Happy New Year from SPAA

Henrike de Haas, Amy Blake, Jason Richter, Michael Martindale, Melinda McGlaun, Monica Cooke, Arlene Packard, Barry Stewart, Angi Murphy, John Lakavage, Joy Hatch, David Dockwiller, Angie York, Tania Tost, Tulika Paul, Kathy Peterson, Melissa Kirk, Chaz Gardiner, Melissa Gidley, Robert Prentiss, Amanda Alvarez, Chrystal Dodson

May The New Year Bring You Additional Research Success!

Contact: aalways@austin.utexas.edu
Effort Reporting

Fall effort reporting training classes were well attended. Fifteen attendees took the SP 601 concepts class. About thirty attendees participated in the hands-on SP 602 sessions. The vast majority of training recipients preferred over-the-phone and via-email training opportunities.

Trained Effort Contacts play a vital role in supporting faculty researchers. Effort Contacts support as few as one, or as many as thirty-five active faculty researchers at a time. Effort Contacts typically also handle research administration duties and/or position assignment updates in tandem, ensuring that research employees are compensated from the correct projects for the **accurate** time periods. The Effort Contact is a crucial role that is very much appreciated.

**All-Star Effort Contacts**
These “top ten” Precertifiers carefully examined the project effort reports and noticed transaction details that their busy faculty researchers might have missed otherwise. They caught tuition typos and skewed service dates. Their work significantly increased the **accuracy** of the effort reports. The Central Effort Coordinator is pleased to recognize and thank them.

- Esther Barrientes
- Charla Carrington
- John Ermis
- Nikki Goodfellow
- Donna Martin
- Janet McCord
- Teri Sahba
- Vicki Stratton
- Lizet Villagrana
- Jay Whitman

**Timeliness is Essential**
Almost 3,000 projects had effort reports to be certified. Despite a wave of retirements and separations, and the passing of a couple very successful researchers, 94% of projects were certified precisely on-time. Since timeliness is a compliance issue that auditors review, this punctuality in reporting is an asset to our university.

The centers in the portfolio of the Vice President for Research all completed their effort reporting on time.

Also timely were Continuing & Innovative Education, Fine Arts, the School of Information, the LBJ School of Public Affairs, Pharmacy, Social Work, the School of Undergraduate Studies, and the University of Texas System. We celebrate this achievement of **timeliness** excellence.

**Effort Certification System Continuous Improvement**
As the campus completed its second cycle on the upgraded ECS, helpful feedback was offered. Thank you. Keep it coming. The ECS developers have additional improvements in the works for Spring 2011. The most anticipated tweak involves identification of Primary Individuals needing to certify. The process of refining the list of certifiers to only the Principal Investigators (PIs) and Co-PIs of active projects, in a manner that encompasses all key personnel of active awards, is a complex endeavor. The list is expected to be more precise in Spring 2011, as a result of the work of the excellent ECS programmers.
SPAA’s FY 09-10 Service Summary

- Total Amount Invoice Method -- approximately $228.7 million dollars
- Total Amount Draw Method -- over $236.2 million dollars
- Active Accounts Managed -- approximately 3,500 ongoing
- Total Number of Invoices -- over 11,700 invoices

The above services (and more) provided by SPAA staff dedicated to helping make research happen.

Audits – our university

On behalf of UT Austin’s Researchers, in the preceding months, SPAA has handled two audits of the State Auditors Office (SAO) covering the Schedule of Federal Awards and the annual A-133. SPAA has also handled two desk reviews regarding sub-recipient monitoring, as well as response to proactive audits by our university’s Internal Audit section.

If your department is contacted about an audit, please contact SPAA oa.jrichter@austin.utexas.edu. SPAA is available to assist with the audit process and can serve as your liaison with the audit entity.

National Audits


The OIGs of NSF and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) published their general audit work plans for FY 2011.


Meet Melinda McGlaun, Grants & Contracts Specialist. She holds a Masters in Business Administration (MBA).

What are your hobbies?
Spending time with my ten-month-old son and my husband. I enjoy being outside and watching college football and softball.

Where do you enjoy dining here on the 40 acres?
There are so many places to choose from to eat at within walking distance from campus. Lately I have been going to Potbelly.

