borough of Brooklyn with a fantastic view of the Manhattan skyline. In addition to being a great place for the meeting, the Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge is located adjacent to a subway entrance for quick access to anywhere in Manhattan: Downtown, Chinatown, Greenwich Village, Midtown, Times Square, Uptown, and Museum Mile. We will have information on local restaurants, stores, historical sites, churches, walking tours and sites-to-see available when you arrive, including directions for the short walk to The Promenade and views made famous by movies like Moonstruck and Annie Hall.

Reservations at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge can be made by calling 1-800-228-9290 or 1-718-246-7000; the group is “National Council of University Research Administrators.” The room rate is $212 (does not include taxes) per night. If you are interested in arriving early or staying longer, the hotel rate is available for the three days before and three days after the Meeting.

You can register for the Spring Meeting through the Region II website www.regionII.org by clicking on Spring Meeting.

The overall program for Setting Our Sights on the New World of Re-
search Administration offers great professional development opportunities,beginning with workshops on Sunday afternoon and continuing with presentations and discussion groups through to 1:00 Tuesday afternoon. We have made adjustments to the schedule that has enabled us to offer additional sessions. As you will see in the program, sessions are identified along five tracks (Pre-Award, Post-Award, Departmental Administration, Predominantly Undergraduate Institution, General/Federal) and the skill level that sessions are targeted to is identified as well (Beginner, Intermediate, Senior). Here are some highlights:

**Workshops:** Demystifying Allowability, Allocability, Reasonableness and Consistency at the Transactional Level for the Department Administrator, presented by Denise Clark (University of Maryland) and Brian Squilla (Thomas Jefferson University); OMB Circular Foundations: A-21 and A-122, the Cost Principles, A-110, the Administrative Principles, and A-133, the Audit Principles, presented by Ann Holmes (University of Maryland) and Betty Farbman (New York University); Federal Training Grants: From Application Development to Close-Out, presented by Walter Goldschmidt (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory), Kristine Kulage (Columbia University), Ruth Torres (Columbia University); and, Managing Intellectual Property, presented by Gregory Slack (Clarkson University), George McGuire (Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC).

**Plenary Keynote Speaker:** Claude M. Steele, Ph.D., Provost, Columbia University. Dr. Steele will talk about his new book, Whistling Vivaldi: And Other Clues to How Stereotypes Affect Us (Issues of Our Time), a new study of cultural stereotypes that shows how, even in the absence of explicit racism, negative stereotypes can continue to pervade American life and have far-reaching influences on our behavior.

**Region II Distinguished Service Awards:** The presentation of the 2011 Awards will be far and away the best part of the Regional Business Meeting.

**Vendors:** Region II has again arranged to have several vendors available who will be ready to talk about their products and how they will help us with accounting, proposal submission, data management, compliance control, and...

**Fun:** One of the great changes that have entered into the Region II Spring Meeting is that the networking and social activities are now coordinated by the Fun Committee. While we still have the same old names for Welcome Reception on Sunday and the Monday Evening Event, we have a terrific, entertaining time. While neither program has been confirmed at the time that I am writing this, be assured that Sunday evening will offer great networking opportunities and then dinner groups in the Brooklyn Heights area (or Manhattan for the adventurous) and Monday evening we will be a real New York, New York experience.

**Presentations and Discussion Group Topics, a sampling:** Details and the Big Picture: Blending Personalities to Building Successful Research Administration Teams; Sponsored Project Financial Reports for Faculty: How to Make and Distribute Tools that the Faculty Will Actually Use; Managing Time/Effort Reporting at a PIU; and Export Control - Will the Nightmare Ever End?; Revising and Resubmitting Unsuccessful Grant Proposals; F&A Policies Within the Federal Government and Universities; Managing and Marketing a Research Core Facility; Latest Trends in Training; and updates from the NSF, NIH and on the overall picture from the Council on Government Relations (COGR).

What else is happening in Region II?

