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This edition of NCURA Magazine is your entre into the NCURA Annual Meeting. On the surface, the theme for our 55th Annual Meeting, Investment — Commitment — Rewards, would indicate that we will be getting tips on how to manage our 403(b) funds or that we are a group of investment bankers. However, our perception of research administration is that you need to invest your time and resources, be committed to first class research management and you and your institution will reap the rewards of primo management of your research portfolio.

In this edition, Carol Blum goes back to the Book of Revelations and finds a forecast of the Sequestration that permeates the federal government today! Other authors find rewards through investments in and commitments to: research funding for faculty, Tricia Callahan; leadership and teamwork, Berylne Temples & Paula Simons; export control compliance, Wendy Epley; electronic reporting system, Kimberly Griffin, Lauran Zajac & Lynda Wolter. Our readers can learn much from the experiences of these authors and apply that knowledge and experience to the research administration environment at their own institutions.

Tim Paterson illustrates how investing the time to take a personal interest in your clients (faculty and administrators) can reward you and your institution with positive outcomes in communication and coordination of your research mission. If you are haunted by wolves you may want to feed and cultivate the good wolf, which is your institutional compliance officer according to the article authored by Carol Knight and William Siler.

NCURA has taken a leadership position in the international arena of research management. This leadership position is illustrated through Dave Richard-son’s account of his recent keynote address at the International URA Symposium at Kyoto University.

I want to thank all of the authors, contributing editors and co-editors for their contribution to this edition of NCURA Magazine. Your hard work and creative writing seem to have no limits!

Pack your Speedos, hikinis and sunglasses and I will see you around the pool and in the meetings rooms at AM55, August 4-7th in balmy Washington, DC.

Tom Wilson

Tom Wilson is the Senior Research Administrator, and Assistant Vice President at Rush University Medical Center and Adjunct Faculty, Rush University College of Health Sciences in Chicago, Illinois. Tom has over 30 years of experience in research administration. Tom’s responsibilities have included all aspects of pre-award and post-award research administration and he has been a member of National Council of University Research Administrators since 1987. He is currently Co-Editor of the NCURA Magazine and a member of the 55th Annual Program Committee. Tom can be reached at Thomas_Wilson@rush.edu
Message from Your President

By Patricia Hawk, NCURA President

My First One Hundred (ish) Days

After taking office as your President on January 1, I shared outcomes from our first Executive Committee and Board Meetings in the last edition of this Magazine. NCURA then had its own version of “March Madness” with the historic “back-to-back” Financial Research Administration Conference and the Pre-Award Research Administration Conference, held March 10-15 in New Orleans. This was one of our new beginnings! The FRA Co-Chairs were Dennis Paffrath (Region II) and Pat Fitzgerald (Region I) and the PRA Co-Chairs were Christa Johnson (Region IV) and Toni Shaklee (Region V). Attendance at these conferences was 1,100 and 600, respectively. Some of us did a little “vampire watching” during the evenings, since filming was underway for an episode of “Vampire Diaries.” I confess that I do watch the show, so it was really a treat for me to see some of the actors on that show. Our Vice President Vivian Holmes is in the process of selecting co-chairs for the 2014 FRA and PRA Conferences.

Next I started my “spring fling.” My travels to regional meetings first took me to Milwaukee, where I met the “Bronze Fonz” and I was “Mooed,” which is quite an honor in Region IV. They really embrace their cows! My next visit took me to Oklahoma City, where I got to attend Game 1 of the Oklahoma City-Houston basketball series. What a great experience that was—thanks Region VI. I next got to return to my “roots” when visiting Region III in Memphis and got to see the world-famous Peabody Ducks. While I didn’t win the contest to be the honorary Duck Master, it was great fun to re-connect with Region III. Then I finished up with Region I at a gorgeous location in New Hampshire with wonderful hospitality—one could say “it was arresting” (you Region I folks know what I mean!). I know Dan and Vivian also had wonderful experiences at the regional meetings they attended.

I hope I had a chance to chat with you at your region’s meeting, but I also wanted to share the update with all of you. As you read through all of this, I hope you recognize that NCURA’s leadership is really spread throughout all regions.

NCURA’s Executive Leadership Program class of 2013 is: Erica Gambrell, The University of Alabama (Region III); Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute (Region VI); Jeremy Forsberg, The University of Texas at Arlington (Region V); Rick Smiley, East Carolina University (Region III); Kirsten Yehl, Northwestern University (Region IV); and Carolyn Elliott Farino, Kennesaw State University (Region III).

Another of NCURA’s “new beginnings” is our Sponsored Research Administration: A Guide to Effective Strategies and Recommended Practices. This is a publication that was previously jointly managed by NCURA and AIS, but is now under the NCURA umbrella. Marc Schiffman has taken on editorship duties for NCURA, and Tara Bishop and Kathleen Larmett are also working with the PDC to update and refresh the publication. Also once again under the NCURA publishing umbrella is Regulation and Compliance: A Compendium of Regulations and Certifications Applicable to Sponsored Programs compiled and edited by NCURA member Jane Youngers, Assistant Vice President for Research Administration at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio (Region V).

You might not know that NCURA is a “sub-recipient” in its own right! NCURA was part of a proposal submission to the European Commission, and our proposal was selected for funding. The project is called the BILAT U.S. 2.0, and NCURA will be part of this multi-year project that will provide grants management and training opportunities. NCURA participated in a kick-off meeting for this grant at the conclusion of AM54, and Dan Nordquist (Region VI) is taking the lead in two areas: development of a database collection system to capture information from schools that wish to report grants management and training opportunities. NCURA will be part of this multi-year project that will provide training, which we are doing at various national conferences.

You also might not know about NCURA’s involvement in INORMS 2014. The International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) is a congress that is convened every two years, and this will be the first time this congress has been held in North America. This congress is being sponsored by NCURA, the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators (CAURA) and SRA International. The meeting will be held in Washington, DC on April 10-13, 2014, at the Washington Hilton (home of NCURA’s Annual Meetings). This will be an amazing opportunity to learn about research management from a global perspective. Stay tuned for more information.

Continued on page 53
Armageddon – Oops! – I mean – Sequestration has come and, remarkably, the government continues to find ways to do business, as usual.

As predicted, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) (2013) proposed a policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC). The limited scope of the proposed policy addresses information derived from 15 identified select agents and toxins and seven categories of experimental outcomes, agents already highly regulated and strictly controlled via the Select Agents and Toxins program (CDC, 2012; USDA, 2005). The proposed policy establishes institutional review and oversight requirements at institutions that accept Federal funding for such research.

Acknowledging the key role of the Principal Investigator (PI) in evaluating the DURC potential of his or her own research, the policy requires all research personnel working on life science research that falls within the scope of this policy to be trained without dictating the manner in which the training must occur, how often, etc. This flexibility suggests that, because all of the covered agents and toxins are part of the Select Agents and Toxins program, DURC training can be incorporated into the mandatory training requirement implemented in those regulations.

The criteria for institutional review of potential DURC research is a bit ambiguous, but this imprecision permits institutions to design and implement a system that suits the level of DURC research occurring on campus. However, disagreements between investigators and the institution or the institution and the federal agencies will be resolved is not entirely clear. If the process used by the National Science Advisory Board on Biosecurity (NSABB) (OSP, 2012) is a model, it made clear that identification of DURC and the appropriate mitigation of risk are topics subject to a great deal of difference of opinion. You will recall that the decision-making process on the review and re-review of the recent H5N1 avian influenza papers took nearly 5 months, an international summit of experts, and still barely reached an uneasy consensus on publication.

This proposed policy, like the NIH Guidelines for Research with Recombinant DNA Molecules (OBRA, 2012), includes all research whether federally funded or not. Admittedly, the biosafety and biosecurity aspects of the covered agents and toxins are covered by Select Agent and Toxin regulations, whatever the funding source, but this proposed policy addresses the dissemination of information – research results. It is not entirely clear what role any Federal agency should play in the management of non-Federally funded research. One wonders if the research is not funded by a Federal agency, what agency would be given some level of jurisdiction over the research activity.

The finalization of this policy is likely to proceed at a much faster pace than its proposal. As OSTP proposed new government-directed institutional oversight of research – albeit a small portion of the research enterprise – the National Science Board (NSB) began an examination of the source of the administrative burden on investigators. The NSB, the policy Board for the National Science Foundation (and advisor to the President and Congress on policy matters related to science and engineering and education in science and engineering) is examining the federal agency and institutional requirements that add to the administrative burden of federally funded investigators with the goal of making NSF-level changes and recommending to the President and Congress government-wide changes that will help reduce that burden.

The NSB outlined a series of eight questions to principal investigators – not limited to NSF-funded researchers – that ask what specific requirements create the well-documented administrative burden with special questions on animal and human subject based research and proposal preparation; whether the investigator receives institutional support to address the tasks; the impact of redundant requirements across Federal agencies; and whether the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) recently proposed reforms to the administrative requirements for Federal awards will provide relief (OMB, 2013).

As with any such broadcast survey, the nature and breadth of the data collected – and resulting recommendation – will depend upon who responds to the request. The Washington-based higher education associations are likely to respond by offering an institutional “context” to the anticipated responses from investigators. The proposed OMB reforms offer a pathway for greater institutional administrative help, but the rapidly expanding Federal requirements (see above) and declining resources make it difficult for institutions to help. It may be difficult for investigators to determine the “source” of the administrative burden – whether the Federal requirement itself or institutional implementation – and assess the value of tasks taken in achieving institutional compliance. Investigators would appreciate greater institutional support for completing administrative tasks, but it’s important to remind our federal partners that the responsibility for the conduct of the research – including its related regulatory and policy requirements, e.g., the humane care and use of animals, the disclosure of financial interests and relationships, accurate reporting of data, etc. – is ultimately the responsibility of the principal investigators. This shared responsibility, like shared governance, takes time. That is not to say that vast improvements cannot be made to simplify and harmonize Federal requirements and institutional implementation – institutions would welcome a performance-based, harmonized, low-risk regulatory and policy structure.

If any federal body had to take on this question, the research community will be better served by the NSB’s taking up this subject. While we’re on the subject of increasing burden, in a memorandum issued on February 22, 2013, John Holdren (2013), Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), directed Federal departments and agencies with over $100 million in annual research and development expenditures to come up with a plan to Increase[e] Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research. Specifically, Federal agencies are to develop plans that provide greater public access to peer-reviewed publications and digital data. Draft agency plans are due to OSTP within six months (August/September 2013) and, following review by OSTP and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), agencies are directed to develop final plans in a transparent process that solicits the views of the agencies’ stakeholder communities.

Holdren’s memorandum outlines the general underlying policy principles – to mobilize research results “for re-use through preservation and broader public access” – and establishes various elements to be addressed in agency
plans with the general parameters for each outlined element. For example, agencies are directed to take advantage of existing archival resources for publications and data and improve the public’s ability to find, search, and analyze publications and data from federally funded research. Of greater interest to agency awardees, the plan must address the notification to awardees of the obligations and include a strategy “for measuring and, as necessary, enforcing compliance with the plan.” Examples of notification approaches include guidance, conditions of an award and/or regulatory change – depending on the nature of the agencies’ agreements with recipients.

In the area of publications, the goal is long-term preservation and access to unclassified peer-reviewed publications. OSTP outlines some parameters for achieving that objective. The plan must provide easy long-term access to the appropriately attributed final peer review manuscript or publication within twelve months of publication in an interoperable data format that anticipates future technologies.

For scientific data in digital formats, the goal of long-term preservation and easy access to unclassified material remains the same. Scientific data is defined using a slightly expanded definition from the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Circular A-110 [additions added in brackets] - research data is “the [digital] recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings [including data sets used to support scholarly publications], but [does not] include laboratory notebooks] preliminary analyses, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer review [reports], communications with colleagues [or] physical objects (e.g., laboratory samples).” Ensuring that agencies respect this definition of research data will be a key factor in avoiding policies that require differing responses that are not a result of differences in disciplines.

The plan for scientific data must protect confidentiality and personal privacy; recognize proprietary interests, confidential business information, and intellectual property rights; and “preserve the balance between the relative value of long-term preservation and access and the associated cost and administrative burdens.” Recipients can be expected to develop data management plans with the costs for data management an allowable cost in proposals.

There are inherent challenges in meeting these anticipated requirements that arise from the nature of the institution’s relationship – or lack thereof – to the process of publication. It will be very difficult for institutions to effectively track compliance with these obligations. Publications that result, in whole or in part, from a federally sponsored award may appear several years after the completion of the funded research. The investigator/author may have moved to a new institution in the intervening period. Tracking publications from collaborative research with investigators/authors from more than one institution is a monumental task.

And the costs. As the National Institutes of Health (NIH) moved forward with its policy, investigators discovered a shifting of journals’ business models from subscriptions to charging publication costs to the author. With regard to scientific data specifically, the concern will be preserving the rights of the original investigator to use and mine the data for future endeavors of research including inventions, publications, and as the foundation for expanding existing businesses and creating new ones. The individual most capable and most interested in using the data is the person who created it, and it could be a mistake to jeopardize the ability of that individual scientist or investigator to exploit the potential of the data.

Presented without a specific timeline for implementation of the final plans (after OSTP/OMB review of the draft plans), the research community will need to monitor the individual research agencies’ proposed implementation plans to ensure that they meet the parameters outlined by OSTP.

In one telling (Rev. 19 and 20), the Messiah will return to earth and defeat the Antichrist and Satan the Devil in the Battle of Armageddon. Then Satan will be put into the “bottomless pit” or abyss for 1,000 years, known as the Millennium. I’m not picking sides, but the piling on of administrative requirements can feel like a bottomless pit.

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Investing in, Committing to, and Rewarding Faculty in the Pursuit of External Funding

By Tricia Callahan
I receive daily e-mails from financial institutions encouraging me to “empower my investments” by buying into tools designed to grow my personal financial portfolio. The concepts of investment and financial growth extend into my professional life as well. No, I’m not in business or marketing or accounting, nor am I housed in finance or economics. Like many of you, I am a research administrator for a predominantly undergraduate institution (PUI), Miami University, a mid-sized liberal arts college in Ohio.

Just as the economy means changing, so, too, is the way Miami University is doing business. And let’s face it: universities are businesses that focus on education, research, and scholarship. Miami University recently hired a provost with a background in economics. Under his leadership, each unit has been assigned the role of service-unit or revenue-generating unit. The Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship (OARS), the service-unit where I work, has a mission to facilitate and support the university community in its effort to obtain extramural funding. We do so by investing time and financial resources in our faculty, by committing to our mission, and by celebrating the awards our faculty achieve.

**Investment.** Investment means putting money into something with the expectation of financial gain. While almost all investments involve some sort of risk, at Miami we find that the gains generally exceed the losses. This is because we don’t make investments blindly. We “empower” our investments by researching what has worked—and not worked—for our benchmark institutions, and we adopt proven practices.

Faculty at Miami are incentivized to write proposals via a number of mechanisms: internal funds for seed projects; funds to support collaborative projects with commercial potential; cost-share funds for capital equipment; tuition waivers on grants that provide full stipends; and a direct return on Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs to principal investigators, their departments, and their colleges. Additionally, we host semester-long workshops designed to provide faculty with time to develop competitive proposals while receiving peer reviews. In return for their participation, faculty receive seed funding for their projects.

For each investment we make in a faculty or staff member, we ask that he or she invest time writing solid proposals, supported by pilot data generated as a result of the institution’s investments. We also ask that faculty allow our office time for a thorough review of their proposals so that we may provide them with constructive feedback. Currently we are exploring the possibility of incentivizing early submissions by providing a modest amount of operating funds when target deadlines are met. In order to encourage high-quality submissions, we plan to return a higher percentage of F&A for funded proposals that were turned in for early review. (Hopefully we will have more to share on how this turned out in a future issue of NCURA Magazine).

But it’s not just our office making investments in the faculty. We ask that the departments and colleges co-invest in faculty through cost-share, seed funding, and programs such as supporting a faculty member’s attendance at a sponsor’s workshop or by bringing a seminar/speaker to campus. Each level of investment within the institution multiplies the force of other investments, thus maximizing return on investments at every level.

As a PUI, we find that simple investments of time and financial resources often have the biggest payoffs. Roundtable discussions foster collaborations; mock peer review panels result in more competitive proposals; faculty focus groups lead to successful institutional programs; and low-cost webinars provide needed information for solid proposal development.

