

Dear Colleagues:

For several months, a campus committee has been reviewing operations in the Office of Sponsored Research, which has seen a steady increase in workload associated with the robust growth of our research programs. I am pleased with the work of the committee, which has produced a strong set of recommendations for improving the office and its services. Our goal is to increase efficiency, ensure compliance, and provide researchers with the timely help they need to manage their sponsored projects.

I am also pleased that the Office of Sponsored Research is moving quickly to respond to the recommendations and reorganize its operations, and I fully support the office and its staff as they make these vital changes. In my view, improvements in support services will help our research programs achieve their potential, ensuring that Carolina sustains its momentum as one of the nation's leading research universities. More information is provided in the memorandum below.

Sincerely,
Bernadette Gray-Little
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

DATE: April 16, 2007

TO: Principal Investigators and Research Staff

FROM: Jim Peterson
Associate Vice Chancellor for Research

Tony G. Waldrop
Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

In January, a broad-based campus committee was formed to investigate the structure, policies, procedures and staffing of the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR). The committee solicited input from their schools on "what is working well and what is not working well" in OSR. One recommendation of the committee was to reorganize OSR from two units (Pre-Award Services and Post Award Services) into three units. The recommendation was based on an analysis of workflow and a goal of eliminating conflicting priorities and duplicate reviews. We have adopted this recommendation and will begin a transition to the new organizational structure on April 23.

The new units will be: Proposal Management, Award Management and Reporting, and Cash Management. The Proposal Management section, led by Hamilton Brown, will be responsible for proposal review and electronic submission of proposals. The Award Management section, led by Kelly Musty, will be responsible for award establishment, subcontracts and pre-audit. The Reporting and Cash Management section, led by Hilda Durham, will be responsible for reporting, invoicing and letters of credit. Proposal Management will be sponsor or agency specific and campus will have a designated individual to interact with based on the sponsor they are applying to. Award Management will be organized on a departmental or school basis and each department will be assigned to a single contact person who will have responsibility for that department's awards and accounts from award initiation to closeout. It is hoped that this reorganization will streamline many of the award and subcontract processes and lead to improved customer satisfaction.

In addition, OSR has a renewed emphasis on providing excellent customer service and making all OSR processes more transparent to campus. Changes will be made in the coming months to RAMSeS to enable campus users to determine the status of their award or subcontract and to streamline many OSR processes. Training for both OSR staff and campus personnel will be greatly expanded to include new and more streamlined procedures. As the research enterprise at Carolina continues to change and expand, we must together be engaged in the process of making it work.

A link on the OSR home page <http://osr.unc.edu/index.php> will be active on April 23, with additional information. Please be patient as we transition to this new organization and new procedures over the next several months. The committee will continue to meet over the coming months to continue to review policies, procedures and staffing levels in OSR. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jim Peterson at 966-2542, email: mailto:jim_peterson@unc.edu.