National Council of University Research Administrators

62nd Annual Meeting

A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

POSTER PRESENTATIONS
BRINGING COST SHARING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY
Harvard’s cost sharing tracking needed modernization. A Harvard-wide committee came together to identify opportunities, devise a plan and process, and execute a revamp of everything known as cost sharing. This poster is the story of that journey.

JEFF DERR, Senior Research Portfolio Manager, Office of Research Administration, Harvard University
CYNTHIA MARTINI, Senior Project Manager, Office for Sponsored Programs, Harvard University
JESSICA PERREAULT, Manager, Sponsored Data Integrity, Harvard University

ETHNIC DISPARITY IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION: RESULTS FROM THE 2020 RASPerS
The Research Administrators Stress Perception Surveys (RASPerS) has collected demographic data on diversity in 2010, 2015 and 2020. In this study, this data will be used to determine disparity gaps between ethnic groups when looking at the representation, salary, position level, perceived levels of stress, experience of bullying, and work/life balance. It is the intent of this study to document and raise awareness of ethnic diversity particularly as it relates to the research administration community.

CELESTE RIVERA NUNEZ, Associate Director, Sponsored Programs, University of Central Florida
TAMERIA MACE, Manager, Sponsored Programs, University of Central Florida
JENNIFER SHAMBROOK, Director, Grants & Contract Management Office, University of Central Florida

INORMS RAAAP – RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION AROUND THE WORLD
Research Management and Administration (RMA) is a growing and global profession. In 2016 the largest ever survey of RMAs from around the world was undertaken as part of the NCURA funded “Research Administration As A Profession” (RAAAP) project. The results (n=2,691) of this survey have been widely published and the data are available for analysis (see https://inorms.net/activities/raaap-taskforce/ for links). In 2019 an even larger (n=4,325) follow-on survey was undertaken at the behest of INORMS. The poster presents initial highlights from the 2019 Survey with some comparisons from the 2016 baseline survey.

SIMON R. KERRIDGE, Director of Research Services, University of Kent
BRYONY J. WAKEFIELD, Workstream Lead: Service Model | Access | Experience, Research Office, University of Melbourne
Policy & Process Improvement

POSTER 4

FACULTY-LED RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM REVIEW LEADS TO REAL CHANGE

Purpose: As part of an aspirational research initiative, George Washington University (GW) engaged in an effort to ensure that principal investigators (PIs) have the support and flexibility necessary to focus on their research. To meet this goal, the university president requested a comprehensive review of GW’s research ecosystem. Instead of looking to consultants to conduct the review, GW looked to the very PIs needing the support. This non-traditional approach led to productive and some surprising outcomes.

Methods: The president of GW tasked the Faculty Senate Research Committee (FSRC) with carrying out the ecosystem review. In partnership with the central research office, they identified focus areas for two review phases (each phase one year in duration) with specific objectives and timelines. For each focus area, working groups were assembled led by researchers and supported by subject matter staff experts. Resources from GW’s internal management consulting team provided group process facilitation. Each group was asked to provide a report based on four questions: what is working well, what are major pain points, what are recommendations for improvement and what metrics are needed to measure success. Working group approaches differed but included faculty surveys, informal interviews, best practice research benchmarking, and interviews with senior leaders. Common themes were identified in report summaries, supported by full compiled findings, and delivered to the FSRC for inclusion in a final report for each of the two review phases.

Results: The two-phased, two-year review produced two comprehensive reports with a combined 167 recommendations addressing strategic investments, technology and process improvements, training and communications, culture, faculty research time, and research space. Detailed presentations of findings were made to groups of faculty and staff, and summaries of the report were made available to the entire GW community. Progress on all recommendations is tracked and routinely reported by the central research office. The review process created momentum to move forward on initiatives that have long been discussed but lacked appropriate visibility and prioritization.

GINA LOHR, Senior Associate Vice Provost for Research, George Washington University
MEGAN DIELEMAN, Director, Operations & Projects, Office of the Vice President for Research, George Washington University
KAREN MCDONNELL, Associate Professor and Vice-Chair, Department of Prevention and Community Health, Milken Institute School of Public Health, George Washington University
QUALITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS MANAGING EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

The purpose of the Quality Performance Indicator, QPI tool is to ensure the consistent review and application of workload performance and the accuracy of work completed. All staff members are responsible for the populations, review, completion and use of the Quality Performance Indicator (QPI). Each financial manager is required to schedule at a minimum, one monthly 1:1 performance meeting with each member of their unit. Each financial manager is required to schedule quarterly performance meetings at the start of the fiscal year with each member of their unit. Their responsibility is to prepare the individual files quarterly, for each unit member by extracting the data required to populate the QPI. The individual staff members responsibility as the individual named staff member is to review their personal file prior to the scheduled quarterly performance meeting, scheduled by their financial manager. Specifically, each staff member is responsible for populating two tabs within the QPI. The tabs each staff member is responsible to populate are the “Supervisor Eval Form” (see No.#12 under IV. Functionality) and “Employee Self-Eval” (see No.#13 under IV. Functionality) for the corresponding quarter.