The mentoring program initiated for NCURA’s Annual Meeting in November 2010 was determined to be a great success and will be offered again at both the 2011 Spring Meeting and National Meeting.

The ad hoc Region II Strategic Planning Committee is actively working on several ideas and initiatives that will increase, strengthen and expand the number of Region-sponsored professional development opportunities available for members, improve communication and networking, and expand volunteer and leadership development opportunities.

The membership of the Steering Committee has lost and gained members: Thanks exiting-member Chris Schlenker (Marshall University Research Corporation) for his service to the Region on the completion of his term. Welcome to new-member Denise Moody (Princeton University).

Congratulations to Dennis Paffrath (University of Maryland) and Mary Louise Healy (Towson University) for being accepted into the first NCURA Executive Leadership Program, and best wishes for a great experience and years of continued service to NCURA.

**REGION III Southeast**

The Regional Meeting begins on May 1, 2011 at Wild Dunes in Isle of Palms, South Carolina. A beautiful barrier island less than 20 minutes northeast of Charleston, Isle of Palms has contributed significantly to our reputation as “One Beachin’ Region”! Check out the Region III website – [www.ncuraregioniii.org](http://www.ncuraregioniii.org) – to register, preview the outstanding curriculum, and get an early look at this incredible meeting location. You can also click the Regional Meeting Archive link to review the programs, handouts, and photo albums from the past three years. If you’ve never attended the regional meeting, the examples in the archive will give you sense of the valuable professional development and networking opportunities that are de rigueur for Region III.

The Program Committee, led by Chair-Elect Rick Smiley (East Carolina University), considered a wide range of possible offerings this year, including beach volleyball, coconut dodge ball, a palm tree climbing workshop, and a pink flamingo tattoo contest. Special thanks to all the Region III members who submitted their innovative ideas! After much discussion and deliberation, the committee settled on a more traditional curriculum to support the Region’s professional development needs. The Saturday workshops were such a hit at last year’s regional meeting that the committee decided to bring them back this year. Offerings include a CRA exam review and NIH Fundamentals. Programming for the concurrent sessions includes a pre-award track, a post-award track, a departmental track, a track for Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions, a general track (cross-cutting topics), and a professional development track.

**Martin Williams** is Chair of Region II and serves as Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs at William Paterson University.
In addition to excellent programming, the regional meeting always features many networking opportunities. The Sunday night welcome reception, as always, is the perfect time to reconnect with colleagues from around the region and also make a few new friends. Hospitality chair Rodney Granec (University of West Alabama) invites everyone to stop by the hospitality suite after the reception. The hospitality suite will be open Sunday night, Monday night, and Tuesday night with a time to relax, play games, and socialize with your colleagues. This is also a great atmosphere for welcoming new members and encouraging them to get involved in their region.

Volunteering is another great way to build your network of research administration colleagues. Are you looking to get involved with the region? Do you enjoy meeting new people and making new friends? Robyn Remotigue, Volunteer Coordinator, is recruiting members to be on the Volunteer Committee. One of the projects will include a mentoring program for the Region III members. If you are interested, please email her at Robyn@spa.msstate.edu. The spirit of volunteerism is the lifeblood of our region. Even if you have only a small amount of time to give, your contribution is valued and appreciated.

A travel award of $1000 is available to support the attendance of one lucky member! Paige Robinson (Vanderbilt University Medical Center), chair of the Membership and Awards Committee, sent out the call for travel award nominations the first week in February. The deadline for travel award nominations is Friday, March 4 at 5:00 p.m. Please consider nominating a deserving colleague, especially if he or she is a new member or has never had the opportunity to attend a regional meeting.

Just a reminder about the online reservation process: Wild Dunes Resort’s usual policy is to require a one-night deposit in order to confirm a reservation. However, we have been assured that this policy does not apply to our group. You will guarantee your reservation with your credit card in the usual manner, but the one-night deposit will not be charged.

And if you need any more convincing that the Region III meeting is the place to be, just remember that Isle of Palms averages 230 sunny days per year, the average temperature in May is 80 degrees, and the average ocean temperature is 81 degrees. See you there!