How many years have you been with OSP?
I have worked in OSP for a little over five years.

Why do you prefer to work here at UT Austin, rather than another institution or organization?
I prefer to work here at UT Austin because of all the activities that happen on campus. Almost everything is within walking distance.

What do you wish UT Austin’s PIs and Research Administrators knew about SPAA?
I would like for the PIs and Research Administrators to know that we are here to help them out as much as possible. When information is provided to us in a timely manner, it is very much appreciated.

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

OSP is pleased to report for the first time, the University broke the $600 million funding threshold with over $644 million received for FY 2009-10 representing an increase over FY 2008-09 of seven percent. The total funding received during the FY 2009-10 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)/economic stimulus package by the university was just over $46 million. The university also submitted a record 3447 proposals.

This year has marked creation of the Office of Industry Engagement headed by Bill Catlett with responsibility for negotiations of industry sponsored agreements.

2011 will bring additional changes to OSP when the Sponsored Projects Award Administration unit staff move to the North Office Administration (NOA) building and bring to closure a plan that has been five years in the making to have the entire OSP located in one building. Please look for our open house invitation when we invite members of the research community to come enjoy fellowship and view the new expanded OSP offices on the fourth and fifth floors of NOA.

We are saddened to be losing two key players on our management team, Jeanette Holmes who will retire January 31, 2011 and Kay Ellis, who is leaving to become the Export Controls Officer for the University of Arizona.

As we explore new ways to facilitate a smooth research process for our researchers, we remain committed to helping make research happen at The University of Texas at Austin and appreciate feedback.

Professional Development

Elena Mota has announced
SP101 Life Cycle of a Sponsored Research Grant – Pre-Award
February 16, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. in NOA 4.106
SP102 Life Cycle of a Sponsored Research Grant – Post-Award
February 16, 2011 from 10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. in NOA 4.106

Other Professional Development Opportunities

NCURA Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
Departmental Research Administration in San Antonio, TX
March 23-25, 2011
Schedule: http://www.ncura.edu/content/educational_programs/workshops/fundamentals/schedule.php

Society Of Research Administrators International (SRA)
Pre-Award March 7-8
http://www.srainternational.org/sra03/template/tntbpre-aw-11.cfm?id=4118
Post-Award March 9-10
http://www.srainternational.org/sra03/template/tntbpre-aw-11.cfm?id=4118
San Antonio, TX
Sponsored Projects Award Administration

Newsletter -- Awareness

NIH Salary Cap
The cap for FY 2011 is $199,700 (same as 2010).

The NIH Salary cap is a prorated requirement. If an individual’s annualized salary with supplement is over the cap, they should identify a university account for cost sharing the difference. In effort reporting, salary in excess of the cap will be shown as “effort cost shared”.

Questions: NIHcap@austin.utexas.edu

As announced a year ago...

Frequently Asked Questions – NSF and Cost Sharing:

Cost Sharing Awareness

Cost Sharing continues to be a topic upon which SPAA frequently receives clarifying questions from the research community. Cost sharing can be defined as the portion of the total costs of a sponsored project paid by the university or third party, rather than the project’s sponsor.

Cost sharing can be mandatory (demanded by the sponsor as a condition of the agreement), voluntary committed (offered explicitly or implicitly in writing by the proposer), or voluntary uncommitted (neither explicitly nor implicitly in writing). If cost sharing is committed in writing, auditors will verify that the commitment was satisfied.

Committed cost sharing of the effort of a project’s employees, when paid for by the university within the employees’ compensation package, can be documented in the Effort Certification System (ECS). ECS can serve as the primary record consulted by auditors during their verification of satisfaction of commitments of cost sharing. Therefore, accurately certifying cost sharing of effort in ECS can save the department future time and money. Ben Franklin’s sage advice about proactive measures, “A stitch, in time, saves nine,” applies.

Questions to ask:
Did anyone work on the project without being paid by the sponsor?
If yes, was the individual’s time or salary written in the agreement?
More questions: effort@austin.utexas.edu

The Research Administrators Certification Council announced the new Certified Pre-award Research Administrator (CPRA) Examination. The CPRA is an addition to the existing CRA certification. The handbook and application are available: http://cra-cert.org/