**Commitment.** Commitment is the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause or undertaking. The Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship is “committed to encouraging and supporting the university community in obtaining external funding for all forms of research, education, scholarly, creative, service, and outreach activities.” We intentionally drafted our mission statement to reflect the core from which all of our services, offerings, and finances flow. We are committed not only to supporting the mission of our unit, but also to ensuring the success of our faculty and Miami University in terms of scholastic and financial growth. Our commitment is evident from the time and financial resources we dedicate to working with faculty on proposal development, review, and submission.

Additionally, we are committed to exploring new ways to improve our processes while supporting and encouraging faculty to become more committed to their research, scholarship, and creative endeavors.

**Reward.** Rewards are positive stimuli that reinforce or motivate behavior. The rewards for time and money invested, along with commitments made and honored, are three-fold:

1. **Greater number of proposals funded** Faculty who attend our workshops and use our services see an increase in the number of proposals funded. This does not mean, of course, that every proposal our faculty develop is funded, but we work just as diligently with every researcher on his or her second and third submissions as we do on the first.

2. **Increased F&A return** Faculty who allow us time for a thorough review of their budget and proposal not only benefit from peer feedback, but also benefit financially in terms of the amount of F&A returned to them, along with a compensatory amount of operational funds.

3. **Recognition** We celebrate the efforts of our proposers and awardees annually, taking time to publically recognize and thank them for their efforts on behalf of the institution.

Rewards in terms of recognition, in terms of F&A returned, and in terms of increased extramural funding (which lead to increased publications and success in promotion and tenure), motivate faculty to continue writing proposals. The ultimate result is a net gain for the faculty, for their departments, for their colleges, and for the institution as a whole.

In summary, we ask not what our faculty can do for us, but what we can do for our faculty. We ask about their needs and work to find creative solutions to fulfill those needs, whether they be monetary, temporal, or human resources. We ask questions of our benchmark institutions and state counterparts. What have they tried? What has worked? What has not worked? We then invest in our faculty, commit at multiple levels within the institution, and celebrate our successes, one faculty at a time.

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**Tricia Callahan, Director for Proposal Development at Miami University, has been a NCURA member since 1999. A graduate of the Leadership Development Institute, she has volunteered in various capacities for NCURA. Tricia enjoys trail running and racquetball. When not on the International Racquetball Tour, she can be reached at callahl@miamioh.edu.**

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**MAY/JUNE 2013**
With AM55 just three short months away, the Program Committee is hard at work planning meeting events and putting the finishing touches on a fabulous program. There will certainly be something for everyone as the program encompasses all of the traditional NCURA offerings, as well as some new exciting additions.

This year we are excited to debut the new Core Curriculum track which is intended to take the participants through the entire lifecycle of a sponsored award. The track, led by Cindy Hope, University of Alabama, and Toni Lawson, University of Maryland, is targeted toward research administrators who are new or newer to the profession as well as for those who have recently moved to an area new to them. The goal of this track is to provide an overview of basic topics and the many issues we encounter whether in the pre-award, post-award or compliance functions. The “curriculum” will include introductions to topical areas beginning with an overview of the research administration profession and its importance in supporting science. Subsequent sessions will be presented on each basic building block from proposal development through submission, acceptance, award management and, lastly, project outcomes. The track includes a presentation by a scientist who has experienced the support and expertise of research administrators.

Our track leaders are working closely with the presenters to ensure a smooth transition from one session to the next, and to make sure they are covering all bases and avoiding unnecessary repetition. Each session is charged with providing the core tips and best practices that a new research administrator would need to be successful within the framework of each topical area. Our track leaders are also coordinating an overarching case study that will have a component in each of the topical areas covered by the sessions that will help tie the many components of the lifecycle of the award together.

If you have ever wondered how to go about making an NCURA YouTube Tuesday video, there will be a concurrent session and a discussion group to answer questions and to help get participants started with making their own video. In addition, the Professional Development Committee (PDC) will be reaching out to NCURA members prior to the meeting to recruit new YouTube Tuesday stars. The PDC has arranged for a studio to be set up at AM55 to record videos for current hot topics. If you are interested in filming a YouTube Tuesday video at AM55, please contact Tara Bishop bishop@ncura.edu for additional information.

For research administrators holding top leadership positions at their institutions, we offer our Hot Topics track and our Senior Forums. The Hot Topics sessions are offered throughout the program, check the website for dates and times and mark your calendars. There will be two half-day Senior Forums offered on Tuesday at no additional charge to senior research administrators; however, advance registration is required. The morning session, CONSOLIDATED CIRCULAR RAMIFICATIONS: A DIALOGUE IN GRANT REFORM will offer an interactive discourse on changes resulting from the OMB Circular consolidation. The panelists will facilitate the discussion and offer comments regarding specific regulation changes and the impact of those on our institutions. The afternoon session, A CONVERSATION WITH COLLEAGUES: ISSUES FOR SENIOR RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS, will be facilitated by Kim Moreland, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Wisconsin – Madison; Marianne R. Woods, Senior Associate Vice President for Research, The University of Texas at San Antonio; and Susan Sedwick, Associate Vice President for Research and Director, Office of Sponsored Projects, The University of Texas at Austin. The panelists will facilitate a dialogue and offer their own comments on a wide-ranging set of topics and issues such as: helping your staff become more engaged in the workplace; ideas and tips for managing your boss; gaining mastery of the proposed Federal consolidated circular; managing sub recipients under the new FCOI rules; demystifying the intersection between effort reporting and cost shar-
In addition to the Core Curriculum, Senior Forums and Hot Topic sessions, AM55 offers members a robust program complete with 11 tracks and over 35 workshops serving research administrators at all levels and across all areas.

If it’s your first Annual Meeting, the Chairs will be hosting a lively, fun session to help you plan out your time, choose your sessions, and not miss an opportunity to network. We want you to take advantage of all the meeting has to offer, enjoy yourself and your time in Washington, DC.

We are busy planning plenty of networking opportunities for NCURA members to connect with their colleagues from across the country and from around the world.

**We look forward to seeing YOU in August!**

Vivian Holmes, Bruce Morgan, and Susan Zipkin

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**AM55 SHOUT OUT**

Can’t have an Annual Meeting without a shout-out or two for Vivian Holmes, the AM55 Program Committee, and an encouragement for all of us to attend AM55!

“Vivian, congrats to you and the AM55 team for putting together a great looking program. Your theme “Investment-Commitment-Rewards” resonates throughout. I’m looking forward to attending. I encourage all of my NCURA colleagues to make plans to attend. It will be well worth it.”

— Ben Prince, University of Massachusetts Medical School

“Vivian and AM55 team - this is a great theme! It highlights the investment, commitment, and reward that each of us - and our institutions - make to the quality and service that we provide as research administrators.”

— Norm Hebert, Brown University

“My personal appreciation of NCURA is that from its inception and throughout its evolution it has succeeded in being the premier professional organization that first and foremost supports academic research administrators, and has always maintained its ability to be at the cutting edge of any new issue with which research administrators are confronted. Vivian and her team, through the sterling professional development program they have planned, will guarantee that you will leave the 55th NCURA Annual Meeting with the tools that will ensure your continued success as a research administrator back home. I look forward to seeing you there.”

— Marjorie Forster, University of Maryland Baltimore

“Vivian and everyone on the Program Committee – Outstanding theme for the annual meeting! And the program – so many great opportunities. Everyone that attends will “reap the rewards”.”

— Bethanne Giehl, University of Massachusetts Medical School
As a post-award administrator within central administration, no better investment can be made than in your relationships with those individuals working alongside you at your research institution who are so vital to the successful management of sponsored awards.

Too often department contacts become faceless voices who may as well work in another state, certainly not on the same campus. Principal Investigators stop being “PIs” and become “PNs” or Project Numbers.

An ongoing commitment to developing and maintaining these relationships throughout the year will not only better position you to successfully manage a portion of your institution’s research portfolio, but reward you by establishing a culture of trust, teamwork, transparency, and accountability and showcase outstanding customer service.

**Portfolio Review – Be Proactive Not Reactive**

Be proactive and open the lines of communication. Too often, we only talk on the phone to discuss a problem, if even then. More likely, we trade 10 to 15 emails on the subject; rarely do we meet in person. Think about it. Throughout the course of a year, this reactive communication and prob-
Establish a goal of having recurring, in-person meetings with at least one of the departments, centers, or units you are either responsible for managing or that have a large percentage of sponsored awards assigned to you. Attempt to reach out, schedule, and conduct this first meeting sometime before the next calendar quarter is over.

Ask to meet with any of the business officers, budget representatives, payroll managers, or department representatives assigned to that same portfolio. Volunteer to go to their office and bring with you some or all of the individuals helping to administer that unit’s portfolio.

Meet with this same group the next quarter and slowly add other groups over time. You don’t have to go from zero to 10 meetings overnight. Gradually build up to the point you want to be. Continue to refine the agenda and reports or information you bring along. Taking similar information (type and format) to meetings with other groups will help decrease your production and preparation time.

Pretty soon, you will have recurring meetings throughout the year with the collection of individuals from various departments, centers, or units that make up an assigned portfolio. If your portfolio consists of six units, perhaps you meet with two units per month over the course of a quarter.

Do you have to meet every quarter? Not necessarily. Maybe you agree to meet three times per year or even twice per year, or perhaps during a very active time, you agree to meet monthly to resolve a backlog of issues, the frequency of meetings can be driven by the size, complexity, or visibility of the group’s portfolio. The bottom line is that you are connecting with these individuals in person, reviewing an active portfolio, identifying current or potential issues, obtaining consensus for how best to deal with those issues, and building key working relationships.

As part of the conversation, make sure to ask what needs or issues they may be battling that your post-award office should be aware of in the upcoming months. Perhaps there are training opportunities that you can provide assistance with. If one of their key administrators is preparing to go on leave, plans should be made for keeping the work flowing while they are out. During the absence of the key administrator, there may be a need to meet more often or may require additional levels of support.

Consider leaving behind a short customer service survey or providing a link to an on-line survey tool. This provides a mechanism for the unit to provide valuable feedback on the meeting, overall management of their portfolio, and/or suggestions for improvement. Customer feedback is an invaluable component that helps reinforce how we do our jobs or allows us to take needed steps for course corrections that could improve the working relationship moving forward.

The information you bring to each meeting could vary by group, but it helps to have some consistency so that your preparation time is minimal and the unit personnel can become familiar with the topics you wish to discuss.

Produce an agenda that includes a complete review of their portfolio of active or open sponsored awards and take time to call out key pieces of information. Send the agenda to the group in advance of the meeting to allow them time to research or take needed action steps on their end. In turn, ask what issues or topics they would like to discuss. They may have a question that requires you to do some research in advance of the meeting, or you may want to follow up on the status of a pending transaction.

What information do you review? As a starting point, consider some of the core business processes your post-award office is responsible for and/or provides support for and then build from there.

**Award/Project Set-up:** Bring a listing of awards that have recently been added to the group’s portfolio, pending set-ups, recent modifications or no-cost extensions, and projects that were established in advance of the receipt of the award notice — often referred to as preliminary, at-risk, or pre-award set-ups. This is a great opportunity to review terms and conditions, spending restrictions, reporting or billing requirements, deliverables, compliance concerns or risks, missing or incomplete documentation, etc.

**Expenditure Review/Approval:** Are there certain transactions that have come across the post-award administrator’s desk that may need clarification or additional justification? Is there a recurring expenditure that appears on a selection of the group’s awards that needs an explanation? This is an ideal time to clear up any outstanding questions regarding these expenditures, and as necessary, have a discussion about allowability, cost standards, etc.

**Billing and Reporting:** A summary of the financial reports and final invoices that are actively being worked on or those that will be coming due in the upcoming months.

**Accounts/Receivable Items:** Provide an aged summary of the group’s accounts receivable items. This provides a great chance to point out opportunities for the unit/PI to provide assistance with the collection of aged items. Often times, PIs have relationships with the sponsor that can be leveraged to help call attention to outstanding items.

**Awards in Overdraft Status:** Provide a summary report of awards in overdraft status (expenses > budget), along with the PI name, sponsor name, project end date, and F&A or indirect cost rate, so that the direct expenditures can be highlighted separately from the indirect costs. If the award is newly in overdraft status, provide supporting copies of detailed expenditure reports to identify the exact transactions that pushed the award into an overdraft status. Use this time to identify the individuals responsible for taking specific actions necessary to eliminate account overdrafts.

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**MAY/JUNE 2013**
**Award Closeouts**: Review a listing of awards coming to a close in the upcoming months. Identify any awards where a request for a no cost extension may be necessary. Discuss a short checklist highlighting the tasks the group should be working on prior to the end date of the award – all of which will better position your post-award office to complete the final invoicing, reporting, and closeout requirements.

**Take a Tour**

Make arrangements to meet briefly with one or two PIs as part of these quarterly visits. Ask in advance to take a tour of their labs or research space. Show an interest. Meet their research staff and learn about what they are working on. I have yet to meet a PI who was not willing to spend a few minutes talking about their projects or walk me through their lab.

Don’t forget that some of the brightest minds in the country are employed by your institution and doing work that is not only interesting and satisfying a need for intellectual curiosity, but also important to our society. Some of these PIs and project directors are working countless hours to make a difference in your local community while others are conducting cutting-edge research in a number of fields affecting the greater public; research that could lead to technology innovations that make life a little easier or may one day help to save your life, if not that of a loved one. Often times, what the PI most needs is a little help navigating the administrative waters of our institutions.

Taking a tour may also help you get an idea about some of the key initiatives the researchers are working on and showcase how they are spending the awarded budget. The next time you see a purchase requisition or expenditure reimbursement request come across your desk, you will have a better understanding of how the items are used in the lab and the value to the project. This often helps when making determinations about allowable costs by better understanding the intended use of various goods or services.

PIs are passionate about what they are working on. Have you ever met one that is not? Too often their passion is tempered over time by administrative obstacles and red tape. If you invest time to build those relationships and enhance your understanding of their project, you will be better positioned to help them by influencing those things you have some control over, such as the speed at which you process expenditure requests or update financial information on which key decisions are made. PIs also need help interpreting and navigating certain regulations to ensure their projects are governed in a compliant manner and in accordance with federal, state, sponsor, and institutional policies.

**Summary**

Be proactive in the management of your sponsored research portfolio and get engaged with the researchers and administrators you work with throughout your institution. The investment made in further developing and maintaining these relationships will lead to increased communication and coordination, which will better position you to successfully manage your portfolio. Everybody wins! As an added bonus, you will feel energized and better connected to the research mission of your institution… and that’s a pretty great and fulfilling reward.

Joe Gindhart, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance & Director, Sponsored Projects Accounting, Washington University in St. Louis

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**Joe Gindhart’s Desk**

During the last two weeks, the most significant issue on my desk has been OMB’s Proposed Uniform Guidance (PUG). This massive “omni-circular” has been challenging to read in its entirety. The primary goal of my review of the PUG has been to determine how it will affect Washington University’s research policies, operations and infrastructure. So far, I’ve developed three buckets in which to classify the issues; positive changes, negative changes and other issues/wording that could be clarified or expanded.

At the NCURA FRA conference in New Orleans, a discussion session about the PUG was held and the participants provided outstanding feedback. In my opinion, it was one of the first instances where research administrators from all over the country were able to share information. Overall, the PUG will remain at the top of my priority issues list for the immediate future.

Joe Gindhart, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance & Director, Sponsored Projects Accounting, Washington University in St. Louis

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**What’s on my DESK**

**Joe Gindhart’s Desk**

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Joe Gindhart, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance & Director, Sponsored Projects Accounting, Washington University in St. Louis

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“I would call in a second for help and always keep Huron in mind when looking for support.”

