

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAAC)
1 p.m. on Monday, October 4, 2021
via Zoom

Present:

Jeremy Alajajian
Darlene Booker
Audrey Callahan
Vikki Cherwon
Valerie Crickard
Paul Cryer

Stafford Farmer
Stacy Leotta
Sherry Loyd
Carl Mahler
Angelica Martins

Nikki Simmons
Peter Szanton
Mary Welsh
Shanda Wirt

Absent:

Elaine Jacobs
Rachel Ladenheim

Stephanie Sanchez-Esparragoza
April Schenck

Meeting Opening:

The meeting started at 1:01 PM.

I. Approval of meeting minutes for 9/13/21 RAAC meeting

Valerie Crickard moved to accept the minutes as amended by Nikki Simmons; the motion was seconded by Stacy Leotta and passed without objection.

Old Business

II. R1 Commission Report and Recommendations Update

The report is currently being prepared for the Board of Trustees and will have two halves. The first half will focus on a “gap analysis” of the areas needing attention in order for the University to achieve R1 status. The other half will identify the University’s “areas of excellence”. The full report is expected to be released on October 26 or 27. Dr. Tankersley will discuss the areas of excellence in virtual town hall meetings that will be held in October and November.

New Business:

III. F&A Distribution to Centers and Institutes

F&A distributions are being modified so that Centers and Institutes may be eligible to receive some of these funds. In Phase I of this change, the Provost will decide which Centers are eligible to participate in the distribution. Phase 2 will determine which awards would entail distribution to Centers. Phase 3 be the actual distribution of funds. Niner Research will require some programming changes in order to implement this change. Implementation is likely to take several weeks, possibly more than a month, and the programming changes will not start until Niner Research has been fully implemented. Shanda Wirt asked whether the fund distribution will be retroactive, and Dr. Tankersley said that it would be retroactive to July 1, 2021. Once implemented, the distributions will be made on a quarterly basis.

IV. NORM to Niner Research Data Conversion

Conversion of data from NORM and IRBIS into Niner Research is in its final stages. Niner Research will need to be shut down several times to complete this work. Angelica Martins reported that Niner Research will be down on October 7 from 6:30AM until 9:00 AM to implement data conversion from IRBIS and that a second shutdown may be required. Shutdowns for data conversion of other modules will be done in the evenings. There are several teams that are handling the conversion of information into Niner Research independently of one another, which is why multiple shutdowns are needed.

Ms. Crickard reported that GCA has gone through two rounds of testing data that had been converted. There have been some “hiccups” converting data from 2009 and earlier due to different data structures that exist for the older data. Peter Szanton noted that adding the converted data in the evenings sped up completion of the work, as doing it at other times would slow the data conversion down for another few weeks. Ms. Crickard noted that it will take several weeks to confirm that all conversion had been performed properly.

Shanda Wirt asked whether the reports from Niner Research will match the reports currently available from NORM and no one could definitively answer the question. Ms. Crickard said that most of the reports from GCA are generated through Web Focus, and Niner Research should be able to communicate with Web Focus. Ms. Wirt noted that running the reports in both Niner Research and NORM would be a good check on whether data was properly converted; this would need to be done before NORM is retired in December. Mr. Szanton believes that such dual reporting from NORM and Niner Research could be performed and Dr. Tankersley suggested doing so both for historical records and for current awards.

V. GCA Updates for Niner Research – Financial Transactions and Delegates

Ms. Crickard reported that some faculty are experiencing problems with the Agreements module and so she and Ms. Simmons are providing faculty with more education on this module. Subawards are not currently shown in chronological order in Niner Research. Currently all subaward data migrated into Niner Research for an individual award show the same date. This will be corrected in the future because addressing the issue immediately would slow down data migration. Support will be required from One IT to address this issue.

The Change Request module will be rolled out after the implementation of the Grants modules; Deans should nominate their delegates who will handle changes for AOR, budget revisions, etc. in the near future so that those delegates are known prior to this rollout.

VI. FY23 New Travel Per Diem for Grant Funds

Changes in the amounts of per diems must be made by April for next year. Several other universities such as UNC Greensboro are already requesting changes. The change will allow people to request funds “up to” the federal rate rather than having the rates be pegged strictly to the federal rate. The federal rates vary geographically and the travel destinations are not always known at the time when grants are submitted. These changes are merely being proposed – it is not clear that they will be implemented. The UNC system office will be the body that approves any such changes.

The meeting ended at 1:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl P. B. Mahler, II