



OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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UC Merced Faculty

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to inform you of a number of changes that have recently occurred within the Office of Research and across the campus and make you aware of significant changes that we have instituted around the creation, submittal and management of grants. In response to two external peer reviews of our previous contracts and grants process we have created the "Contracts and Grants Ecosystem" at UC Merced. This holistic approach to the contracts and grants process was developed in consultation with the School Deans and a number of members of the faculty. Briefly this customer-service oriented approach consists of five major changes to the previous practices at UC Merced.

1. We have created an expanded Office of Research Development Services (RDS) led by Director Susan Carter. RDS will: i) continue its prior roles of providing training, technical assistance and advice in identifying potential funding sources, and in assisting faculty in the development of complex multi-investigator, center career and training proposals, ii) strive to assist all faculty in the preparation of budgets, grants forms, and boiler plate language for all proposals, and iii) assist all faculty in the use of our new electronic research administration system (a proposal preparation and submittal system) which should be come largely operational in January of 2014. The RDS staff are the front-line people who will provide all pre-award services to faculty submitting grant proposals. They should be your first points of contact for all research proposal development and pre-award activities.
2. We have refocused the Sponsored Projects Office, led by Director Thea Vicari, to: i) do all final reviews of grant proposals prior to submittal, ii) submit all proposals on behalf of the Regents, iii) negotiate and accept all proposals on behalf of the Regents and iv) assist with proposal close outs.
3. Contracts and Grants Accounting, formally in the Division of Administration, has been moved to the Office of Research and renamed Research Accounting Services (RAS). RAS, led by Director Autumn Salazar, will be responsible for: i) invoicing extramural sponsors, ii) the federal effort reporting system, and iii) responding to audits of contracts and grants expenditures. RAS will also provide functional oversight to local Research Administrators (located in the Schools and ORUs) in regards to budget reconciliation and expenditures of extramural funds.
4. We have created the position of local Research Administrators. These staff are employees of the Schools or the ORUs, but will report functionally to the Director of RAS. Local Research Administrators will provide: i) local authorization for research budget expenditures, ii) budget reconciliation and monthly budget reports, and iii) be your liaisons with SPO and RAS.
5. We have started the implementation of an electronic research administration system. The first package, Cayuse 424, is designed to submit proposals to federal sponsors. This system is used by five other UC campuses. It is very similar to the Fast-lane system used by the NSF. We hope to have Cayuse 424 fully deployed early this coming January. We are setting up a second system, Cayuse SP, that builds on the

capabilities of Cayuse 424. SP enables submission to any extramural research sponsor and it also adds a large number features that will assist us in the management of research grants once an award has been made. Cayuse SP should be fully implemented by fall of 2014.

What does this mean for you today?

1. Effective immediately, RDS will provide grants preparation support to all faculty submitting extramural proposals. To ensure that RDS will be able to address your needs, please contact RDS at rds@ucmerced.edu at least two weeks prior to the submittal deadline for routine pre-award assistance; a minimum one-month time frame is recommended for larger proposals or where in-depth assistance is requested.
2. SPO will submit all proposals to all external research sponsors. They will not provide proposal preparation services. Please direct all requests for preparation support (budgets, budget justifications, etc.) to RDS.
3. The local Research Administrators are the front line staff responsible for budget reconciliation, monthly budget reports and expenditure approvals. Please direct all such enquiries to them. Your Dean or ORU Director can assist you in identifying your local Research Administrator.

The goal of these changes is to create a more streamlined, full service, customer oriented experience for you around contracts and grants. I hope that you will provide us feedback on what is and is not working in this process as we go forward.

Sincerely,



Dr. Samuel J. Traina
Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

Cc: Tom Peterson, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
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