Top 20 research institution client

TAKE OUR CLIENTS’ WORDS FOR IT

Huron Education is dedicated to serving the higher education industry. We have a large team of professionals with extensive knowledge and experience in the business of higher education and academic medical centers, globally. We deliver the most comprehensive services to the industry and partner with institutions to improve business performance across the enterprise, freeing you to focus on your mission. Visit www.huronconsultinggroup.com/highereducation.
The theme for this issue, “Investment – Commitment – Reward” is a perfect fit with a discussion on leadership, especially to talk about its importance in research administration. An abundance of information is available on what leadership means and what defines a leader for anyone interested in looking. So, when asked to write this article, we read several books, papers and articles on leadership. We also talked to experts in the field of leadership at the University of Central Arkansas who offered valuable advice. After gathering all this information and knowledge came the roadblock. The quandary is in conveying everything about the vastness of leadership in a meaningful way that would hold the interest of peers and make reading this article worth their valuable and precious time. That is when the light went on! Let the experts give the advice and we enrich it with our own experiences.

“Leadership is an art and a science. It is an art because it continually evolves, changes form, and requires creativity. It is a science because there are certain essential principles and techniques required” (Holdaway, 2013). So very true and very relevant to the activities of research administration this statement is in that our jobs change day-to-day based on the ever-evolving rules of the variety of programs and funding agencies which cross our desks. Because research administrators are on the front-lines of these changes, we are also in a position to see the effect on our institutions and the profession. These situations make it very important to continuously re-examine and remodel our educational programs and keep our teams up-to-date (Slocum, 2012). An important part of accomplishing this teambuilding is in involving our stakeholders in the process and enhancing their effectiveness in their divisions/ departments to give them the feeling of being included and having an important role on the team (Hamilton, 2012, p 62).

In Leadership Theory and Practice, Peter G. Northouse (2004) identifies leadership as a process involving influence, occurring in groups, and including attention to goals. Additionally, both leaders and followers are essential for the process to be effective. Northouse supports the theory of two common forms of leadership, assigned and emerging. An assigned leader is usually selected because of occupying a specific position within the organization already. However, the problem is that this leader must be strong enough to be a recognized leader and employ the traits essential to lead within their current position to be effective. Contrastingly, emergent leaders are those individuals seen by others as having the most influence and ability to lead, regardless of their title within the organization (Northouse, 2004). Power is another area where Northouse makes a distinction between position and personal. He describes positional power as the power a person gets from a particular office or position in an organization, while personal power is what the leader receives from followers. While management and leadership are similar in many ways, management is more about the quest for order and stability, while leadership is about ensuring that change is purposeful and effective for growing, evolving and thriving programs (Northouse, 2004).

Another interesting point-of-view on leadership came from a volume in the International Leadership Series, Building Leadership Bridges by James M. Mohr (2011). In his contribution to the series, Improvising Transformation, Leadership Lessons from Improvisational Theater, Mohr (2011) relates six principles of improvisational leadership (p 57-61):

1. Trust is absolutely necessary for success
   a. Trusting in one’s own abilities
   b. Having a trustworthy team
   c. The ability for others to trust you
   d. Everyone involved needs to trust the methods used to achieve success

2. Awareness
   a. Awareness of one’s self
   b. Awareness of others
   c. Awareness of the environment
   d. Awareness of connections and relationships which occur with interactions between self, others, and environment

3. Communication
   a. Collaborative dialogue to generate new knowledge
   b. Listening and providing an environment that is safe and conducive to discourse among team members

4. Compounding growth
   a. Ideas which grow from other ideas and are interconnected with the team’s relationships with each other and their goals, but with a clarity for participants to hear and see a picture of the concept as a whole and how each contribution fits into it

5. Co-creation
   a. All members of the team share responsibility and ownership for actions of the team and must recognize that with a positive and accepting environment, creativity can prosper and empower the group

6. Openness
   a. The ability to create the environment needed for all of the above to exist and to accept that all team members should enter the group with their own knowledge and experiences which makes them unique and should be accepted for the gift of new insight with which they bring

Also, Mohr (2011) lays out four strategies leaders can use to promote and help develop spontaneous leadership (p 61-62):

1. “Create shared spaces of creativity and openness where everyone is invited to spark the fires of their imaginations to explore organi-
zational successes and challenges to see what emerges from this collaborative exploration.

2. “Respect everyone for his or her knowledge and experiences”
3. “Recognize and reward people for teamwork and for being supportive of one another” and
4. “Embrace inclusive practices that allow for a diverse workforce to feel welcomed and wanted.”

It is important for any leader - whether appointed or innate - to recognize the importance new and original team members play in sparking innovation within an already existing department/organization. For this recognition to take place however, the leader must ensure their team environment is always open and welcoming with its already existing members as well. Effective team leaders serve as the linchpins for the entire structure departments/organizations are built upon while being aware of all other necessary parts for the structure to remain successful.

In closing, we all strive to be the best we can be, but “no one person can have all of the knowledge, skills, and ideas to handle the continual flow of information, technological innovation, and cultural transformations that are happening. Leadership during chaotic times takes a person who can build trust, be present in the moment, engage in dialogic practice, respect the emergent nature of things, encourage a co-creative process, and be open to the possibilities. In essence, the new leaders need to be improvisers who can see past the rational and tap into the creative source of everyone within the organization.” (Mohr, p 62-63)

References

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NCURA has identified three distinct volunteer pathways for its members to get involved - presenter, leadership, and volunteer at the regional and/or national level. “Pathways” is intended to inspire and inform NCURA members on how to engage NCURA as a volunteer in any or all of these opportunities. To get involved visit http://collaborate.ncura.edu/VolunteerOpportunities

When I first became actively involved, it was under duress. I kicked and screamed the entire way. Fortunately for me, my mentors were insistent and strong, willful women, participating WITH me in presentations/workshops and leadership/volunteer activities. Eventually, they kicked me from the nest and sent me flying out on my own.

Over the years, it has become obvious that I have benefited far more from participation than I could have imagined, certainly far more than the organization has benefited from MY participation. I’ve traveled from student to teacher, from beginner to mentor, and from new member to VERY OLD member (or is it “senior”? ). Along the way I’ve discovered that you can’t learn everything, know everyone, or go everywhere. However, through active participation, you CAN discover what you need to know, who to call, and where to go for answers. You can form professional relationships that can advance your career and friendships that can last for years (or even a lifetime). So, if your mentor hasn’t found you, find them. If you can’t find one, let me know. I know a few insistent and strong, willful women I can introduce you to.

Debbie Newton is Director of Research and Sponsored Programs at The University of Tulsa. She can be reached at deborah-newton@utulsa.edu.

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In 2008 University Research Administration (URA), the central sponsored programs office of The University of Chicago, kicked off a project to automate its business processes. The result was AURA (Automated University Research Administration), an electronic research administration (eRA) system with a dedicated data warehouse. In the two years since the AURA launch, the AURA data warehouse has itself become an integral tool for research administrators across campus, with nearly one-hundred active unique users. To the delight of central, divisional, and departmental offices across campus, the data warehouse allows for streamlined generation of common “pre-built” reports (e.g. Current/Pending Support), while also providing the flexibility to create special ad hoc reports (e.g. foreign activity, year-to-date activity, annual reports, etc.) on an as-needed basis.

From their earliest discussions, the planners recognized the need for a more robust reporting tool. Research administration relies on data, and the limited reporting capability of the University’s legacy grants management system was among the reasons cited for a new system. URA partnered with two key groups within the University’s Information Technology (IT) office – the Project Management Office (PMO) and the Data Warehousing/Business Intelligence (DW/BI) group for the overall project team. A business requirement was to incorporate data warehouse reporting capability from the start. An early investment of time and commitment of resources were viewed as key to seizing the opportunity to create a data repository within the relatively brief window of the eRA system design and implementation.

The success of the AURA data warehouse is the result of the early commitment. Rather than treating reporting capability as a post-implementation afterthought, the AURA project team incorporated data warehouse requirements as they defined the system application requirements. Thus, AURA was built from the ground up to accommodate the reporting needs of users across the campus. Data elements were specifically created and formatted in the application to allow for reporting.

During the application requirements gathering phase of the project, the DW/BI staff worked closely with the project sponsors to secure project funding to design and deliver a reporting environment. In addition, resources were committed to provide hardware, user support, training, maintenance and future upgrades to ensure the long-term viability of the data warehouse.

When the project reached the business/functional design phase, DW/BI staff were fully embedded in the project team. In particular, a key asset to the project team was the DW/BI staff member, a former research administrator on campus, who understood the business processes and functional content. A DW/BI representative also attended all of the application design sessions, where users often expressed reporting needs. Application de-
sign decisions were made to proactively incorporate reporting needs in both the production design and the technical configuration.

The involvement of departmental and central office staff (end users), in addition to their functional representatives on the project team, was key to the project’s success. Their participation during the design and the development process, built their trust in the system. This trust gave them the confidence to commit resources to the new system and retire their local shadow systems. For example, the Department of Medicine had a home-grown tracking system that provided overall summary data for their diverse research portfolio. It also generated reports that were easy to run, and it provided proposal and award information that could be sorted on a variety of identifiers (e.g., section, subunit, principal investigator, etc.) or time points (monthly, quarterly, fiscal year). Yet, this system had limitations. It lacked data security (anyone with access could overwrite many of the data fields), and it did not support system-to-system electronic submissions. These limitations motivated department staff to devote time and energy in the design of the application and data warehouse. Once they trusted that the system would meet their needs, they committed to using it as a replacement for their legacy system. A key lesson learned — involve end users to articulate their data and reporting needs, then to coordinate with the technical team to ensure that application data elements are configured in a way that meets those end user requirements.

While the data warehouse project was managed separately from the application project, the DW/BI staff attended team meetings and coordinated key milestones for both. Thus, as the application project milestones evolved, the downstream impacts could easily be coordinated by the team. Further, as the application project moved from design to build to testing, the DW/BI staff could incorporate the changes into the data model. So, by the time application testing was underway, the data model had already been developed and was ready for construction. By coordinating project plans, the DW/BI team could focus on reporting-specific design sessions with multiple campus constituencies, as the application moved into the build/development phase. Thus, departmental and central office staff where included in both the eRA and data warehouse phases of the overall AURA project, but their participation was coordinated to minimize their overall time away from their desks.

Designing and building the eRA application concurrently with the data warehouse sometimes slowed down meetings, but the benefits have far outweighed the costs. Since going live, there have been few instances where system modifications (“patches”) were required due to data issues. Also, the close coordination of the two projects allowed the data warehouse and reporting environment to go live soon after the eRA system went live. By coordinating the launch of both the application system and the data warehouse, the DW/BI team was able to standardize the system role assignments and security profiles of end users. In addition, the coordinated launch allowed the system trainers to incorporate instruction on data warehouse queries and reporting into the basic system training. Additional training for analytical and ad hoc reporting was also made available. Ongoing coordination of end user application role assignment and training has allowed end users to more quickly integrate reporting into their daily work.

Since going-live, the DW/BI team continues to maintain a close working relationship with the business sponsors in URA and with the application technical team in IT. Any required system patches are coordinated among the business/business/functional, technical and DW/BI teams. The downstream impact of any system change on the data warehouse is considered and accommodated in the particular system update.

With its rollout, AURA became the system of record for the University’s sponsored research activity. Users across the campus have come to rely on it for ready access to the details of individual awards and as a conduit for institutional review and approval. The AURA Team built the data warehouse alongside the main system, and like the players in Field of Dreams, the users have come. The analytics enabled by the system have produced exciting results. While the standard pre-built reports are widely used, the availability of data and ease of query construction have sparked a variety of new reports. These are being used to forecast department grant revenue, to coordinate grant transfers related to faculty recruitment or departure, and to identify and manage groups of grants with particular common characteristics, among other applications.

In the end, coordinating the design and build cycles of the eRA application and data warehouse projects lent leverage to increase the productivity of University resources and staff dedicated to the projects. The result is two systems that each accomplish their specific functions, while working together seamlessly. The AURA data warehouse has become an invaluable resource for the research administration community at The University of Chicago. Its rewards would not have been possible without the early investment of time and the commitment of resources.

1 This article is based on the presentation entitled, “Incorporating Data-Driven Decision Making into Application Design” developed by the authors and presented by them at the Edutech Midwest Regional Conference, “Collaborating for the Future…Now!”, March 19, 2013, Chicago, Illinois.

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Lynda Wolter is Deputy Director of University Research Administration, the central sponsored programs office, at The University of Chicago. Lynda has been a research administrator at the University for over twenty years working at both the department and central office level. She was also the business lead on the elec- tronic research administration (eRA) implementation at the University serving as both the lead for the production system and on the data warehouse development. She has extensive experience in reporting metrics on research administration functions. She has presented at national meetings on research administration and on partnering with IT professionals to implement Electronic Research Administration (eRA) tools. Lynda can be reached at lwolter@uchicago.edu.
The primary goal of research administration is to create a supportive environment that allows researchers to reach their full potential to create, develop, communicate, and transfer new knowledge. It is time, perhaps past time, to question the assumptions that result in and help maintain the traditional administrative processes, practices, policies and structures under which research administration offices function.

My purpose is not to be provocative, but to simply stimulate some thought and discussion about possible innovations before the opportunity is lost. I do this not because it is popular to call for change, but because it seems necessary in order for the research mission to survive at more than a few universities. It is not that these universities will fail and disappear, but more that they will no longer have sufficiently sized research programs so that they can reasonably call themselves research universities.

The Challenge, Thinking Differently

Of all the activities in a university, research is the most competitive, most costly, most easily measured, and means the most to the university’s current and future reputation. Research supports and enables the success of the teaching and engagement missions while the other missions contribute much less to the support of research. Reductions in research funding have created record levels of competition and an unsustainable research arms race for the best faculty and new and better facilities and equipment. This has accelerated the consolidation of the nation’s academic research into fewer but larger (and increasingly) private universities.

Without innovation in research administration support processes, practices, policies, and structures, more and more universities, particularly public and small private universities will reach a tipping point where research is no longer a sustainable mission. The move to focus on a few research areas and to not be “all things” is code for struggling to stay good in at least something related to research. Research and research administration is an increasingly complex enterprise, with many points of failure. Like a bridge,
even a small failure in one critical element of the research process can cascade to impact other components which can ultimately put the whole enterprise at risk.

Research accountability has increased as have expectations of growth in research funding, but the likelihood of significant growth in terms of funding support seems remote. In the absence of increased resources (inputs) it is possible to produce the same amount or increase high quality research? Yes, absolutely, to a point. But it will require re-thinking on several levels about how research is conducted. Central among these has been a drive to motivate and incentivize interdisciplinary research and team science. Unfortunately, the track record for these has not been all that good and perhaps the reason being that such efforts are premature until first enabled by complementary changes in the practices and policies of research administration. If researchers are forming extended teams to do their work, perhaps the administration should do the same and should do it first.

A Change of Focus: From Getting Bigger to Being More Productive

Leading-edge research that produces new knowledge does not happen without the presence of a number of critical inputs. Central among these are human, physical, and financial resources. While each is necessary for research, just one of these in isolation from the others is not sufficient. The nature of the research and the discipline(s) involved influences the mix of inputs necessary for success. In some cases, (such as in math and theoretical chemistry and physics) the singular input of a bright, curious, and dedicated mind is sufficient. In other cases, significant laboratory space, equipment, reagents, and an interdisciplinary team are required. What is often overlooked and not fully appreciated are the administrative systems and processes that connect these. If done well, they can leverage them together to produce successes that would not be possible otherwise.

To maximize productivity with any given amount of resources invested in an effort requires well-designed administrative processes. In fact, in the private sector innovation in the structure, function, and decision making of administrative processes is often the distinguishing characteristic between success and failure. The same is now becoming the case with academic research. In an increasingly resource constrained environment, the focus of research program development is rapidly shifting to growth through strategic increases in organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

The development of innovative structures and processes that reliably transform inputs into rare and valuable research outputs are the means to maximizing productivity, which in turn is a powerful competitive advantage for the individual research as well as the institution. Rather than looking systemically and considering transnational structures and functions, what tends to happen are largely symbolic changes to the research administrative structure. Sadly, almost pathetically, the best that might happen are things such as adding innovation or economic development to the title of the vice president for research or rearranging the deck chairs by separating research from graduate education. Success, in fact, increasingly requires a profound rethinking of processes, practices, policies, and structures from the base up and across traditional administrative domains.

“All organizations are perfectly designed to get the results they are now getting. If we want different results, we must change the way we do things.”

Tom Northup
Leadership Management Institute.

A System and Team-Based Approach to Research Administration

The systems approach to organizational management recognizes inherently the value of connecting inputs, process, and outputs. Rather than having these function independently and with little regard for one another, robust communications built though cross-functional teams, produces responses and feedbacks between functional areas that can dramatically increase productivity.