**Sam Gannon and Laura Letbetter** serve as Region III’s newsletter contributors. Sam is Education and Training Manager for the Office of Grants and Contracts at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Laura is Director of Proposal Development for the Office of Grants and Contracts at Kennesaw State University.

The keynote speaker has been confirmed: Jim Henke, Vice President of Exhibitions and Curatorial Affairs of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum will be speaking about Rock and Roll research and rock our members with some great stories. He is well respected by musicians, writers and the music industry and is well known to be a dynamic, engaging speaker. You can read his bio at [http://rockhall.com/visit-the-museum/learn/staff-bios/james-henke/](http://rockhall.com/visit-the-museum/learn/staff-bios/james-henke/). David Ngo and his team promise to “blow the doors off” the Region IV Spring Meeting! Let *Research Rock*!

There are many opportunities to volunteer at the upcoming Spring Meeting. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact David Ngo at dvngo@rsp.wisc.edu.

Please also remember that Region IV has some important initiatives this year. If you are interested in getting involved in Region IV, these are some great opportunities to volunteer:

**Task Force on Website Improvement:** this task force will conduct an assessment of the functionality and navigation of the current Region IV website, make recommendations to the Board for both a new architecture for the Region IV website (new outline, navigation and list of where content should reside) and recommendations for a new design template.

Contact: Kirsten Yehl, Northwestern University, k-yehl@northwestern.edu

**Task Force on Position Descriptions:** this task force will be making writing and reviewing thorough volunteer position descriptions for the Region – to be housed on the new website. Contact: Jeffrey Ritchie, Aurora Health Care, jeffrey.ritchie@aurora.org

**Task Force on a new Region IV Mentoring Program:** this Task Force will be looking into the feasibility of creating a new Region IV mentoring program. This group will make recommendations on a potential structure, funding mechanism, and application and review processes as we explore this exciting new venture. Contact: Kirsten Yehl, Northwestern University, k-yehl@northwestern.edu.

I hope everyone stays warm this winter—and hope to see you in April at the Spring Meeting.

**Christa Johnson** is Chair of Region IV and serves as the Associate Dean for the Office of Research and Projects at the Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

---

**REGION IV**
**Mid-America**
[www.ncuraregioniv.com](http://www.ncuraregioniv.com)

Dear NCURA Region IV Friends:

**Research Rocks!** is the theme of the upcoming Region IV Spring Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, April 16-20, 2011. Chair-Elect David Ngo and his Program Committee have been working hard to put together what is sure to be an exciting and enriching program for our Region IV members.
If you would like to volunteer or be a moderator for a session, email Jeremy Forsberg at j.forsberg@uta.edu. Join us for the Southwest Roundup in Houston and make your reservations now. For more detailed information view the Region V home page at: http://www.ncuraregionv.com/spring-meeting11.htm.

Call for Nominations: Quinten Matthews Travel Scholarship We have put out a call for nominations for the Quinten Matthews Travel Scholarship for the Spring Meeting. We will be awarding 2 $750 scholarships. We have also put out a call for the Distinguished Service Award. Qualifications and nomination forms for both can be found on our Region V website. We encourage all to nominate deserving individuals.

Call for Nominations: Regional Officers The Region V NCURA Nominating Committee has put out a call to identify and nominate new officers and executive committee members for our region. All members of the region are urged to nominate your colleagues or self nominate. Nominations are requested for the positions of Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, Secretary, Region V Member on the National Board of Directors, and Ad Hoc Regional Executive Committee Member (2 positions).

Regional Member Changes Reata Busby, Associate Vice President for Research at the University of North Texas has retired and is living in Alabama. Jeanette Holmes, Associate Director, Office of Sponsored Projects, UT Austin has retired. Suzanne Rivera from UT Southwestern Medical Center has moved to Case Western Reserve University where she is now Associate Vice President for Research. Kay Ellis, Associate Director, University Export Controls Officer, Office of Sponsored Projects at UT Austin has moved to the University of Arizona where she is the University Export Controls Officer.

