

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAAC)

1 p.m. on Monday, June 6, 2022

via Zoom

Present:

Jeremy Alajajian
Darlene Booker
Vikki Cherwon
Valerie Crickard
Jacob Falkiewicz

Elaine Jacobs
Caroline Kennedy
Stacy Leotta
Sherry Loyd
Carl Mahler

Angelica Martins
Laura Moody
Stephanie Sanchez-Esparragoza
April Schenck
Peter Szanton

Absent:

Juandra Burris
Stafford Farmer

Rachel Ladenheim

Mary Welsh

The meeting started at 1:03 PM

Meeting Opening:

I. Approval of meeting minutes for 04/04/22 RAAC meeting

Vikki Cherwon moved to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2022 meeting; the motion was seconded by Angelica Martins and passed without objection.

Old Business

II. Update on Cost of Education Charges on Grants

Peter Szanton and Valerie Crickard are working with the Graduate School to update some of the standard compensation packages to reflect the addition of two fees (E&T and health services fees). These compensation packages will apply to both new and existing awards starting on July 1 and will be built into graduate contracts for the Fall semester. They should also be built into all proposals submitted after July 1. Tuition charges in the amount of \$6,000 or \$8,000 should only apply to proposals going out on July 1 or later, not on existing awards. Vikki Cherwon asked how the differences in compensation would be made up on existing grants and noted that her college has little flexibility to meet these changes. Dr. Tankersley replied that changes need to be made either to effort levels or to other charges in the budget. He noted that the colleges reviewed and approved the packages, so they should have already made arrangements for these changes. Stacy Leotta noted that the Graduate School's website says that "a minimum of \$6,000" must be requested and asked if more could be requested; Dr. Tankersley replied that no, this is a fixed number for FY2022-2023 and would increase to \$8,000 thereafter. Ms. Leotta noted that existing proposals that are now being awarded did not have these figures and asked how this discrepancy should be handled. Dr. Tankersley replied that if the proposals were submitted before July 1 then they are still required to cover in-state tuition and that the Graduate School will cover other parts of the packages such as healthcare fees and S&T fees. Some of the older programs included healthcare fees and others did not. Ms. Crickard noted that the GCA website provides correct information on healthcare fees. The standard budget template will have updated information by next week per Mr. Szanton, as well as a breakdown of how the \$6,000 will be allocated to different cost categories. Ms. Crickard expressed concern that there may be an audit issue for some of the allocations of the \$6,000 for tuition; information about this that is currently on the web site is

slightly out of date but will be corrected in the coming week. Ms. Leotta asked where money for paying these fees would come from and Dr. Tankersley responded that for grant-funded students who are supported on sponsored awards the fees that are part of the compensation package must be included in the grant request, and for students who are supported by State funds the funds will be paid for out of State funds; if a student is supported by multiple sources including a grant, the charges made to the grant to cover these fees must be prorated in the same proportion as the overall percentage of support provided by the grant.

New Business:

III. Revised Policy 50.2 Travel Funded by Sponsored Awards

A “redline” version highlighting changes to the policy had been circulated to RAAC members earlier in the day. Ms. Crickard noted that Policy 50.2 did not comport with our current processes so the policy was in the process of being revised to reflect current practices.

IV. eGA Approver change for grant funds

GCA was not empowered to approve eGAs prior to February 4 and is currently going back to its “after the fact” reviews of eGA. Ms. Crickard noted that encumbrances were not handled properly in software after February 4 and that a number of errors for the coming Fall semester had been found in the last two or three weeks. The return to an “after the fact” review is expected to go into effect in the coming week; Ms. Crickard will inform the RAAC members when GCA’s role as a “prior approver” has ended, and this change should not create any new work for GCA or require any new notifications for anyone else.

V. Compliance updates

The Department of Energy has released a new interim Conflict of Interest (“Col”) policy that emphasizes the need to review submissions for Organizational Cols; similar language will be found in some other funding organizations’ requirements. Organizational Cols were discussed at the January 6, 2020 RAAC meeting. Reviews for Organizational Cols will be performed by Sherry Loyd’s office and will require several weeks to complete. Organizational Cols may require review under FAR Subpart 9.5. Language regarding handling of allegations of research misconduct may also be included in some funding institutions’ requirements; if this is noted for any proposals, please contact Ms. Martins to inform her of the fact. There is currently nothing on the ORPI website describing these changes but this information will be added soon. Ms. Cherwon asked if a list of bullet points for things to look out for could be provided as Organizational Cols may be expressed in different words (for example, the Department of Justice may ask for an “Independence Assurance” rather than using the words “Organizational Conflicts of Interest”), and Ms. Loyd said that she would create such a list. Ms. Loyd noted that the Department of Energy Col policy is only an interim policy but is currently required for new proposals.

VI. Society of Research Administrators International hosts their NC Chapter meeting on June 16th, 2022 at the Dubois Center <https://www.srainternational.org/northcarolinachapter/home>

Ms. Leotta noted that the North Carolina chapter of the SRAI will be held in person at the DuBois center of the Charlotte Center City building; preregistration, which has a cost of \$180, has been extended. There will be several workshops available on June 15 in addition to the meeting on June 16.

VII. New F&A Rates

Dr. Tankersley has received word that the federal F&A negotiations have been completed; official notification of the new rates is expected to be received in the coming week. F&A has increased from 51% to 54% and the new F&A rate should be in effect for the next three fiscal years. It is not clear whether this rate will apply to existing awards or only awards received after July 1 and clarification on

this point has been requested. Dr. Tankersley encouraged the RAAC members to use the 54% rate on all new proposals that are submitted after July 1. Ms. Cherwon asked how to handle awards that have already been received but that are not effective until after July 1, and Dr. Tankersley indicated that we are awaiting guidance on this point. Mr. Szanton noted that the Claims Made rate in the Fringe Rate is also being changed. The new rates will be formally announced once they are official. Ms. Cherwon asked whether this information should be shared with faculty now for project kick-off meetings and Dr. Tankersley said not to share the information with faculty until the University receives official notice as to whether the new rates apply to existing awards.

VIII. Salary Increases for FY2023

Dr. Tankersley has been working with faculty and deans regarding the anticipated 2.5% salary increase for University employees that is expected to go into effect in July of 2022. Although it is currently planned, we have not received official implementation guidance from the System Office. As a result, EPAFs must be revised using the current salaries; if there is an increase, salaries may be increased for the second half of the summer. There should be a broad communication across campus once the salary increase, if any, is finalized.

The meeting ended at 1:57.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl P. B. Mahler, II