Processes that function in series are inherently less robust and less efficient than those that function in parallel or better yet can adapt to address the requirements that are best to accomplish what is required. The shift from serial computation to parallel computing (from executing one process at a time to breaking down the problem into independent parts and addressing them simultaneously) transformed the power and efficiency of computing. The parallelism that is transforming computing is more challenging than sequential systems, particularly in terms of coordination and communications, but the benefits related to increased productivity are enormous. Could the same be true for research administration?

The administrative practices and organizational structures that support research are often viewed as a workflow of sequential step-wise processes. Post-wards accounting, responsible conduct, research compliance, budget, facilities, purchasing, etc., do not get involved until it is their turn in the process. Why? Because that is how we have always done things. Is this the most effective and efficient approach? Is there an alternative? Most definitely, yes. In most cases the administrative stovepipes we have created and the associated boundaries they foster are merely artifacts flowing from a hierarchical organizational chart rather than designed to foster productivity.

Academic research is not a for-profit enterprise, but it is an economic system. Externally supported research rarely is totally self-supporting and requires institutional supplemental financial support. Any private sector knowledge-based company, which like many research universities has revenues and expenditures of several hundreds of millions of dollars, would not be organized like research administration is currently at most universities.

Because their future depends on success, private companies organize themselves in cross-functional teams specifically assigned to identify and evaluate new opportunities (business development), teams to develop strategy and to assess risks on an ongoing basis, teams to develop and report on key performance indicators, as well as teams in the areas of production, communications, and regulatory affairs. These teams are comprised of individuals representing the various functional areas as required to produce the best results in the shortest amount of time and at the lowest cost. Sounds pretty good. Should academic research administration adopt the same approach? Does the future of academic research depend on doing things differently? Can universities adapt quickly enough? Can they do so before it is too late and any change in administrative approach will not change the outcome of a significant reduction in research output?

Time and time again, organizational research has demonstrated that an integrated team approach is both more effective and efficient, and also fos-
Team based science as well as team based medicine produce better outcomes. Could team based research administration do the same? Such an approach would likely have a positive impact on the 20% of most university faculty who are producing 80% of the scholarship. However, it holds the potential to have the most dramatic impact on the greatest underutilized and often undervalued university faculty who are functioning below their full potential as scholars.

**Thoughts to Consider**

Would a systems rather than a workflow (step-wise) approach to research administration support be more successful as a driver for increasing research productivity?

Would cross-functional teams be a better organizational structure than independent specialized units for the delivery of research administration services?

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**Research Administration... By the NUMBERS**

51,836...
The number of awards (all mechanisms) NIH gave in FY12, with an average award amount of $492,012.

$27,557,404,000...
Size of Harvard University’s Endowment, number one in the U.S., as reported in the 2011 CMUP Top American Research Universities Report.

$149,403,000...
Total Environmental Science R&D expenditures at the University of California-San Diego, number 1 on the NSF FY10 HERD Survey.

$1,000,000,000...
The amount USDA’s funding for ongoing discretionary operating and program expenses has decreased by since 2009.

2,966...
The number of proposal records NSF electronically provided Washington State University for their latest data cleanup project.

0...
The number of records we needed to manually review. Thank you NSF!

Sources:
http://report.nih.gov/fundingfacts/index.cfm
http://mup.asu.edu/
https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/researchadmin/recentProposals.do

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Would you like to be able to train your Principal Investigators (PIs) when you are at home cooking dinner or sleeping? How about when you are away with family on the weekends? Creating instructional videos for your office website involves some technical investment, lots of patience, and a commitment of institutional knowledge, but is ultimately very rewarding. In 2012 I set out to produce a video series that would give our PIs on-demand training in critical sponsored research functions. Today, I have a series of videos using narration and screen capture to train researchers on important topics, including use of our accounting system and filling out effort reports. In this article, I present a brief overview of my experience creating a successful instructional video series while highlighting the technical and organizational challenges that arose along the way. Hopefully, this will give you some ideas for using similar tools at your own institution.

In my experience as website manager and outreach specialist, training manuals never seemed to catch on. We had a manual that outlined how PIs could use our grants accounting system, BANNER, to query their own grant balance using screenshots, but the 5 page document was rarely looked at, and I never saw it referenced by my PIs. Here was an area ripe for training possibilities, but limited by its media form. There was already a paucity of knowledge when it came to the accounting system, which came to our attention from the researchers themselves as well as associated staff. Using the training manual as a reference point, I had the idea of creating a video that would combine voiceover narration with recorded screen captures, that is, video rendering of my computer screen as I went through the motions of this budget query. With this idea in hand, I sought the support of my director, Dr. Milton Cole. He thought that the idea was sound, and advised me to go through all the official channels before putting the finished product on the website, rendering of my computer screen as I went through the motions of this budget query. With this idea in hand, I sought the support of my director, Dr. Milton Cole. He thought that the idea was sound, and advised me to go through all the official channels before putting the finished product on the website. We both believed the accounting system lent itself to this kind of video, because access to grant balance reports required our researchers to cycle through several screens and fill out forms in an exacting manner.

My office computer runs MS Windows 7, and I was certainly not anticipating reimbursement for an expensive video production program! Mac OSX has a built in tool in the Quicktime software that can do screen capture, but I am really a Linux guy using a Windows machine. Fortunately, a program called CamStudio, offered for free at www.camstudio.org, was just the right tool for my Windows machine. It would give me the raw video combined with audio narration that I needed to demonstrate the execution of a query.

Once I had recorded my voiceover and the screen capture, I used Windows Live Movie Maker to do post production work, such as adding a title screen with our university logo and office name, and credits at the end of the video. However, using Movie Maker did require some fiddling to get it to recognize the CamStudio file; if you need help, please feel free to email me for advice on this step. Next was finding a place to publish the video. Villanova University has a YouTube channel which hosts videos for a variety of departments, so after calling our Marketing and Communications Departments, I eventually located our YouTube Channel Administrator in our tech office. He uploaded my video to the YouTube channel surprisingly quickly. After that it was as easy as embedding the video on the website, something my web developer was glad to do.

The next step was advertising. We sent the video to our PIs directly, but for several months I did not hear much feedback. That changed when I sent the video to the deans as well as departmental and college administrators. This really brought my video to the next level. The link was forwarded all over campus, and I knew we were successful when I received a flood of questions about and praise for the video. It was accessible for new researchers, invaluable for the seasoned researchers, and looked great for the office. I had reduced our post-award workload by eliminating some requests for grant balance reports by empowering researchers with the tools needed to manage their grant finances.

Since then, I have developed a follow-up video about the accounting system in conjunction with our Controller’s Office and a video about our effort-reporting forms and policy. The screen capture method is particularly useful in settings and situations that require visual guidance. For instance, in each of my three videos, I have the PIs following my cursor and typing; the screen is the center of the action. Screen capture videos quickly lose the interest of the viewer if there are long stretches of narration with no on-screen activity. Indeed, I ran into this problem with my video when trying to explain how our BANNER system deals with revenue accounts. Ultimately, I recommend using the screen capture method when demonstrating very concrete procedures, such as the completion of forms or basic use of a computerized effort-reporting system. This is in contrast to more abstract concepts, like explaining the difference between a grant and a gift, or why the university requires certain human subject protections – ideas that will require a different method of instruction.

Creating instructional videos with the screen capture method is an excellent way to reach out to faculty on issues important to the office. The end product is impressive and effective. Not only will your PIs be thankful for your efforts, but you will make an impression on your superiors with your initiative and creativity!
While we may find the above comment humorous, it is also very true. In a world that is moving with ever increasing speed, we are being asked to do more and more every day with less and less resources – both in terms of equipment and personnel. Bear with me for a bit of a history lesson to drive home this point. The Industrial Revolution encompassed the period of roughly 1760 – 1840, a mere 173 years ago. The computer revolution started with the creation of Leprechaun by Bell Labs in 1947, a mere 66 years ago. Steve Jobs founded Apple in a garage and incorporated it on January 3, 1977, a mere 36 years ago. Microsoft was founded on April 4, 1975, a mere 38 years ago. In 1982 the Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) was standardized and the flood gates opened, a mere 31 years ago. Stop and think of the impact this less-than-200-year-old transition has had on our world.

As our world changes, we have to safeguard and monitor increasingly granular levels of the research world we support; we have to think smarter, not work harder. We have to embrace the change that is demanded of us while growing not only our individual skill sets, but also mentoring and growing the staff around us. We face a myriad of compliance risks right and left which, if not recognized and adhered to, can leave us vulnerable to audit findings and subsequent costs that are substantial to our institutions, not only in terms of reputation, but also financially.

With this in mind, we at the University of Washington (UW) are embracing the concept of a shared service environment. Institutions can run the gamut from decentralized administrative functions, to centralized, very controlled and regulated functions, to a mix of some decentralized and some centralized functions. UW has components of all three of these administrative functions.

At the UW I am involved with a project at the School of Medicine (SOM) which is one of two projects currently underway (the other project is on our “upper” campus or the Liberal Arts Schools). We have the luxury to build upon the upper campus model as well as a much smaller initiative which is similar in nature and in use by two of our fellow SOM departments. At the UW we are not trying to develop one central shared services organization for the entire campus, but rather will maintain a model for our upper campus and a model for the SOM as the needs and work flow are very different between the two entities. This makes our journey somewhat unique among higher educational organizations.
By moving to a shared services model we hope to unify separate departments (organizations) by linking them through an oversight model. We will establish service level agreements to define the services provided by the Shared Services Team (SST) which will have a focus on customer-driven transactions. In creating the SST, our goal is to create a performance-driven culture through measurement and feedback. A highly trained and technically competent team that can provide support at a level and consistency that an individual department cannot will ensure better compliance and end product.

The University of Michigan Administrative Services Transformation project created a table defining the advantages of moving to a shared service model which best describes what we are trying to create http://ast.umich.edu/. It is described to the left.

These teams will allow the departmental level the ability — freedom — for us and our staff to work to the level of our jobs. It is traditionally viewed that at best we only work to 65% of our job – i.e., there are a lot of workplace “detractors” that cause us to “underperform.” Many of us have or know of staff members that are capable of much more but are held back by routines and protocols that do not necessarily breed success and growth. By taking the more routine aspects of our activities and centralizing them where these activities can have the attention required by a highly trained and focused staff, we and our departmental staff can focus on tasks that traditionally take a back seat, but are equally as important. Additionally, when considering compliance risks, these tasks may be even more important. In short, we will be able to work smarter, ensuring compliance and the ability to partner with our leadership to think and work strategically. It will provide us with the ability to mentor our staff up (promote them to the next level) by “freeing” them to think strategically about what they do.

While recognizing the need for change and deciding on choosing a shared service model, we are also quickly recognizing the need for communication and change management, emphasizing that this has the potential to be a win for everyone in the system touched by the service areas we have selected. From a central level and at our School of Medicine level, the University is partnering with us on this journey. We are being armed with training and tools to help ensure success in this transition. We have just completed a professional development journey on how to manage organizational shifts, with the final presentation on the Immunity to Change by Wendy Fraiser, Ph.D. What has become apparent, especially in this last session, is that as we embrace change, we must first look to ourselves as individuals and identify what “drives” us. Then we can move to the level of how the group/team/organization is moved and driven and thereby will react to change. In Dr. Fraiser’s presentation, it was also pointed out that in looking at change we should remember the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Traditional View of Centralization</th>
<th>Shared Services View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customers Treated As………</td>
<td>End Users</td>
<td>Customers (e.g., departments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Central Oversight Entity/Headquarters</td>
<td>Independent Unit – Customer Board/Advisory Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Capital Area/Headquarters</td>
<td>High Skill/Low Cost Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Focus</td>
<td>Cost Control</td>
<td>Service Excellence, High Performance, Cost Control, Continuous Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Responsibility</td>
<td>Central Oversight Entity</td>
<td>Shared between SST and customers as stated in Service Level Agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Management</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>Service Level Agreements, Key Performance Indicators, Performance Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Contact Mgt.</td>
<td>Ad Hoc</td>
<td>Multiple channels (e.g., voice, e-mail, web); Contact center staffed with customer service reps; Case/Time Tracking Software; Client Relations Managers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is much to be gained by adopting a shared service model. The benefits can span the following:

1. Economic:
   a. Higher productivity
   b. Reduced expenses
   c. Reduced infrastructure costs
   d. Leverage of investments in systems, equipment, and IT development

2. Strategic
   a. Support meeting increased demand with fewer employees who are highly trained and specialized
   b. Consistent support of key functions at the institution such as payroll, purchasing, grant preparation, visa preparation, etc.
   c. Achieve process and systems standardization – we all speak the same language
   d. Enable the larger group to move and react at a quicker pace to changes demanded of us in the various functions this team would support

3. Quality
   a. Improved information for decision making
   b. Better and more consistent service to key stakeholders – the departments, staff, faculty, etc.
   c. Reduced error rates – quality at source – better end product
   d. Develop centers of expertise and innovation

4. Speed
   a. Reduced cycle times for authorizations, procurement, sourcing, document preparation, submission, etc.
   b. Shorter response time to changes in requirements, rules, etc.
   c. By having a highly trained, centralized staff, they can create an end product with a shorter turnaround
one study cited 6 out of 7 heart patients could not sustain any change in
their behaviors (eating habits, exercise, stress) even though they were
told by doctors they would die without these changes. WOW! What this
says is that even if we know a process, procedure, or protocol is not pro-
ductive, not compliant, not teaming or forward thinking and we know of
a better way, we tend to keep on the same course as it is familiar, com-
fortable, and makes us feel “safe.”

We know we need to change and quickly because the status quo is no
longer good enough. Therefore, we have identified four areas to which
we want to apply the SST model – Visa, Pre-award, Purchasing, and Pay-
roll. Visa and Pre-award will be first, followed by Purchasing and Payroll
a year later. At the UW SOM and upper campus, we are capitalizing on
our talented departmental and central staff by forming small groups of
volunteers to build and launch the project. We have a core leadership
group with a diverse membership, and then sub groups looking into IT
and the various services we wish to develop.

We have formed teams comprised of ten different departments and staff
from different levels as well as staff from the central offices that would be
impacted by this change. We have tapped these volunteers as they have
expert skill sets in the areas we wish to move to a SST. The teams will de-
fine and create the SST based on evaluating different models at other peer
institutions. We are examining all aspects of the process map and tools,
systems, and staffing to make the SST a success. We have discovered we
also need an IT team for the tools and systems development as this is key
to the success of the SST model. I want to highlight that what we are cre-
ating is somewhat unique as it is anticipated the Pre-award SST will have
direct faculty contact, a concept not commonly used at other institutions.

The mantra on this journey is that the staff — using their skills, listening,
team and empowering them to take ownership of their position so that
our customers are served well — uses and grows your human capital. The
staff is our best and sometimes most undervalued resource, so we are
striving to empower them on this journey of change. As the SST takes root,
the departments participating will be supported in empowering the staff
to move to the next level of performance and support of the department.

I do not have many answers as we have just begun this journey, but I can
say that we are being thoughtful and careful and that in the end we will
all benefit and grow as a result. We recognize that teaming and commu-
nication are key and cornerstones to the success of this change. We are
actively challenging ourselves and thereby challenging the system. The
status quo is not acceptable — we have to capitalize on our human capital,
grow the staff, and move everyone toward being able to work at 100% of
their ability.

Randi Wasik is the Director of Administration and Finance at the
University of Washington’s Department of Urology. In addition to
her Departmental role serving both the clinical and research opera-
tions, she is also very active on several committees in the School
of Medicine, creating a shared service model for the School of Med-
icine, and is part of a team teaching a post-award grants manage-
ment class at the UW. She has worked in the central pre-award office
at Harvard Medical School and the central post-award office at Boston University.
She has worked in central budget operations and at a start-up R&D company. She
is active in NCURA at both the regional and national level. For “down” time she
plays the flute (BFA in flute performance), gardens, and cooks, is the secretary for
her daughter’s Booster club, is active in the community, and cares for a myriad of
rescued pets. She can be reached at randiw@uw.edu.

My University is partnering with systems designers and two other institutions to
develop the grants management module of a new financial system.