Jeri Muniz is Chair of Region VI and serves as Executive Director for the Department of Contracts and Grants at the University of Southern California.

The theme of this year’s meeting is “Climbing the Heights of Research Administration in the Mile High City” and the Program Committee has developed interesting workshops and concurrent sessions. Please visit the Regional Meeting website at http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/meetings.aspx to view the short and long versions of the program.

While on the website, don’t forget to make your room reservations at the conference hotel, Westin Denver Downtown. On-line room reservations can be made at http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1101187550&key=2B909.

Don’t miss the opportunity to become involved in Region VI – it is a rewarding experience. I look forward to seeing each of you at the upcoming Spring Meeting and “Climbing the Heights of Research Administration” in the Mile High City!
Congratulations goes out to Winnie Ennenga of Northern Arizona University who we just learned was selected to participate in the first NCURA 2011 Executive Leadership Program (ELP). The selection committee was impressed with her involvement in NCURA to date, and her expressed commitment to this program, the profession of research administration, and to NCURA. The ELP is NCURA centric and expressly designed to develop those leadership traits considered necessary to lead NCURA into the future and to ensure future leaders emerge with an understanding of NCURA’s organizational structure, goals and objectives. The ELP is, for the most part, virtual and will be conducted primarily from February through June and led by senior members of NCURA.

With our region being the smallest (number of members) at 325 out of a total NCURA membership of 6,583 we have the ability to function as a family. So, get involved at the regional level, it is easy to do. Volunteer, present, and attend NCURA workshops as well as national and regional meetings. Network and connect. The work contacts and friendships you will make will last a lifetime.

Finally, I would like to thank Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico, my original mentor when I joined NCURA many years ago. Also, Dianne Horrocks, Idaho State University and Josie Jimenez, New Mexico State University, for all of the guidance over the years. Most of all I would like to thank our NCURA president Judy Fredenberg, University of Montana, who introduced me to NCURA, convinced me to get involved with NCURA, and to stay involved with NCURA.

See you in Denver and please feel free to pass along any suggestions or ideas.

Tim Edwards is Chair of Region VII and serves as the Accountant for the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences at the University of Montana.

---

I’m now experiencing how much time and effort she put into everything last year. I would also like to thank Ralph Brown, Colorado School of Mines. Ralph is going off as a member-at-large but has been regionally elected as our member to the national board of directors. A thanks also goes out to Kathi Delehoy, Colorado State University, as she leaves the national board of directors. Continuing thanks goes out to our secretary/treasurer, Christine Pacheco, University of New Mexico; Kim Page, Boise State University, member-at-large; and Lisa Jordan, Boise State University, volunteer coordinator for continuing their roles for another year. Last fall we elected Vicki Krell, Arizona State University, as our chair elect and Candyce Lindsay, Arizona State University, as our member-at-large. I look forward to working with all of our continuing and new officers as well as relying heavily on the wisdom and expertise of our outgoing officers.

Don’t miss our upcoming Region VI/VII Spring meeting, “Climbing the Heights of Research Administration in the Mile High City” from April 3-6, 2011 in Denver, Colorado. You can now secure your hotel room and get the best rate of $141/night + applicable taxes. For hotel information and registration for the Westin Tabor Hotel, please visit our meeting website:

http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/meetings.aspx. Also please check the same web site http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/meetings.aspx to register for the meeting. You will find a listing of the workshops and concurrent sessions to be offered. We have a great keynote speaker lined up as well as entertainment for all. The program committee consists of representatives from both regions, Chair of region VI, Jeri Muniz jmuniz@ooc.usc.edu of the University of Southern California and Tim Edwards tim.edwards@mso.umt.edu are co-chairing the committee. The meeting is located in downtown Denver which is close to all types of activities from museums to shopping to even catching the Colorado Rockies on baseballs opening weekend. If you have any questions regarding the upcoming meeting, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