RASHONDA D. HARRIS, Director, Post-Award Operations, Office of Research, Grants & Contracts, Emory University
INGER GARNETT, Director, Strategic Operations, Office of Research Administration, Emory University

THE VIRTUAL LEARNER

Nearly 100% of training in research administration, whether at an institution/organization or within NCURA, is currently virtual due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Closing schools, staunching travel, and transitioning to virtual learning is critical to not only attenuating the spread of the novel coronavirus but to ensuring educational opportunities are still available. While anecdotal, it is anticipated that online virtual training will continue after institutions reopen their doors. Poster participants who view, “The Virtual Learner,” will come away with a virtual toolbox for creating exciting, motivational, targeted, and effective virtual training modules for the virtual learner.

TRICIA L. CALLAHAN, Senior Research Education and Information Officer, Senior Research Education and Information Officer, Colorado State University
CARRIE CHESBRO, Associate Director, Post-Award, Sponsored Projects Services, University of Oregon
TOLISE C. DAILEY, Training Manager, Research Development Team, Johns Hopkins University
MELANIE HEBL, Education Coordinator, Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison
LISTSERV BLASTING: THE FOA AND VIRTUAL DEVELOPMENT

With the move of research administration to a virtual format over the last ten years, proactive interdepartmental tools can be implemented by the research administrators to share funding opportunity announcements to faculty and PI’s. By using a listserv to blast FOA announcements directly into the inbox increases the visibility of chances for funding that are typically left unseen, and underutilized.

This simplistic use of a listserv enables opportunities to be filtered based on research expertise as well as research background. It narrows broad research focuses as well as encourages collaboration among internal and external faculty.

This tool bridges the gap for cleaner and more accurate data collection. Comparison can be made prior to fiscal year funding vs current fiscal year based on opportunities blasted and incoming NOA’s, how many faculty are recurrent submitters vs who does not submit enough, and it enables the departmental administration to take action by recording the behaviors and enacting other client service tools to encourage PI’s to submit.

Using a list serv bypasses busy faculty and feeds opportunity directly to their Post Docs and Grad Students. Imparting chance to early stage investigators who normally are only focused on completing their mentor’s assignments creates a self-interest in their own scientific career development. Allowing ESI’s to see benefit in applying for grants early retains quality science as well as funding within the institution. Imparting a full circle knowledge base within the scientific community.

KRISTEN LEMMA, Grant Specialist, Department of Medicine-Pulmonary Division, New York University Grossman School of Medicine
CREATING AND ADOPTING A UNIFIED RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS MODEL ACROSS THE STATE OF ALASKA

Research is a crucial part of the University of Alaska’s mission to disseminate knowledge throughout the state. UA research includes areas specific to its location such as arctic engineering and climate change, as well as other topics such as life sciences and policy research. The research administration offices from the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) partnered as a result of the State of Alaska fiscal climate, institutional changes, the campus expectations of customer service and support and the rapidly changing regulatory requirements governing grants and contracts administration.

The charge was to create and adopt a unified business model that embraces operational effectiveness through efficiency, accountability, transparency and responsiveness to the needs of the campus communities and the external partners with which they do business. As part of each of the Universities research administration leadership, a preliminary internal evaluation and assessment tool was conducted in order to get a sense where campuses stood against best practices and industry standards in the field of grants and contracts administration. In addition, the Universities looked at streamlining the processes and workflows within and between the campuses.

ROSEMARY MADNICK, Executive Director, Office of Grants and Contracts Administration, University of Alaska Fairbanks
NATASA RASKOVIC, Research Administration Data Analyst, Grants and Contracts Administration, University of Alaska Fairbanks

REMOTE WORK AND PERCEIVED STRESS IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS: RESULTS FROM THE 2020 RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION STRESS PERCEPTION SURVEY

This poster reports the findings of the 2020 Research Administration Stress Perception Survey from data collected from over 700 research administrators about remote work and its effect on work and home stress. This data will also show a preference to continue home-based work beyond the pandemic. Previous Research Administrator Stress Perception Surveys (RASPerS) have shown that over 50% of research administrators (RAs) report their perceived work stress is either high or extremely high. RAs have also reported high levels of work/family conflict due to demands of work. RASPerS 2020 examines associations between perceived levels of stress and work/family conflict and remote work. This study also explores RA level of preference for working remotely on a permanent basis.

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DANIEL SEIGLER, Director, Public Administration Internship Program and Lecturer, University of Central Florida