Being on the pre-award side of research, one might wonder why this is “sitting on
my desk.” As NCURA demonstrates, Re-
search Administration consists of three
“tracks,” pre-award, departmental and
post-award. What one “track” does im-
mediately impacts another. University
leadership recognized the importance of
inviting all “tracks” to the table early in
this process. After a couple of meetings
we realized the true scope. Simple things
like a change in the number of characters
in an account number to the possibility
that other systems cannot interact are
now not so simple. That said, we couldn’t
be more excited to invest time and energy
to this endeavor and we are committed to
its success! The reward in the end will be
increased efficiency and accountability!
“Investment – Commitment – Reward”

Brenda Kavanaugh, Assistant Director, Office of
Research and Project Administration, University
of Rochester
NCURA continued expanding its global collaborations in April by offering the first “NCURA Global Sponsored Project Administration Level II” workshop at Qatar University in Doha, Qatar. The intermediate-level workshop was a follow-up to the successful “Global Fundamentals” workshop held in Doha in 2012. The attendees from Qatar University, neighboring universities, and the Qatar National Research Foundation represented the full range of research administration personnel from proposal development, pre-award, post-award, accounting, as well as sponsor-level review and management. David Mayo of the California Institute of Technology and Robert Andresen of the University of Wisconsin-Madison led the attendees through exercises and case studies that focused on contract negotiation, award management, and research compliance. “After the first workshop, there was a great deal of interest in digging deeper into working with collaborators, both on the pre-award and post-award sides of research administration” said Robert Andresen, “We spent two and a half days working together to take the ideas and concepts covered in the first workshop and put them to use in real life scenarios. It was a great opportunity for all of us to share our experiences and learn from each other.”

NCURA Global Sponsored Project Administration Level II Workshop

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The Investments, Commitments, and Rewards of an Export Compliance Program: A University of Miami Model

By Wendy M. Epley

The new export compliance paradigm is quickly transforming the way business is conducted, bringing the once stand-alone, seldom updated programs which focus primarily on the exportation of goods into the throes of modern technology and business customs. Subsequently, export control programs have become highly complex, leaving many universities and research institutions in a legal quagmire.

The University of Miami, which conducts focused research to advance knowledge, enhance student learning, and build its reputation as a top-tier institution, strives to ensure positive returns on investments from sponsoring partners. While the University applies the principles of freedom of inquiry and open exchange of knowledge, it must also be mindful of the federal laws and regulations governing the exchange of research materials and results that are subject to export controls.

U.S. laws and regulations that govern export or access to certain information, technologies or financial services by foreign persons inside the U.S. or abroad, and transactions or services to individuals who are on embargoed or specially designated national lists. Further complicating matters, the U.S. Government recently has received increased attention, affecting programs at all major research institutions. Although federal regulations restricting exports of goods and technologies have existed since the 1940s, the regulations in recent years have become stricter and consequences for universities have become more severe.

Under export control laws and regulations, it is unlawful to send or take controlled information to certain countries outside of the U.S., disclose it orally or visually, or transfer it to certain foreign nationals inside or outside U.S. territory. Government regulators define exports not only as tangible items, such as biological materials, chemicals, and equipment, but also intangible information, including research data, formulae, engineering designs, and ideas. Exports also include electronic and voice transmissions, training of or services to foreign nationals in the U.S. or abroad, and transactions or services to individuals who are on embargoed or specially designated national lists.

In addition, compliance with export controls must be considered and achieved before traveling, engaging in science- or technology-based research, executing contracts or other agreements, or purchasing high-technology devices or software. In some cases where an export license is required, projects can be delayed several months until one is obtained.

The Fundamental Research Exclusion provides some relief to researchers as long as all five criteria are met: (1) no publication restrictions can be accepted either verbally or in writing, (2) no foreign national restrictions can be accepted either verbally or in writing, (3) the scope of the project constitutes either basic or applied research, (4) the scope of the project does not constitute development, and (5) the research project must be conducted at an accredited institution of higher learning in the United States. Unfortunately, even if all five criteria are met, export controls may still apply to the actual materials, items, or technologies involved in or resulting from the research (15 CFR §734.8, 2012).

Further complicating matters, the U.S. Government released in February, (OSTP, 2013) a proposed Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern, which applies to all federal agencies, as well as institutions that receive funding or that are conducting research that meets the definition of dual use research of concern, regardless of the funding source. While the policy limits the scope of DURC to 15 select agents and toxins, and seven categories of experiments, non-compliance with this policy could result in loss of funding for the institution.

To help navigate the ambiguous export control laws and regulations, the University of Miami invested in an Export Compliance Officer.

In November, 2011, the University entered into an agreement with a new Restricted Party Screening (RPS) provider, which offers technologically advanced, user-friendly services. University faculty and staff are now able to easily and regularly conduct screenings to ensure that they are complying with export policies.

UM also has invested in export licensures. But obtaining these licenses from governing agencies is an intricate and time-consuming process, requiring export control classification numbers, harmonized tariff schedule numbers, RPS on all individuals, objects, and vessels involved, and a technology control plan, among many any other items. The cost for obtaining these licenses can reach tens of thousands of dollars.

A successful export compliance program also requires commitment from executive management. At UM, the Export Compliance Program is managed by a team of one, but leadership supports and acknowledges the importance of the program. Getting faculty and staff to understand the necessity of
export compliance, however, can be difficult. Many researchers already spend nearly 42 percent of their time completing administrative tasks for Federal awards (NSB, 2012) and view export compliance as another administrative burden that will limit their ability conduct research and recruit brilliant minds to work on projects. Many times, researchers rely on others to tell them what procedures to follow, creating inconsistencies and a lack of responsibility for liability concerns.

In addition to research faculty and staff, administrative employees in such departments as purchasing, human resources, risk management, and sponsored programs play an important role in export compliance. Employees in these areas are often the first to notice export control issues. But because export controls are not black-and-white, identifying control issues in advance is not always easy.

Commitment to the export compliance program is more than just writing policies and procedures and fulfilling administrative duties. Educating personnel is a continuous and needed endeavor. A user-friendly website with regularly updated information and links to internal and external sources is an important tool that can help answer many questions employees have. At UM, export compliance training sessions are offered in a classroom setting to encourage participation.

It is important to help faculty and staff understand the importance of safeguarding information and intellectual property. The pursuit of information or technologies is an increasingly serious threat where targeting methods include luggage searches, extensive questioning, and unnecessary inspection or downloading of information from laptop computers (FBI, 2003).

The rewards of a robust export compliance program can be measured in many ways. When compared to monetary fines that could be imposed for violations, the financial costs are minimal. In addition to loss of privileges and professional licenses, violators also could face deportation, incarceration, and fines as high as $1 million (22 CFR §2778(c), 2012). Moreover, violations can be applied to both the institution and the individuals involved.

As colleagues at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell recently learned, export compliance is not simply a matter of red tape. As a result of export violations, the institution was fined $200,000 and placed on probation for two years (United States v. University of Massachusetts, 2013). In 2008, a former University of Tennessee professor became the first university professor or administrator ever prosecuted for violating the Arms Export Control Act. Convicted of sharing technical information in a U.S. Air Force research and development contract related to drones, he is serving a four-year federal prison sentence (FBI, 2009). Institutions are encouraged to file Voluntary Self Disclosures to help mitigate what could otherwise be similarly costly mistakes (15 CFR §764.5, 2012).

Another reward of having a well-established program is greater employee awareness. UM advocates an open-door policy with the university community, as well as with vendors and customers, to help ease anxieties and promote understanding of export control complexities. As more and more university employees become aware of export control issues, they also begin to analyze current department processes and policies to ensure compliance.

There are many institutions like the University of Miami that are just developing their export compliance program with a small staff, possibly decentralized network, and most likely an significant number of issues to address.

Many experts would agree that building a solid program starts by taking small steps toward analyzing an institution’s needs, prioritizing two or three items that can be reasonably managed over the next year, and asking for input from departmental staff. The U.S. Department of Commerce publishes information on its website that also may assist with developing an effective export management and compliance program (U.S. DOC, 2011).

Wendy M. Epley, Export Compliance Officer, University of Miami, holds a B.S. degree in Global Business from Arizona State University and certification from ECTI in both EAR and ITAR. Before joining UM to develop and manage the export compliance program, her 25-year career extended across many industry leaders. She can be reached at 305-243-9545 or WEpley@med.miami.edu.

References


Research compliance can often be perceived as trying to leash or tame the evil wolf in our investigators. Maybe our investigators do not have any sense of the two wolves, but they often feel and complain about the leashes and cages being imposed by the compliance world. The compliance world seems to have spent a great deal of time dealing with the evil wolf, missing the true purpose of compliance and leading investigators to look past the issues and simply do whatever has to be done to “jump through the hoops.” In the end, trying to leash the evil wolf does not result in the right things being done for the right reasons and can lead to negative outcomes.

One of Shakespeare’s characters suggested doing away with all the lawyers3 and researchers may, at times, feel the same way about their research compliance officer (RCO). Faculty members groan (at the minimum) when RCOs come calling. Because of their charge to uphold federal regulations, these officers can be viewed as “the police” rather than the allies that they are meant to be and strive to be. “Why don’t they just let me do my research and leave me alone?” We’ve heard researchers say that many times. Of course, there can be instances when the compliance officer is the enforcer and has to step in and disrupt a research project. A research compliance officer’s main duty is to protect the reputations of the institution and its investigators by ensuring that no actual or perceived wrongdoing occurs. And if something does go awry, the compliance officer must initiate corrective action immediately. Maintaining the public trust is essential. Contrary to some opinions, the research compliance officer is not looking for trouble, but rather ways to avoid it.

Why the negative opinion of RCOs?

If RCOs are charged with protecting researchers’ reputations, why are they sometimes (mostly) looked upon with scorn? When RCO’s do not maintain a visible presence in the research community, the first impression by that community may be of investigators of wrong-doings and enforcers. Honestly, the federal government is partly responsible for this, imposing so many regulations – most of them difficult to interpret – on the research enterprise. When the first contact Dr. Findit has with Dr. Aider is an investigation of his financial relationships because of a reported conflict of interest, it’s not the most positive start to a collaboration. When compliance is investigating alleged research misconduct, an attitude of “Turn over your research notebooks and step away from that microscope!” may go a long way toward ensuring that the reputation of the investigator could be saved, but the compliance officer has lost any modicum of respect the investigator may have had for that office.

Why are Research Compliance Offices necessary?

There are many reasons to create and evolve a vital and proactive Research Compliance Office. Kulakowski and Chronister state that research compliance programs have emerged due to increased involvement by government and other agencies in discovering and publicizing moral, ethical, and/or legal wrongdoings by researchers and research institutions. There can be no doubt that regulations have increased exponentially over the past decade, and researchers
imposed at multiple levels, and the public begins to lose trust and their willingness to invest in the research enterprise. Research compliance is a close cousin to research integrity. Compliance means we will do what we are required to do by federal regulations; in essence, we will follow the rules. Research integrity means that we will do what is right — what we and our institutions deem as correct and ethical behavior. A faculty member may be extremely ethical with high levels of integrity but may still be out of compliance with federal guidelines if he or she neglects to file a conflict of interest disclosure in a timely manner. An RCO can help ensure that both compliance and integrity are maintained.

RCOs are crucial in protecting the public trust and their institution. The public has a right to know that those of us doing research are doing it right. Because of growing movements towards Public Access, the Freedom of Information Act and the Sunshine Act, there are few places to hide when things go wrong, or appear to be wrong. To maintain public trust, we have to be transparent. The federal Office of Research Integrity publishes names of those who have been found guilty of research misconduct, and media outlets like the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post don’t hesitate to turn out stories with 2-inch headlines when they get a whiff of something amiss. RCOs are determined to be sure that all research at their institutions passes the “New York Times test.” Reputations lost are difficult to regain.

The publication Integrity in Scientific Research states: “The public will support science only if it can trust the scientists and the institutions that conduct research.” Once that trust is violated, it is difficult to regain. RCOs are committed to maintaining that trust and ensuring that trust by educating and supporting our investigators and faithfully enforcing research regulations.

Anyone involved in research at a university, corporation, or research institution realizes that adherence to federal regulations and guidelines is essential. There are few areas of research, whether in the medical, physical, behavioral/social sciences or even the humanities not touched by federal regulations. Oversight is especially important when research is federally funded. With ever-changing federal regulations and guidelines, compliance has become an extremely complex area, touching everything from grant applications to research publications and presentations. Federal regulations cover everything from Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols to research grant applications to grant expenditures to intellectual property. With the myriad of faces of research compliance, principal investigators cannot possibly be expected to know every regulation that touches the conduct and management of their research, from IRB to Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, from Responsible Conduct of Research Training to Export Controls, conflicts of interest to radiation safety. Who can know all that stuff? Who wants to? RCOs, that is who!

How do we feed the good wolf?

Grant et al. presented an extensive model and supporting explanations for creating and maintaining a comprehensive research compliance office. That model obviously had to contain elements focused on the evil wolf. As suggested earlier, focusing on leashing the evil wolf serves only to prompt our investigators to seek ways of getting through and around the system. Focusing on the evil wolf essentially denies the existence of the good wolf and certainly does nothing to nurture that good wolf. Feeding the good wolf means helping our investigators understand not only what the right thing is, but making it easy for them to choose to do the right thing. Feeding the good wolf can take form and those are embedded in Grant et al.’s work as well.

One could be simply changing the name. Just think of the term “compliance.” It just sounds like something next door to evil. Terms like Research Integrity Officer, Office of Research Integrity, and Office of Responsible Conduct of Research sound at least less threatening. Moreover, those viable names serve to refocus the audience on doing the right thing, the real heart of the matter. But it’s not just changing a name that will help bring the office of research compliance out of the depths of disdain. RCOs must be visible and proactive.

Another form of feeding the good wolf is the creation and support of the infrastructure necessary to clearly communicate that the institution as a whole is committed to the highest ethical and integrity standards and what those standards are. This step is crucial in establishing not only a cli-
NCURA PATHWAYS

NCURA has identified three distinct volunteer pathways for its members to get involved - presenter, leadership, and volunteer at the regional and/or national level. “Pathways” is intended to inspire and inform NCURA members on how to engage NCURA as a volunteer in any or all of these opportunities. To get involved visit http://collaborate.ncura.edu/VolunteerOpportunities

As an organization reflecting on its fifty five year history, NCURA and its members are full of stories which will highlight the success of this premier professional organization, as well as personal achievements. At the very core of this success is the spirit of volunteerism. As a member of NCURA Region V, I still reflect on my first regional and national meeting and the invaluable gains I achieved from volunteers who were committed to serve, to make me feel welcome to the organization, share their knowledge along with their sense of support and humor. By volunteering I have served as moderator, presenter, chair, committee member, graduated from LDI and serve on the N&LDC. Right from the very first year of membership it became clear as members of NCURA and through volunteering, we are here to support research together and be a part of a bigger purpose that over time benefits mankind. By volunteering I continue to enhance subject matter expertise, stay current and relevant in my profession, my network of peers and friends and give back to the profession and organization that has defined my career path. Volunteering for NCURA continues to be among the top best experiences for me.

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mate and culture with the highest ethics standards and focus on integrity at the heart of all things, but also in providing the resources for perhaps the best possible nutrition for the good wolf - active and proactive engagement of the RCOs with the investigators and their staff members.

The best possible form of nutrition for the good wolf is a balanced diet of education, information, and relationships. Education and training programs focused on compliance have always been important, but they likely aren’t enough to help the investigator choose the right way. The RCO should have an established relationship with investigators and their staff members as the foundation of all things.

With the relationship serving as the foundation, all other steps gain in acceptance, importance, and efficacy. The RCOs must consider themselves an ally of the research team and should work to make that feeling reciprocated. With the relationship in place and given that RCOs are absolutely current with the latest standards, guidance, and regulations, the investigative team knows where to take every question and is comfortable doing so. Moreover, when a relationship is established it is far easier for RCOs to know the ongoing activities and issues facing the investigators and their labs.

Conclusion

We all have two wolves battling in us and the one that will win is the one we feed. If we assume people are bad by nature, we focus our attention on keeping a tight leash on the evil wolf. If we assume people are inherently good and prefer to do the right things, however, we focus on feeding the good wolf. At the heart of feeding the good wolf are two very simple goals: 1) Help researchers and their staff members to choose what is right, and 2) Make it easy for researchers and their staff members to choose to do what is right. When RCOs and research teams believe themselves to be allies, and when the relationship between the two is ongoing and vital with trust and communication, providing all essential vitamins and minerals, the good wolf will win.