---

### Introducing PUI Contributing Editor, Carolyn Elliott-Farino

Carolyn Elliott-Farino is the Director of Contracts and Grants Administration at Kennesaw State University where she prepares, reviews, and negotiates all awards and subawards on behalf of KSU and the KSU Research and Service Foundation. She is a graduate of the LDI class of 2009 and has been a research administrator for seven years, with experience in the preaward and postaward non-financial arenas. Prior to KSU, Carolyn worked as an aid worker in Africa for 15 years, first as a Peace Corps Volunteer, then as a project director for non-profit organizations funded by private and government (US and foreign) sponsors. Carolyn is a member of NCURA’s PUI neighborhood committee and is actively involved in Region III.

Contact Carolyn at cellio12@kennesaw.edu

### NCURA Bylaws Amendment Approved

The NCURA electronic polling booth opened on November 10, 2010, and for the next 30 days members had the opportunity to vote on a proposed Bylaws change. Of the 1,055 members who voted, 94% were in favor of the amendment, which allows the Annual Business Meeting to be held at any time during the year, rather than during the last quarter. Prior to the voting, members were notified in September of the possible change and were given the opportunity to discuss or amend it during the Annual Business Meeting in November. There being no amendments, the ballot moved forward as originally offered in September and was approved.

Barbara Gray, NCURA Secretary, Director of Sponsored Programs and Research Administration, Valdosta State University
EFFORT CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING JUST GOT AFFORDABLE.

It’s Web based. It’s compatible with your pre-award, accounting and payroll systems. It’s powerful and easy to use. But what makes Effort Administrator™ truly unique is it’s price.

Effort Administrator™ makes it easy for faculty and research scientists to certify their own effort for sponsored research and hard money. Reports compare budget to actual effort, cost sharing, and more. And it’s a fraction of the cost of any comparable system on the market today.

Thanks to IT Works innovation, Effort Certification and Reporting is practically effortless. And very, very affordable.

See it now at itworks-inc.com.
ONLINE TUTORIALS
- A Primer on Clinical Trials – 7 week program
- A Primer on Sub-awards – 8 week program
- A Primer on Federal Contracting – 7 week program
Visit the website for Enrollment Periods

NATIONAL TOURING WORKSHOPS
DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
March 23-25, 2011..............................San Antonio, TX
May 23-25, 2011.................................Minneapolis, MN

FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
April 11-13, 2011..............................Charlotte, NC

FUNDAMENTALS OF SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
March 23-25, 2011..............................San Antonio, TX
April 11-13, 2011..............................Charlotte, NC
May 23-25, 2011.................................Minneapolis, MN

SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION LEVEL II WORKSHOP
April 11-13, 2011..............................Charlotte, NC

REGIONAL MEETINGS
REGION I (New England) May 15-18, 2011...........New Haven, CT
REGION II (Mid-Atlantic) May 1-3, 2011...............New York, NY
REGION III (Southeastern) May 1-4, 2011..............Isle of Palms, SC
REGION IV (Mid-America) April 16-20, 2011.........Cleveland, OH
REGION V (Southwestern) April 17-20, 2011.........Houston, TX
REGION VI / VII (Western/Rocky Mountain) April 3-6, 2011 ....Denver, CO

2011 NCURA TV WORKSHOP SERIES
Managing Interactions and Potential Conflict of Interests with University Spin-Offs and Other Small Businesses ..........Available April 18, 2011
International Collaborations: Negotiations and Compliance ..................Available October 11, 2011

NATIONAL CONFERENCES
5TH ANNUAL PRE-AWARD RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE,
Hilton Palmer House Hotel, Chicago, IL.................................July 24-26

53RD ANNUAL MEETING

THE DEADLINES FOR MAY/JUNE NCURA MAGAZINE, 2011 ISSUE ARE:
Submission of Articles to Contributing Editors .........April 8, 2011
Submission of Articles to Co-editors .....................April 15, 2011
Submission of Advertisements ..........................April 15, 2011

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

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