

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAAC)
1 p.m. on Monday, December 6, 2021
via Zoom

Present:

Jeremy Alajajian	Stafford Farmer	April Schenck
Darlene Booker	Elaine Jacobs	Nikki Simmons
Audrey Callahan	Stacy Leotta	Peter Szanton
Vikki Cherwon	Sherry Loyd	Shanda Wirt
Valerie Crickard	Carl Mahler	

Absent:

Rachel Ladenheim	Stephanie Sanchez-Esparragoza
Angelica Martins	Mary Welsh

Meeting Opening:

I. Approval of meeting minutes for 11/1/21 RAAC meeting
Vikki Cherwon moved that the minutes be accepted as submitted; the motion was seconded by Nikki Simmons and passed without objection.

New Business:

II. Updated Research Awards and Expenditures FY2021
A report of research expenditures for FY2021 was circulated prior to the meeting. The UNC System Office has changed its guidance for such reports and this change required an adjustment of the numbers reported. Some earlier reports that are still on the web site do not reflect the recent changes; once the individual monthly reports have been updated in accordance with the new guidance they will be made available. Dr. Tankersley does not anticipate any additional changes to these reports in FY2022. Previously the System Office had taken information directly from NORM to generate an annual report, but with the termination of the University's use of NORM a "hybrid" report is necessary. Jeremy Alajajian asked if the Awards report would be released monthly, as had been the case in the past; Dr. Tankersley said that this report was not being generated monthly because not all information had been migrated into Niner Research but that such reports would be generated once all the data has been successfully migrated. Dr. Tankersley is currently working with OneIT to figure out how to generate more comprehensive reports for a real-time dashboard containing much of the same information, but this will take some time to work out and will probably not be available until sometime during the Spring semester.

III. Release Time for Spring Semester

Valerie Crickard reported that she had received questions about release time and how the recently granted, but as yet unreleased, raises would affect release time as tracked in Banner; as of the date of the RAAC meeting these questions have not been resolved. Per Mr. Alajajian, the raises will not hit in calendar year 2021 although the bonuses will. Ms. Crickard said that release time requests will be processed after the raises have been implemented. Dr. Tankersley

noted that release time from the Fall semester may also be affected, and Ms. Crickard noted that there were several ways to handle this. The Budget Office may make an automatic adjustment, as a result of which PI's may see additional charges to their awards. Vikki Cherwon asked if this would affect budgets and Ms. Crickard noted that a request for a reduction in release time may need to be submitted in some situations. Dr. Tankersley noted that retroactive pay has been received in the past but this raise will result in six months of retroactive pay, which is a significantly longer time period than the University has had to deal with previously. It may be a good idea to notify PI's that some changes are likely to be made to their budgets and expenditures. Ms. Crickard expects that Academic Affairs will not allow retroactive changes to be made to summer salaries. All information regarding the raises is currently on the Chancellor's web site, not the HR web site. Dr. Tankersley expects that HR will provide an update in the near future once HR receives guidance from the UNC System Office.

IV. Discussion on Implementing the New Account Code 911260 - Graduate Fellowship
Prior to the meeting an email was circulated regarding new Account Code 911260; the use of this number is the repurposing of a previously existing account code. Ms. Crickard noted that the change of this account code had already been enacted when she became aware of it, and that it could impact many awards. It should not affect budgets until July 1 of 2022, so it will not be used until then. Peter Szanton noted that this code corrects for charges to fellowships that had improperly been treated as Research Assistantships. Dr. Tankersley expressed concern that some Fellowships may still end up being improperly being charged against Research Assistantships, especially since some of the statements in the email from Hong Vu explaining the use of this Account Code are not consistent with federal rules. Ms. Crickard will follow up with the authors of the email to correct any errors.

V. Update on Niner Research Sponsored Awards Reporting
Prior to the start of the meeting Ms. Simmons distributed a document showing awards that had been received only in the month of July. The purpose of providing this report was to ensure that the format of the report was acceptable to everyone. The information in it was obtained from Niner Research but manipulation in Excel had been necessary. Ms. Simmons noted that there were multiple reasons why no awards report has been generated from Niner Research, but the chief reason was that information was still being entered into Niner Research and it is taking time to get some historic information correctly entered. Audrey Callahan asked whether similar reports would be generated for proposals that have been submitted and Ms. Simmons replied that such reports had not been created by GCA. Stafford Farmer said that reports such as Ms. Callahan mentioned were only generated on an ad-hoc basis. Ms. Callahan had tried to generate such a report, but the report she created did not display the dollar amounts involved. Mr. Farmer asked for a copy of that report so that he could see whether he and Ms. Simmons could manipulate it so as to display the dollar amounts. Dr. Tankersley noted that he would like to see a set of standard reports but that different colleges might ask for variations on them. He also noted that the report of awards was based on the departments in which PI's were located, but that with the increase in the number of interdisciplinary projects some changes might be needed in order to properly indicate which departments would receive funding, i.e., to indicate effort rather than merely where the lead PI was housed; it is not clear how centers such as EPIC

would be reflected in such a report. Ms. Simmons will continue pulling information in the manner that was used to create the awards report, but the documents that she intends to generate will not show a side-by-side comparison with data from the prior year. Dr. Tankersley asked whether such reports should be generated for this Fiscal Year or whether they should be delayed until additional information has been entered into Niner Research. Ms. Simmons replied that if a comparison with the prior year's data was desired then this effort should be delayed in order to allow historical data from NORM to be entered.

VI. Update: Redesign of Office of Research Services

Dr. Tankersley has put together a working group to reconceptualize the Office of Research Services (formerly ORSO). A search committee is reviewing applicants for Ellen Zavala's former position and scheduling initial interviews. No interviews will be scheduled prior to the winter holiday break. Subsequent phases of the effort to reconceptualize that office will include discussions with the Deans of the various colleges regarding the pre- and post-award support that they desire, especially for the College of Arts + Architecture, the College of Education, and the College of Business. The working group is looking at the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Research Services vis-à-vis those of GCA; this work is well under way and will continue into January. Dr. Tankersley noted that adding a post-award function to ORS would require adding personnel to oversee those activities. Shanda Wirt asked if a draft organizational chart or structure of the units would be made available and Dr. Tankersley replied that it will be difficult to determine the structure of ORS until the expectations of the individual colleges have been determined.

The meeting ended at 2:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Carl P. B. Mahler, II