References


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William Siler, Ph.D. is Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training at Saint Louis University. He is formerly Associate Dean of Research Administration in the Doisy College of Health Sciences and an IRB chair at Saint Louis University and former NCURA member. Now that he is back in the faculty, Bill’s research revolves around research culture and research productivity. William can be reached at silerw@slu.edu.
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Prior to becoming a research administrator, I was a competitor in the Weekend Wrestling Federation (WWF) where the phrase “no pain, no gain” was often uttered. Indeed, it was our mantra. Those of us who were dedicated were training constantly, and we knew we had to push through any discomfort to succeed.

Following a misstep during my championship bout with a Gulliver-like opponent, my professional WWF career abruptly ended. My foe was declared the winner, but because neither this adversary nor the referee appeared to pay much attention to the established rules, teammates and friends argued on my behalf as my lack of consciousness prohibited my lodging a formal protest. While the judges later admitted that rules may have been bent, none were overtly broken. I’ve viewed the award ceremony video numerous times and the coveted Grand Championship of the World trophy was dwarfed in those meaty hands.

Obviously at that time I wasn’t able to make the comparison between WWF rules, regulation, and oversight to a day in the life of a research administrator. But some months later, I awoke to find myself happily employed in a university sponsored programs office. As more and more lucidity returned, I began to realize and recognize the many similarities between these two passions.

Let’s begin with the fact that most research administrators stumble into the profession. Often we first learn about the profession by reading a job announcement. Similarly, as a small child I didn’t dream about being a WWF contender when I grew up. I started weekend wrestling to keep me out of the library. It was icing on the cake when I realized that it also provided a viable excuse for not emptying the dishwasher.

It is only after gaining a unique knowledge base and beginning to understand the important role research administrators play in advancing the research endeavors at our respective institutions that the job transitions into a career. From that transition grows commitment. Research administrators embrace and epitomize the philosophy to “do what needs to be done.” When considering WWF and research administration side-by-side, you must agree: The commitment parallels are astounding.

Of course, once the research administration hook is set, we begin the personal investment necessary to succeed in the field. Perhaps even more impressive is that our institutions also are willing to financially invest and support our professional growth and success. Like wrestlers building up muscle and technique, we begin to build a knowledge base. We attend professional development opportunities. When confident that this mortar is solidly applied to its foundation, we begin to engage as presenters. We help the up-and-comers build their own foundations that will withstand huffing and puffing. We make a difference. If this were my acceptance speech at the Oscars, it would be appropriate to add, “None of this would be possible without the unconditional love and support of my institution.” While perhaps not unconditional in reality, the financial backing, support, and patronage must be acknowledged and appropriately appreciated. To each and every one, I give an enthusiastic thumbs-up.

I remember the satisfaction of a solid pin in the heat of WWF competition: the smell of the mat; the sounds of cheering fans; the pure enjoyment of a tall glass of carrot juice at the end of the day which was my reward for all the blood, sweat, and tears. Now consider research administration: A complex proposal is signed, sealed, and delivered; a multi-fund project is closed-out with nary a hitch; a formerly disgruntled PI stops by with candy and verbal kudos for the office; the warm glow of an adult beverage at the end of the day like a hug in a glass… a reward for the tears and sweat. Oh, the ecstasy!

Clearly I could wax eloquent for some time, but I believe my point is made. There are times in one’s life when all the stars are aligned, the silver polished, the expenditure reports accurate and reliable. We research administrators are a lucky group. I’m particularly riding this rainbow. I’m still avidly involved in WWF. Well, yes, now it’s Words with Friends. I find great satisfaction in herding those tiles around the virtual board. After 82 hours per week herding a variety of people and paperwork, I am often soothed to sleep by WWF. If you’re ever interested in starting a game, my profile is “tymneffert!”

NCURAbly Pedantic is written by long-standing NCURA members, all under pseudonym protection.
The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee invites all members to participate in the election of the organization’s future leadership. Terms of office begin January 2014. Members will receive an electronic ballot in May. Elections are open for 30 days.

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Thank you in advance for your participation in these important elections.

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**2013 NCURA National Elections • Your Vote Counts!!**
The Applicants and Administrators Pre-award Luncheon Series at Tufts University

By Kara E. Charmanski, Zoya Hamilton, and Sarah Sherman

Introduction
If you could implement a low-cost, highly effective approach to educating faculty and staff about pre-award best practices that also builds connections among and between faculty, central and departmental staff, would you do so? At Tufts University, the Applicants and Administrators Pre-award Luncheon Series (AAPLS) has created a vibrant, well-attended and effective program that accomplishes these goals. Now in its third year (and Series), the program presents monthly hour-long sessions, each with unique content. With investment and commitment, this program and its rewards can be replicated across institutions.

AAPLS at Tufts University
The Tufts University Boston Health Sciences Campus, home to the AAPLS program, houses several Schools, Colleges and Research Centers. While there is a centralized Office of Research Administration, there is no centralized school or departmental administrative structure, which historically has led to administrative procedures that vary widely by school and department. This structure created administrative silos, leading to inefficiencies in resource creation and sharing, while also making administrative camaraderie difficult to foster.

Founding the Program: AAPLS was initiated in response to these challenges. The leadership team includes three Co-Directors: a research center-based Grants Management Administrator, the Coordinator of the Office of Proposal Development, and a Senior Associate Director of Research Administration. This balance between central and departmental administrators among the leadership team was a conscious choice, designed to represent the interests of all parties involved in pre-award activities.

The initial goal of AAPLS was to provide access to administrative best practices for grant submission from cradle-to-grave, both via slides and handouts and through discussions with subject matter experts. The target audience of the program was set as faculty (with an emphasis on new and inexperienced faculty) and administrative staff who work on pre-award matters. A secondary goal of creating an informal setting for investigators and administrators to strengthen their relationship and connection to other investigators and administrators has emerged as the program has progressed. As the program grew, it transformed into a forum that builds the research administration community at Tufts and nurtures our collaborative environment.

Investment in Developing a Program
AAPLS began through a series of small strategic investments involving time and existing resources. These simple investments when taken together were enough to build a vibrant and lasting program, and they are easily replicable at other institutions.

Time Commitment: The time of several key participants was necessary both in building the AAPLS program and in sustaining its monthly programming. Each of the Co-Directors devotes time to session planning meetings, curriculum development, and resource creation, as well as to leading sessions throughout each Series and connecting and collaborating with guest speakers. The time of a Staff Assistant has also been necessary for administrative tasks such as reserving space, ordering refreshments (including apples, of course), sending announcements, tracking participation and issuing annual attendance certificates.

These time investments have continued through subsequent sessions, as each Series includes a fresh curriculum. As the curriculum has expanded, AAPLS has also benefited from a signifi-
significant time commitment from presenters other than the program directors. To-date, seven different business offices participated in delivering the sessions. To ensure consistency of format and adherence to the AAPLS goals, and for quality control, one of the AAPLS program directors either co-presents or moderates the discussion during each session that involves a guest speaker.

Resources: While AAPLS involves negligibly small direct financial outlay, it does require the investment of several resources, including access to a website where materials and information about upcoming and past sessions are stored, and a conference room with AV capabilities for presentations. Narrative resources such as PowerPoint presentations, checklists, outlines and templates are also a critical component of the AAPLS model.

Commitment to Sustaining a Program
Research administration professionals have many demands on their time. Sessions are conducted during the lunch hour to make it easier for participants to fit AAPLS into busy schedules. Attendees are invited to bring their own lunch and modest refreshments are also served. This setting creates an informal atmosphere, which in turn encourages dialogue and conversation. To show respect for the time commitment of attending AAPLS, a special effort is made to start and finish each session on time.

Session Structure: Limiting sessions to one hour was a strategic decision. Apart from the fact that it is more difficult to dedicate extended periods of time, one hour is appropriate for providing resources that the participants can explore on their own. AAPLS primary objective is not training—although during the sessions our presenters do provide brief information about rules, regulations and internal policies relevant to the session topic—but is instead resource sharing. Information is usually delivered in a format of ten to fifteen PowerPoint slides. Each slide promotes a discussion and exchange of opinions or real life examples, and a list of “Links and Resources” is provided at the end of session for more detailed information.

Gray Areas are Positive: “Gray area” cases are often more useful than best case scenarios for delving into nuances and brainstorming solutions to the challenges of pre-award research administration. In discussions such cases, participants obtain immediate feedback and insights from both topic matter experts and fellow participants. In working through difficult topics, they gain exposure to the thought process of their peers in analyzing issues at hand. Most importantly, these exchanges build a sense of community that spans faculty, staff and administrators. Participants realize that they are not alone struggling with particular problems that evade straightforward resolutions, and find counterparts from other schools or departments on campus to whom they can reach out.

Audience Engagement: Participants’ engagement and commitment to AAPLS has been extraordinary. On average, each session attracts 30 or more attendees. The sessions are designed as stand-alone events where faculty and staff can come to any number of sessions, picking and choosing topics that are of particular interest to them. Certificates of attendance are issued in the spring of each year, in time for the annual performance reviews, and may be used by the attendees as evidence of their professional development.

The Rewards - What We Have Gained
As outlined above, AAPLS has created an open forum for discussion that has brought together various groups of individuals involved in research administration, affording numerous benefits and rewards at the University, School and individual level.

Reinforcing Partnerships: AAPLS has reinforced the partnership between faculty, staff and research administrators that is essential for successful proposal development and grant management. At Tufts, the program has identified shared goals and underscored roles and responsibilities, emphasizing the important role that each party plays. We believe APPLS has helped to reinforce a team mentality, contributing to job satisfaction and performance as investigators and administrators no longer feel that they are alone in navigating the complex arena of pre-award research administration, as highlighted above. APPLS has also sparked dialogue among investigators and their respective administrators, and has broken down barriers of communication between departmental and central administration.

Developing Best Practices: By providing useful tools and resources both during the session and on the AAPLS website, the program has given staff a place to look for templates, resources, and advice, filling a gap that had previously existed at Tufts. This development has the dual benefit of gently asserting a norm that is highly compliant, while also assisting faculty and administrators with the often time consuming tasks involved in pre-award research administration.

Learning From Each Other: AAPLS has allowed participants, session facilitators, and program directors to learn from one another. Each has been able to share unique experiences and to build on the experiences of others. This has been extremely beneficial for new employees, but has also had a positive impact on more seasoned faculty and staff by providing a new perspective for tackling ongoing and repeated issues. Through AAPLS, faculty and administrators’ need for clarification and information on University policies and procedures has been brought to the attention of central staff, and questions from the audience have inspired topics for future APPLS sessions.
Informal Network for Collaboration: AAPLS has created an informal network for collaboration and small working groups at Tufts, each of which have bolstered the University’s infrastructure for research administration. The series has been essential to crossing the boundaries between central and departmental administrators, between staff and faculty, and between the departments and schools—in many instances for the first time. It has facilitated communication and encouraged participants to use one another as a resource outside of AAPLS. As a result, resources continue to be shared and maximized, and the faculty and administrator knowledge base continues to be both widened and strengthened, providing more support for research administration.

Conclusion

AAPLS at Tufts University is an easily replicable low-cost model that can be used to increase the engagement of an organization’s research administration community. At Tufts, the program contributes to the development of collegial atmosphere, provides useful tools and resources, and strengthens the culture of compliance of the institution. Adapting the methods discussed above, administrators at other research universities can build a program that meets the needs of their own institutions.

Kara E. Charmanski, BA, MBA (in progress) is the Grants Management Administrator for the Jean Mayer US Department of Agriculture Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University. She identifies funding opportunities for departmental-based research and cross-school collaborations, assists with proposal development and grant submission, and facilitates routine post-award tasks. She can be reached at kara.charmanski@tufts.edu.

Zoya Hamilton, Ed.D., CRA, is a Senior Associate Director for Research Administration at Tufts University Office of the Vice Provost for Research. She has a BS in secondary education, an MS in psychology, and an Ed.D. in administrative leadership, as well as graduate training in sociology, law, and accounting. She can be reached at zoya.hamilton@tufts.edu.

Sarah Sherman, BA, MA (in progress) is the Proposal Development Coordinator for the Office of Proposal Development at Tufts University. Working on all three Tufts University campuses, she focuses on educational initiatives, and partners with Tufts faculty and staff on the extra-narrative pieces of their grant submission. She can be reached at sarah.sherman@tufts.edu.

Julie Guggino’s Desk

In addition to being the university’s sole pre-award person, for the last twelve years I have managed the Graduate Studies and Research unit’s budgets; supervised Graduate Studies staff; overseen the McNair, GEAR UP, and RSVP programs, budgets, and staff; plus an assortment of other responsibilities. No dull moments here! I have recently been tasked with delegating and divesting everything except pre-award functions. I had no idea it would be so hard!!! On one hand, it’s a dream come true—my to-do list has been more of a what-not-to-do list in recent years. On the other hand, I had no idea how hard—mentally and emotionally—it would be to let many of these responsibilities go. So what’s on my desk is how to gracefully take almost everything off my desk, leave it to someone else’s care, and focus solely on pre-award tasks.

Julie Guggino, Director of Sponsored Programs, Central Washington University

“Collaborate Conversations”

We picked our favorite Collaborate Community conversation topics over last couple months to make sure you don’t miss any of the juicy gossip…we mean professional development! Popular recent topics:

- The Departmental Administration Community brought us “Grants Management Manuals,” posted by Amanda Drazin of The University of Colorado Denver.

- Financial Research Community – “A New Center-Business Case to Cover All Costs,” posted by Valerie Cheeseman, Tidewater Community College, asked about the process of justifying the need for a new university Center.

- Bonnie Dee from Washington University in St. Louis was asking about “PCORI agency status” in the Pre-Award Community. Good replies on both sides of the “fed or non-fed” question here!

- Emily Robinson, in the PUI Community, was asking about the “Banner Grants Module.” Emily is from Smith College in Northampton, MA.
NCURA’s Volunteer Central

NCURA’S VOLUNTEER CENTRAL now makes getting involved with your professional association even easier! Find volunteer opportunities that match your interests, expertise and availability. Scroll through the list of opportunities or filter your selections to find out which positions or projects best suit you. Check out Volunteer Central for the latest ways to get involved and enhance your membership and career!

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- Additional experience
- Sharing expertise
- Personal achievement
- Giving back to the organization
- Recognition
- Having fun!

If you have any questions or would like additional information about how to get involved with NCURA, please contact Alissa Brower, National Volunteer Coordinator, at brower@ncura.edu or 202-466-3894.

Visit: http://collaborate.ncura.edu/VolunteerOpportunities

Visit NCURA’s NEW Volunteer Central!
The Value of Professional Development - A VC’s Perspective

By Darrell Bazzell

Learning is at the center of all activities at a university. As members of a university community, we are engaged in teaching both students and colleagues and also in learning from those same individuals. The sharing of information, facts, and opinions is at the heart of a university education. At a research institution, a critical part of the learning takes place when faculty and staff discuss, debate, analyze, and ultimately create new knowledge that is

By Brian Herman, University of Minnesota VPR, on NCURA Professional Development

“Rapid, in depth understanding of regulatory changes and the ability to compare and discuss novel approaches with our peers is key to facilitating an effective research enterprise,” says University of Minnesota Vice President of Research Brian Herman. An accomplished scientist, researcher, and academic administrator, Herman has both system and campus administrative leadership experience.

Herman said he appreciates the fact that his Associate VP for Research, Pamela Webb, can pick up a phone or send a few emails to her colleagues around the country and get an immediate “read” on how institutions similar to Minnesota have approached an issue or are considering implementing a new regulation. “It is clear,” says Herman, “that NCURA fosters a sense of community among its members. Sharing, rather than competing, seems to be the order of the day.”

Herman knows that staff in the units reporting to him, as well as departmental administrators throughout the Minnesota system, take advantage of many of the training opportunities offered by NCURA, including the “NCURA TV” series and sharing of the weekly “You Tube” videos. “These locally-available, skill-building opportunities are particularly appreciated and valuable today, given today’s intense pressures on administrative budgets, ever-expanding workloads, and the ongoing concern about the intensity of the faculty administrative burden related to research,” says Herman. “Knowledgeable staff who are able to stay current on agency issues and processes are not only fundamental to regulatory compliance and to provide outstanding service to faculty, but can also help the institution better align its policies and procedures to manage current and emerging (rather than historical) risks.”

