Happy Holidays from SPAA

May The New Year Bring You Continued Research Success!

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Completion of effort reporting was due December 2. Almost 3,000 projects were certified. Less than a dozen remain for follow-up by the Central Effort Coordinator.

Most colleges, centers, and VP units had certified all projects by the end of the 45-day window including: Business, Communication, Continuing & Innovative Education, Fine Arts, Information, Law, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Nursing, Pharmacy, Social Work, Undergraduate Studies, Diversity & Community Engagement, Information Technology, Centers of the V.P. for Research. * Thank you!

* Some colleges, centers, and VP units not listed had no reports to certify for March — August 2009.

Accuracy is the highest priority. The campus carefully certified effort including cost sharing commitments. The phone calls and emails poured in non-stop for much of the 45-day window. The effort reporting training TX CLASS 601 was well attended. The training on the OSP Web site was frequently visited.

Effort Reporting

Timeliness is Essential – 52% of Departments Certified Within 30 Days

ECS Redesign

Previews of the new version of ECS planned for release in April 2010 are available on OSP’s effort reporting Web site:
http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/effort_reporting.html

Communications regarding the refinement of the lists of PIs and their Effort Contacts (Precertifiers) continue individually and via the Principal Investigator and Research Administrators Network (RAN) UT Lists.
SPAA’s FY 08-09 Service Summary

• Total Amount Invoice Method -- approximately $228.5 million dollars
• Total Amount Draw Method -- over $172.5 million dollars
• Active Accounts Managed -- an average of 4,000 ongoing
• Total Number of Invoices -- over 11,000 invoices
• Reports Processed -- over 6,000 reports

The above services provided by a staff dedicated to helping make research happen.

Account Contact Rotation

You may have noticed that some of the account contacts have shifted recently. SPAA leadership encourages cross-training, to maximize human capital wisely and strategically. At fiscal year end, rotation requests were discussed and assignments for FY09-10 were updated. [http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/accounts.html](http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/accounts.html)

Audits

On behalf of UT Austin's Researchers, in the months Sept 2009 through December 2009, SPAA has handled several audits of National Science Foundation (NSF) awards, a U.S. Department of Health & Humans Services (HHS) OIG award closeout audit, an audit of the Schedule of Federal Awards, and the annual A-133 audit. If your department is contacted about an audit, please contact SPAA [oa.richter@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:oa.richter@austin.utexas.edu). SPAA is available to assist with the audit process and can serve as your liaison with the audit entity.
Meet David “Doc” Dockwiller, Assistant Director. He is an accountant, CRA*, and a veteran of our U.S. military.

How many years have you been with SPAA?
I began on September 5, 2000. I have been working in this office for nine years and three months.

Why do you prefer to work here at UT Austin, rather than another institution or organization?
I prefer to work at UT Austin because of its position within the best city in the state of Texas.

What would you like the PIs and Research Administrators at UT Austin to remember about you?
I would want the PIs and research administrators to remember that if there is an issue, they can contact me. However, when there are not any issues I would like to be made aware of this so that recognition can be provided. Most times we are notified about the negative aspects of this job as opposed to the positive aspects.

What are your hobbies?
Right now my hobbies are salt water aquarium corals and fish. However, I am just starting to venture into the world of gemstones and minerals.

What do you enjoy here on the UT campus?
I enjoy bowling on Fridays with individuals in the office. I enjoy lunch at most of the facilities here on campus. Mexican food is my favorite.

What motivates you in your work?
Being able to resolve difficult financial and reporting functions. I like the challenge.

What do you wish UT Austin’s PIs and Research Administrators knew about SPAA?
I would like the campus to know that we are here to serve them. Abiding by guidelines can be laborious but we are here to not only protect the University, but to also protect the PIs.

*Certified Research Administrator (CRA)  http://www.cra-cert.org/
Sponsored Projects Award Administration

Newsletter -- Awareness

Research Administration Conferences


The NCURA Region V Spring Meeting will take place April 25-28, 2010 at the Sheraton Beach Hotel South Padre Island, TX. Last year’s meeting was excellent. High hopes for this Spring!

NIH Salary Cap - The current salary rate is $196,700. If a PI’s salary is over the cap, when they propose for an NIH award they should identify a university account for cost sharing the difference. The NIH Salary cap is a prorated requirement. For effort reporting, salary in excess of the cap should be shown as "contributed effort". Questions? NIHcap@austin.utexas.edu


NEW NSF Revised Policies and Procedures Guide – Effective January 2010

A Message From Our Director

OSP is pleased to report the university recorded just under $600 million in new funding for FY 2009 representing an increase of $85 million over FY 2008. About half of that increase was attributable to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) stimulus funding received by UT Austin researchers.

In addition to working diligently to minimize the reporting burden for ARRA researchers, OSP is in the final stages of a major upgrade to the Effort Certification System (ECS) that will launch with the spring reporting cycle. As a part of that upgrade, we are “cleaning house” by removing inactive principal investigators from the ECS system so that those individuals who do not have active funding will not be required to submit effort reports. OSP wishes our research community happy holidays and we look forward to an exciting 2010. We remain committed to helping make research happen at The University of Texas at Austin.

Something for You

OSP SPAA has helpful content posted in askUS. Can’t find an answer there? Post a question and we’ll get you the answer.