In addition to increasing competency in research oversight, Herman remarked, “in an era where many campus staff development programs are having to be trimmed, having University of Minnesota staff take on leadership roles in their professional organization, or who teach workshops and sessions at national and regional conferences provides career experiences that make these staff more valuable to the University.” “In addition, their contributions are also helping to bring greater awareness of the strength of the University of Minnesota into the national arena.”

Dr. Brian Herman is the Vice President for Research at the University of Minnesota and has primary responsibility for the overall vitality of the university-wide research environment, including supporting evolution of new research, maintaining a competitive research infrastructure, developing and managing campus-wide research policies, and overseeing administrative management of all sponsored research activity. He is also responsible for technology commercialization activities and for the administration of regulatory offices associated with research.
then shared within the community and with the public at large. I am fortunate to work with some of the most creative and curious researchers in the world at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Their work is supported in many cases by sponsored project funding from public and private sources.

With sponsored funding comes tremendous responsibility – both for researchers and the university. There are ever-expanding obligations to ensure compliance with scientific and ethical standards. We also face accountability and transparency standards for research administration. The responsibility for managing and monitoring research activities and expenditures extends across many institutional units, from departmental administrators to central offices that deal exclusively with sponsored projects. Research administrators number in the hundreds at UW-Madison, and their efforts to support the research enterprise require constant diligence to the regulatory environment.

In the last decade, the responsibilities for compliance and regulatory management have grown exponentially as a result of “unfunded mandates” imposed by sponsoring agencies. There is a need to continually revise university policies to meet new federal standards, to review business practices to accommodate new areas of audit interest, to develop more efficient electronic tools to support the research community, and to provide the highest quality customer service to our faculty and our sponsors.

The world of research administration is expanding rapidly. The wave of the immediate future portends more multi-departmental services and more multi-campus services – all of which require a higher level of research administrator skill, ongoing operational reviews, and process redesigns to increase efficiencies.

Similarly, changing federal regulations necessitate a larger staff of professional administrators. The increasing numbers of non-public funding sources mean new contracts, more negotiators, more compliance specialists, and more information services to assist the academic community. New technology improves the quality of research administration but does not alleviate workload. Research administrators regularly confront the challenges of change. UW-Madison must meet these challenges by providing high-quality, resilient, and flexible support for our faculty.

It is no longer feasible for any single university to create an educational and professional development framework that meets the needs of all its administrators. While on-campus programs are critical, it may be more efficient and more cost-effective to seek professional development opportunities offered by an organization that directs its full attention to research administrators. Our research staff members report that the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) offers excellent programming on cutting-edge issues, provided by experts in the field.

An investment in the ongoing education of our research administrators is one critical approach to facilitating the work of our scientists. If we improve the skills of those staff, we can reduce the administrative burdens on our researchers and allow them to focus on the work that yields world-class scientific discovery and innovation.

Lisa Mosley’s Desk

Right now I am working on finalizing my FY14 funding request, drafting an email to a faculty member explaining why a fixed price contract is not a gift, and working on process changes as ASU moves from a paper process for COI certification to using the Click Compliance module. While taking inventory of my desk to write this piece, I discovered a Gift Award Letter that I was supposed to review to determine if it really is a gift – oops! I’m also reviewing the proposed Omni Circular to determine how the proposed changes will impact ASU. This doesn’t sound too terrible, but don’t forget reading Circulars is prescribed for people who suffer from insomnia, which I do not! On a positive note, I also need to send one of my team members a Sun Award for outstanding service – which I will move to the top of the list!

Lisa E. Mosley, CRA, Executive Director, Research Operations, Arizona State University, Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development, Operations
Individuals spend a majority of their time in a home or workplace and for many, these places are their sanctuaries. At Washington State University, the CASAS research group is designing homes and workplaces that are also smart. A smart environment is one that acquires and applies knowledge about its residents and their surroundings in order to provide activity-aware services that improve their experience in the environment.

In order to add these capabilities to a home, wireless sensors are installed throughout the home (see the figure on the right for an example). These sensors can detect, for example, motions of home occupants, the status of cabinets and doors, and the use of electrical devices. Using the CASAS technology, sensor events are collected in a database and are analyzed using ambient intelligence (AmI) techniques, including machine learning and data mining, to recognize resident activities. In the home, the CASAS technology, playing the role of an intelligent agent, perceives the state of the physical environment and resident, reasons about this state, and then takes actions to achieve specified goals, such as minimizing resource consumption, maximizing the comfort of the residents, and maintaining health and safety.

The first component of this research is the design of a CASAS “smart home in a box” kit. This kit is small in form - all of the components fit within an 8”x8”x2” box. The CASAS software infrastructure utilizes a Zigbee wireless mesh which communicates directly with hardware components including sensors and controllers. Software components publish and receive messages through a publish/subscribe middleware manager. The architecture is easily maintained, extended, and enhanced. They have already outfitted 38 smart homes around the Northwest. The CASAS smart home technology also works “out of the box”. By having been trained on dozens of existing smart homes, the software can capture, visualize, analyze, and act on collected information without excessive customization and training on the part of the user.

The uses for smart environment technology grow daily. One key application of the technology is support aging in place. The world’s population is aging and the resulting prevalence of chronic illnesses is a challenge that our society must address. Smart home technologies can be leveraged to keep older adults and individuals with disabilities functioning independently in their own homes as long as possible. Caregivers can be provided with up-to-date information about the activities and wellbeing of individuals (see figure above). Researchers are also investigating ways of performing automated cognitive and physical health assessment from smart home sensor data and are using the technologies to design automated interventions for individuals with health conditions.

The ambient intelligence in this technology is not limited to the confines of a home. They are designing methods to allow the home to teach the phone about user behavioral patterns, so that activity-aware services can be used “on the go”. The phone can update the home and other daily environments in order to continually adapt to the individual’s needs and changing lifestyle.

If you want to share a “cool” project idea, please email Danielle Anthony at danthony@wsu.edu

Diane Cook is a Huie-Rogers Chair Professor in the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at Washington State University. Diane’s research interests include artificial intelligence, machine learning, data mining, robotics, smart environments, and parallel algorithms for artificial intelligence. She can be reached at cook@eecs.wsu.edu.
In February of this year, I was honored to have the opportunity to serve as a keynote lecturer for the inaugural International University Research Administrators Symposium sponsored by the Kyoto University Research Administration Office (KURA). The daylong event took place at the Kyoto University Yoshida campus in the historic Clock Tower Centennial Hall and attracted university research administrators from all over Japan. My lecture was titled “An Institutional and Individual Perspective on Successfully Administering the Research Enterprise” and focused on sharing best practices to advance institutional competitiveness in the pursuit of external funding. I shared common examples of office structures, training suggestions, and provided pre-award and post-award best practices on everything from managing the proposal submission process to collecting accounts receivables.

While Japanese universities have produced world-class research for decades, the advancements their researchers made in science were achieved sans any formal administrative sponsored research structure that is common to the institutions in the United States. However, increasing dependence on external competitive funding has left many Japanese researchers struggling to find the time to conduct the research while balancing the administrative needs required to obtain the funding, manage the projects, and provide outreach and public relations. Recognizing the need to reduce the administrative burden on the researchers, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) initiated grants to select institutions to establish sponsored research administrative operations. Kyoto University was one of the original MEXT grant recipients having established the Research Administration Office in April of last year. Since its establishment, the Kyoto University Research Administration Office has emerged as a leader among the Japanese sponsored research offices and the symposium was an inaugural effort to bring together university research administrators from the various institutions throughout the country.

For many of us that have been in the profession of research administration for some time it is hard to imagine what it would have been like to work in the profession in 1959, the year NCURA was founded. But this is exactly where our colleagues in Japan find themselves and it was greatly fascinating and exciting to have the opportunity to share with my Japanese colleagues what I’ve learned over the years. While the profession of research administration may be new to Japan, the problems facing their institutions and their researchers are not. It was my observation that my colleagues in the Kyoto University Research Administration Office are serving as a pioneering model for university research administration and I was honored to have had the opportunity to participate in the inaugural symposium and I encourage the NCURA membership to reach out to our Japanese colleagues when the opportunity avails itself and make the world a smarter place by exchanging best practices.

David Richardson is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Administration at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He holds a BS in agricultural economics and an MS in family and consumer economics. He can be reached at daverich@illinois.edu.

Dave Richardson, University of Illinois (l) and Dr. Kouichi Ono, (r) Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Kyoto University.
What a wonderful time we had in New Orleans for the 14th annual Financial Research Administration (FRA) Conference. FRA 2013 turned out to be a very successful conference in many ways, including setting a new attendance record with over 1,100 participants. Attendees were from all types of institutions across the U.S. and from foreign institutions. In addition, we were able to cope with the impact of Federal government sequestration by having our federal speakers participate virtually.

While there were many great sessions presented, there were also many opportunities for networking and connecting. The conference began with 25 workshops, including 6 senior forums. The meeting was kicked off by a fantastic panel from local universities discussing their experiences around the theme “When Disaster Strikes Will We Be Prepared?” For the next two days attendees chose from 160 sessions and discussion groups. If the topic is vital to financial research administration, FRA 2013 delivered a platform for it to be addressed.

As is true for all successful events, it takes many people to make them happen. FRA 2013 was possible due to all the hard work and commitment of the Program Committee, workshop faculty, session speakers, discussion group facilitators, volunteers and last but not least the wonderful NCURA staff.

We hope everyone returned to their institutions better informed and equipped to deal with daily challenges and with an expanded network of colleagues to call on for support. Thank you to all who attended and be sure to keep an eye out for information on next year’s FRA conference in the spring of 2014.
Set in the French Quarter of New Orleans, one of the world’s most fascinating cities, PRA VII was a truly historic NCURA event. Registration numbers exceeded all expectations and set a new record with more than 600 total participants, representing national and international institutions from around the world. This was also the first time the PRA Conference was held in the spring, immediately following the Financial Research Administration (FRA) annual meeting, allowing our members to maximize their educational experiences in new ways. Fueled with morning beignets and café au lait, participants enjoyed a wide variety of sessions and discussion groups and networking events. The conference was a resounding success: an excellent example of how we are all Supporting Research … Together.

The conference began with an exceptional array of 16 pre-conference workshops at all levels, from basic courses to advanced seminars. Sessions were organized around nine tracks and included more than 100 concurrent and discussion sessions. PRA also included more than twenty member-suggested sessions as well. There were also plenty of opportunities to network, renew old friendships and start new ones.

The conference’s success was possible through the efforts and commitment of a dedicated community including: the program committee, workshop faculty, presenters, volunteers and the fabulous NCURA staff. Special thanks goes to the amazing Peggy Lowry, our Program Manager, who kept all of us on track throughout the process. All of these individuals came together and worked hard to make PRA VII an exceptional success!
Supporting, motivating and assisting faculty members to reach their full potential is an important role of the sponsored research administrator at the predominantly undergraduate institution (PUI). Many research administrators are drawn to working at a PUI for the unique challenges and opportunities of working closely with faculty to help both the faculty and the institution achieve their respective goals. Jillian Cawley of Richard Stockton College shares interesting insights and approaches on the ways in which those involved in sponsored research at a PUI contribute to faculty development.

What is faculty development and how can someone in an Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) at a PUI contribute to faculty development?

Broadly considered, faculty development is the range of programming and activities offered by institutions that ensures the growth and vitality of faculty members in their instruction, their scholarship, and the institutional community. Research and other forms of scholarship inform teaching and have lasting impact on the institution and larger community. Further, the role of OSPs in overcoming barriers to scholarship in PUIs is well documented in the Research Management Review, NCURA Magazine, and the Journal of Research Administration.

The most important and fundamental way that the OSPs at a PUI can contribute to faculty development is by creating and sustaining meaningful relationships with new and tenured faculty members. OSPs often cite formal venues for developing these relationships such as new faculty orientations, workshops and recognition events for proposal writers and funded Principal Investigators (PIs). I think that the informal encounters tend to produce the most lasting relationships: the 1:1 impromptu office chats, the accidental hallway meetings, and the chance encounters out in the real world.

I recall a couple of recent unplanned meetings where two faculty members came to chat with me about their exciting news and reservations about leaving the teaching college they call home for research careers in Africa and Australia. While their leaving the institution can be seen as PUI “brain drain,” I choose to believe that our office helped them build a scholarly agenda and indirectly facilitate an opportunity for future international research collaboration or perhaps even study abroad/study tours/international internships for students. These opportunities rely entirely on our ability to maintain lasting relationships with such faculty. Another important way that staff in an OSP at a PUI can contribute to faculty development is through their own professional development and networking. Participating in conferences, sharing on listservs or the PUI community on NCURA’s Collaborate, and volunteering with professional organizations can help to gain insight into the current trends and best practices in faculty development. These professional venues for vetting possible development programs tend to save PUIs time and critical resources in the long run.

How would you adjust your advice to faculty once you determine which stage of their career they may be in? How should incentives for new, mid-career and senior faculty differ?

It is important for OSPs at PUIs to be sensitive to faculty members’ stages in their careers and encourage, for example, a longer view for new faculty. At the same time, most active scholars at PUIs must also hear how they can avoid burn out, which is a common experience for PUI faculty with heavy teaching loads and a research program. Faculty can easily be stretched beyond capacity and have a poor experience with the expectations imposed by a funded project, so it is our job to help them maintain balance.

While not characteristic of all new faculty members, many “green” professors entering a PUI need to build their curricula vitae in order to become competitive for external funding. With this in mind, incentives might serve...
new professors by focusing on building skills and qualifications. For example, many PUIs provide internal research and professional development funding programs as building blocks toward a vibrant scholarly career. These programs often support research to develop high quality pilot data, publications and/or creative activity such as exhibitions or performances. PUIs can also offer extensive scientific and proposal development mentoring—with the guidance of senior faculty and the OSPs. In addition, institutions might also extend travel funds for conference attendance to new faculty, as conferences offer the unique opportunity to establish personal contacts and initiate collaborations within one’s scholarly field.

Incentives for mid-career faculty should facilitate continued growth and sustainability of their scholarly endeavors. Most commonly, PUIs provide released time from teaching to devote to research; however, to taper dependency from internal funding, institutions might also consider offering released time to develop a proposal for external funding. Further, worthy mid-career faculty could be provided with travel funds to visit with program officers to discuss the resubmission of high-scoring, unfunded proposals. In the case of faculty members with externally funded programs, undergraduate student researcher supplements could be offered as a means to ensure the continuity of sponsored project activity. These arrangements are a win-win: faculty members receive support on funded programs while balancing heavy teaching loads and undergraduate research assistants gain experience and skills in research methods. Additionally, college units could reserve a portion of recovered indirect costs to be used for institutional commitment or cost-share for more complex sponsored programs, given the limited operational budgets of PUIs.

Incentives for senior faculty can focus on revitalizing scholarly life or ensuring an institutional legacy of scholarly engagement. Sabbaticals provide tenured and senior faculty with time for complete immersion in scholarship—an opportunity that can lead to significant changes in research direction, reenergizing a previously active PI. Further, institutions might target seasoned project directors for awards to build and facilitate interdisciplinary, collaborative programs, given their vast experience in managing project teams. For senior faculty less inclined to lead their own research programs at this stage of their careers, institutions might award mentorships in which previously prolific scholars support and encourage new faculty in their development.

**What innovations, best practices, or future trends can you share for developing the capacity of faculty to submit and manage research activities?**

I recently presented at NCURA’s PRA conference on an innovative training program that Beth Olsen and I developed and piloted in 2011 at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. The intensive summer proposal-writing institute incorporated many of the best practices in proposal development training into one comprehensive, long-term program. The three-month institute kicked off with a 4-day primer on topics such as project idea development, goals versus objectives, literature review and background, methods/activities, finding and screening funders, budget development, evaluation plans and the like. The expected end product for this 4-day introduction was a 1-2 page concept paper that could be further developed into a draft.

While the primer served as the starting point of the institute, other features of the program were identified by faculty participants during our summative assessment as absolutely critical to its success:
1) Faculty mentors that supported participants in every stage of the program;
2) Review of samples of successful and unsuccessful proposals;
3) Simulated conditions of a review panel using target sponsor’s criteria;
4) Independent time for draft writing; and
5) Consultation with mentors and peers built into the program.

Two additional institutions have adopted the model and are in various stages of implementation.

Aside from anecdotal evidence, there is limited data available on effective faculty development and training methods at PUIs. What seems clear is that developing faculty is rewarding for the research administrator, the faculty member and the institution. There are some core considerations in effectively developing faculty. The faculty member’s career level and the institutional context must be considered when determining effective mechanisms of support and incentives. And, don’t underestimate the critical impact of day-to-day informal conversations with faculty when building a culture of supported and motivated faculty.
It’s hard to believe that by the time this is published our Spring Meeting will either be in full swing or over! Many heartfelt congratulations to our Program Committee co-chairs, Jeff Seo and Stacy Riseman, and to everyone in Region 1 who contributed their time and talents to the conference.

In May the Region will be convening two site committees. The first will be a Regional Meeting site committee charged with finding possible sites for either a spring or fall 2014 Region 1 Meeting. The second will be looking for a new Boston-area venue to replace the Boston Commons Hotel and Conference Center, which will be closing in 2014. If you would like to be on either committee or have any suggestions for venues, please email Karen Woodward Massey at the address below.

The Nominating and Governance and the Advisory Committees are also planning to create a Secretary-Elect position which will take office for the first time in January 2014. Be on the alert for a request for our membership to vote on the by-laws in order to create this new Secretary-Elect position. Region 1 Officer Elections will also take place this summer. If you have anyone you would like to nominate, please contact the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee, Pat Fitzgerald, at pwf@fas.harvard.edu.

June 20: Research Administrators Discussion Group (RADG):
Implementing fCOI Regulations: Challenges and Lessons Learned

Are you tired of hearing about the Public Health Service (aka “NIH”) financial conflict of interest regulation? Are you interested in hearing the challenges faced and the lessons learned from your peer institutions since August 24, 2012? Please join us for an interactive discussion about the implementations at a variety of institutions, including a predominantly undergraduate institution (PUI), a medical center, and a large, decentralized university. A survey was recently distributed to NCURA members across the country in order to obtain various metrics of interest, which will be incorporated into the discussion.

Please check the Region 1 website at ncuraregion1.org for more information. Registration will open by May 20th.

Keep your eye peeled for eblasts and website updates and, if you haven’t already, please “like” and contribute to our NCURA Region 1 Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/ncuraregion1.

Karen Woodward Massey is the Chair of Region 1 and serves as the Director of Education and Outreach in Research Administration Services at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), Harvard University. She may be reached at chair@ncuraregion1.org.

Our regional conference at the Buffalo Marriott Niagara in Buffalo, NY exceeded all expectations. The learning opportunities and networking events were outstanding. I would like to thank our program chair and co-chair (Mary Louise Healy and Erin Bailey) for putting together a remarkable program. I would also like to thank all the volunteers in our region especially our officers and program committee for all their efforts in making this meeting so successful.

Region II’s Professional Development Committee successfully delivered their workshop, “Hot Topics in Research Compliance” on March 18th and 19th to research administrators in the Hoboken, New Jersey area. The attendee evaluations praised the delivery of the faculty/presenters and the learning opportunity this workshop provided them. A special thanks to Stevens Institute of Technology who hosted this workshop. Please be on the lookout for emails announcing future locations and dates of workshops.

I am proud to announce the creation of Region II’s Mentor Me Program which was created to share knowledge and guide mentees of the membership through a leadership development process. The goal is to increase interest in the region and foster long term careers in sponsored programs. This interactive learning environment will provide opportunities, create relationships and strengthen professional networks within the region as well as in the sponsored programs field. More information and details including the application process about our new Mentor Me Program will be emailed to Region II members.

Due to the additional revenue to our region from our successful PDC workshop initiative, I wanted to highlight just some examples of how we have allocated some of these funds with the goal of giving back to the membership. We have increased the dollar amount of our travel awards given to individuals to attend our meeting. Since we value and appreciate the volunteerism and expertise of the workshop faculty at our regional meeting, funds have been allocated to pay for their hotel room the night before their workshop as a token of our appreciation. We have also allocated funds to ensure the successful implementation of our new Mentor Me Program which includes funding a symposium for the participants of this program. Regional leadership is actively brainstorming other initiatives to benefit the members of our region. If anyone has suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly with your idea at Brian.Squilla@jefferson.edu.
By the time you are reading this, we hope you have already thoroughly enjoyed, or regret not attending, the Region III Spring 2013 meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. At the time this article was being written, plans were in place to again offer a valuable opportunity for our members to increase their understanding of research administration and develop their professional networks. The successful development of our excellent program is all due to the hard work of this year’s program committee: Kay Gilstrap (Georgia State University), Rodney Granec (University of West Alabama), Jennifer Shambrook (St. Jude’s Hospital), Trisha Southergill (Clemson University), Laurienne Torres (Duke University), Berylne Temples (University of Central Arkansas), and Pam Whitlock (University of North Carolina Wilmington, retired). The program committee, in turn, could not have been so successful if it were not for the workshop faculty, session presenters, and discussion facilitators who agreed to share their knowledge and expertise. We would also be unable to manage this large event without our generous volunteers, led again this year by Robyn Remotigue (Mississippi State University). A big “Thank You” to our host institution, The University of Tennessee Health Science Center, and our sponsoring institutions, University of Memphis and St. Jude’s Hospital, for sponsoring the meeting as well as everyone who contributed to make this another great Region III meeting!

AWARDS Congratulations to Hagan Walker, Clemson University, for winning the $1,000 travel award to the spring meeting in Memphis, Tennessee.

This year Region III will issue two service awards to recognize the outstanding contributions our members have made to the region. The first award will be issued to an NCURA Region III member who has served the region for five or more years. The second service award will be to a member who has served the region for fewer than five years.

To recommend someone for a service award, submit a nomination letter and two letters of support that describe the candidate’s outstanding service to the region. Please watch your email for more details about the nomination process and deadlines. Nominations will be reviewed by the Membership & Awards Committee, and awardees will be officially selected by the Region III Executive Committee.

ANNUAL MEETING Region III is again planning activities and events to enhance the networking opportunities built into the NCURA Annual Meeting in August. Watch your email and/or our website, www.ncuraregioniii.com, for volunteer opportunities and other information.

Bill Lambert serves as Region III’s regional corner contributor and is Assistant Dean for Research Administration, Rollins School of Public Health, at Emory University.

The 2013 NCURA Region IV Spring Meeting – Researcher Fest – was held in Milwaukee, WI on April 14-17. More than 230 research administrators, university faculty, vendors, and public and private grant-makers were in attendance. They represented each of the twelve states in our Mid-America region as well as the states of Arizona, California, Kentucky, and Oregon.

Feedback from the membership played a direct role in the shape of the program, which included eight optional half- and full-day workshops and 61 concurrent sessions, discussion groups, and case studies. An open invitation for speakers brought new faces, voices, and perspectives to the meeting. Some hot topic concurrent sessions—such as FCOI, export controls, human research protection programs, and budgeting and negotiating clinical trials—were paired with “follow on” discussions or case studies to allow for greater depth of exploration.

Dr. Peter Lichtenberg, director of both the Institute of Gerontology and the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute at Wayne State University, gave a keynote speech that was powerful, motivational, and inspirational. His experience as a researcher and research administrator highlighted ways that we can develop and maintain productive relationships with PIs. And his expertise in “successful aging” offered insights that we can use in the short- and long-term relevant to our own personal situations.

In true Milwaukee spirit, “festing” means enjoying great food, live music, and fun. The Tuesday night even offered an evening of networking and entertainment with a very local flair. There was Milwaukee’s famous delectable treat—Kopp’s Frozen Custard, available in three flavors: vanilla, chocolate, and red raspberry—as well as an all-suggestion improvisational comedy show from ComedySportz and music from one of Milwaukee’s best known cabaret singers, Pat McCurdy.

Thank you to all who volunteered at the Spring Meeting. Your contributions of time and talent are the life-blood of Region IV.

As we move forward with planning for 2013-14, a number of openings are available for committee positions: Awards Committee, Communications Committee, Membership Committee, Nominations Committee, and Site Selection Committee. If you are interested in volunteering your service, please contact Region IV Chair Jeremy Miner at minerjt@uwec.edu.

Jeremy Miner is the Chair of Region IV and serves as Director of Grants and Contracts at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.
The Region V Spring Meeting was held April 21-24 in Oklahoma City. Scott Davis, vice chair, and the program committee put together an excellent program with opportunities for networking and informal discussions. At the conclusion of the meeting Scott succeeded to the position of Chair, and a newly elected vice chair assumed that position. Other newly elected officers—the secretary, a national board member, and two ad hoc members of the Regional Executive Committee—will begin their positions in January.

Recipients of the Quinten Mathews Travel Awards for travel to the Spring Meeting were Beckie Whiting, Oklahoma State University; Diana Holbrook, University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston; and Huanyi Greg Chu, University of Houston.

The call for nominations for the Region V Joan Howeth National Travel Award has been issued.

Be on the lookout for notices recruiting volunteers for committee assignments and volunteer opportunities for the Annual Meeting in August.

Kathleen Harris is Chair of Region V and serves as Senior Associate Vice President for Research at Texas Tech University.

Our Spring Meeting was held in Phoenix, Arizona from April 7-10. The theme of the meeting was “Success Through Synergy: Partners, Purpose & Passion.” The program included eight workshops and over 50 concurrent sessions. The program committee worked energetically to put together a wonderful program for the members of Regions VI and VII.

First, we would also like to give special recognition to Lisa Jordan for handling hotel and registration. Second, please give huge thanks to our Program Committee for both regions: Compliance and Legal (Randy Draper, Helene Orescan, Randall Draper); Pre-Award (Csilla Csaplá, Winnie Ennenga, Mich Pane); Post-Award and Financial Management (Ted Mordhorst, Randi Waski); Professional Development (Nancy Lewis, Rosemary Madnick, Deb Murphy); Management and Operations (Deb Chapman, Tamara Deuser); Electronic Research Administration (Steve Shapiro); Compliance and Research Ethics (Kay Ellis, Adilia Koch); Workshops (Georgette Sakamoto, Josie Jimenez); IT Support (Allen Anderson, Jon Peterson, Steve Shapiro, Tyler Wilson); Evaluations (Lynda Olin, Olivia Pierce, Jennifer Teixeira); Volunteer Coordinator Chairs (Melissa Mullen, Sandra Logue); Sponsors and Exhibitors (Gene Larson, Rich Larson); and Entertainment and Local Resources (Barb Hoffman, Vicki Krell, Cheryl Lea, Mary Townsend).

There was an exciting list of programming that included topics such as Essentials of Research Administration at the Department Level, Subrecipient Monitoring, Coverage Analysis for Investigational Sites, Cost Share: To Commit, or Not to Commit, That Is the Question, eRA Forum, NIH and NSF Updates (from the Federal sponsors themselves!), Introduction to the FAR, Case Studies in Research Ethics, Managing Federal Contracts, Applying F&A, and Project Management. The complete program is available at the meeting website [https://sites.google.com/site/regionviviiannualmeeting/](https://sites.google.com/site/regionviviiannualmeeting/)

The meeting hosted nearly 250 attendees. There were 119 from Region VI, 115 from Region VII, and even eight attendees from other regions! Also, extracurricular activities were offered at our Spring meeting. Group outings included a baseball game to watch the Arizona Diamondbacks and a tour of the Desert Botanical Garden.

This year both regions’ Travel Awards were given to the following individuals: Raquel Rodriguez (University of Southern California), Mike Fallwell (University of Arizona), and Cori Huttinga (Montana State University). Congratulations!

Lastly, special thanks to our sponsors rSmart and Attain, and exhibitor Evisions.

Wait! Is it time for another Annual Meeting already? It is! Starting this year, the Annual Meeting will take place each August. We hope to see many of you at the next meeting in Washington, DC on August 7-10. Don’t forget to stop at the Region VI/VII Hospitality Suite in the evenings!

Katherine Ho serves as Region VI Chair and is the Deputy to the AVP and Executive Director of the Office of Sponsored Research at Stanford University.

Tony Onofrietti, M.S., CRSS, serves as the Region VII Chair and is Director of Research Education in the Office of the Vice President for Research at The University of Utah.
Earlier this year, European Union and U.S. officials met in Washington to discuss ways to enhance science, technology and innovation cooperation. The discussions covered cooperation in transatlantic marine, maritime and Arctic research, transport research, health research and materials science. At the meeting, the European Commission and the U.S. Department of Transportation signed an agreement to boost cooperation in transport. This agreement is designed to foster research into new cross-cutting technologies that will improve our transportation systems and maintain our competitiveness.

European Commission Director-General Robert-Jan Smits said: “By engaging in more joint research, the EU and the U.S. can produce greater scientific breakthroughs, encourage new industries and provide more solutions to societal problems. We can speed up those breakthroughs by putting our best brains together across academia and industry, and by fostering joint projects at sufficient scope and scale. I am personally committed to this goal.”

Assistant Secretary Jones said: “Science is a global enterprise. We look forward to strengthening our cooperation with the EU to improve the lives of our citizens and citizens around the world.” (source: European Union 2013)

When you need an additional reference from the International Region, you can refer to me.

Annika Glauner serves as the Secretary of the International Region and is the Senior Programme Co-Director of EU GrantsAccess, International Research Programmes, at the University of Zurich/ETH Zurich.

A Presidential Task Force has been created to develop plans and processes to both raise additional funds and uses for the NCURA Educational Fund. This fund was first created from receipt of an initial gift made with the intent of starting an Education Fund. The purpose of this Educational Scholarship Fund is to provide financial assistance to and support of continuing educational needs for research administrators such as attendance at traveling workshops and national conferences/workshops and participation in Graduate Certificate and Master’s Degree programs in Research Administration. This Task Force has membership of the two initial donors, current members of the Board, NCURA’s Treasurer, past presidents and our Executive Director. One of our first fund raising opportunities will be to allow members to contribute to the dues renewal form. The Task Force held its first meeting during the FRA Conference, and I’m very proud to be part of an organization that gives back to its members in many ways.

NCURA now has 4 on-line tutorials: Federal Contracting, Subawards, Clinical Trials, and our newest on-line tutorial on Intellectual Property.

NCURA also continues to see solid demand for our workshops that travel, both city-based and also brought to your campus: Departmental Research Administration, Financial Research Administration, Sponsored Project Administration (SPA) Level II, and Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration.

AM55 has its new beginning in August! Vivian Holmes has put together a great program committee, and the meeting begins on Sunday, August 4th, with workshops. This year’s theme is “Investment—Commitment—Rewards.” Along with VP Vivian Holmes, program co-chairs are Bruce Morgan (Region VI) and Sue Zipkin (Region I). Not only has the Program Committee put together a great program—the preliminary program was released April 2—there will be Camp NCURA for the kids, the Capitol Steps on Sunday and a Beach Party for the “bigger kids.” You’ll hear more from Vivian, but I see this as being NCURA’s new “Summer Fest”! I hope to see you there—we’ll have the opportunity to experience sports and events never seen before during an Annual Meeting. The Nationals will be in town during AM55, **and** I don’t think you’ll need to worry about packing a winter coat or boots!

Finally, as we transition from spring to thoughts of summer our national election will be taking place. I encourage all of you to cast your vote. These individuals will be shaping the future of our organization—the world’s first and largest association for research administrators.

Patricia Hawk is the NCURA President and serves as the Director of Sponsored Programs at Oregon State University. She can be reached at Patricia.Hawk@oregonstate.edu
NATIONAL CONFERENCES
55TH ANNUAL MEETING
Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC .................................August 4-7, 2013

NATIONAL TRAVELING WORKSHOPS
FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
Seattle, WA ..............................................................................June 10-12, 2013
LEVEL I: FUNDAMENTALS OF SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
Seattle, WA ..............................................................................June 10-12, 2013
LEVEL II: SPONSORED PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP – CRITICAL ISSUES IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
Seattle, WA ..............................................................................June 10-12, 2013

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

DEADLINES FOR AUGUST 2013
Submission of Articles to Contributing Editors ............................June 14, 2013
Submission of Articles to Co-editors...........................................June 21, 2013
Submission of Advertisements....................................................June 21, 2013

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

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