

Program Development Plan

Program: Office of Research Administration (ORA)

Department: Graduate School and Research

Date: TBD

Strengths: The ORA unit ...

- staff bring a wealth of education and experience to their positions;
- provided faculty development and mentoring through STARS, credited by one participant for helping her overcome the fear of preparing a proposal and inspiring her to submit more in the future;
- has seen significant turn-around, and staff are now seen as helpful instead of bureaucratic;
- made positive steps toward strengthening their reputation with the formation of the Sponsored Programs Advisory Council.

Recommendations	P H/M/L	Strategic Action	Resources needed C/R/N	Costs	Person(s) Responsible	Date of Review
<i>Shared recommendations</i>						

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1. For WCU to build the research and external funding enterprise on campus, it will be critical to review the Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment process to ensure inclusion of unambiguous statements so faculty understand the value and/or expectations of external funding activity. (p. 4)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORA completed a review in spring 2014 of the Departmental Collegial Review Documents (DCRDs) to identify how proposal submission and awards are recognized as part of the tenure & review process 	C		ORA Staff	Quarterly
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 6 - DCRD summary was presented to and discussed with the Council of Deans 	C		Deans/CRO/Provost	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next Steps: ORA will evaluate how peer institutions integrate sponsored research efforts into their TPR process. (Completion of comparative study by September 1) 	C		ORA Staff	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean will meet individually with college Deans to discuss how to facilitate these discussions at the department level throughout the year (Completion of discussions by August 15) 	C		Deans/CRO	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORA will complete annual review summary report of University-wide DCRDs (June 1, 2015) 	C		ORA Staff	

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<p>3. The Director of the Office of Research Administration (ORA) should work closely with the Chief Research Officer and Business Affairs to define roles and responsibilities for each member of the Sponsored Research Community. This would include the ORA staff, the Post-award Accountant, the ORA Director, and the Chief Research Officer. This process should include an assessment of current tasks and organizational structure and consider modifications where necessary to improve efficiency, client relations, and accountability. (pp. 5-6)</p>	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 10 - Initial discussions began between ORA and the Controller’s Office, focusing primarily on the gap in non-fiscal post-award support. • April 30 - Dr. Laura Cruz submitted a proposal to the Provost to move a faculty research support specialist position from CFC to ORA to help fulfill the needs of proposal development support. The Provost supported and approved this transition. • May 1 - Jolene Elkins, David Steinbicker, Nancy Foxx, Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Mimi Fenton, and Andrea Moshier met and determined that a grants manager would be housed in ORA to cover this gap. The Provost has provided funding to create this position. • May 2 - ORA retreat to discuss roles and responsibilities for all staff members, including the new grants manager position and the integration of the Research Development Specialist • July 15 – Post-Awards non-Financial Grants Manager Position Filled • July, 2014 – Research Development Specialist search in progress. 	R (Provost/ N (ORA))	~45,000 plus benefits ; ~5,000 for office set up	Chief Research Officer Key Admin and Finance Personnel Provost Director, Sponsored Research	Quarterly

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<p>4. When defining roles and responsibilities, the Director should focus on developing internal relations and managing the day to day operations of the office. This will free up the Chief Research Officer to serve as an advocate for ORA at the senior leadership level, as well as to build relationships with federal and state partners to strengthen WCU research at a strategic level. (pp. 6-7)</p>	H	<p>May 2 - As part of the ORA retreat, the roles and responsibilities of all staff members, including the director and CRO were discussed, revised, and are in the process of being operationalized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As recommended, the Director will assume greater leadership in the day to day operations within the office and internally to the institution (summer 2014) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Individual meetings with College Deans, Center Directors to discuss needs of the colleges (summer/fall 2014) -Continued conversations with Tony Johnson, Meredith Whitfield, Nancy Foxx and other administrators -Weekly staff meetings will be established (May, 2014) -Develop efficiencies in business office operations (June, 2014) -Semi-annual formative assessments and Job Targets (November –December, 2014) -Regular semi-annual review of position description, actual duties, goals of each staff member • The CRO will elevate her role to focus on external relationships and strategic approaches. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -October, 2014. Will participate in the Senior Leadership Institute at the Society of Research Administrators annual meeting -Partner with Tony Johnson in strategic conversations with potential regional partners -Partner with Meredith Whitfield in strategic conversations with state and federal partners/agencies -Establish formal mentoring relationship with CRO external to the institution to develop a plan of activities for relationship building with regional/state/federal agencies and organizations 	N	<p>\$5000 – funding to support the develop ment of externa l relation ships</p>	<p>CRO Director</p>	Quarterly
Office of Research Administration						Academic Affairs

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5. There needs to be better integration between pre-award and post-award so that faculty don't see the grant process as two separate steps, pre-award and then post-award. There are several ways of doing this, including combining pre-award and post-award under the Chief Research Officer, moving the post-award accountant's office to the pre-award office suite (while maintaining the current hierarchical structure), and having both groups work together on preparing budgets. (pp. 7-8)	H	See response to recommendation #3				Quarterly
6. ORA might consider realigning the utilization of the Sponsored Research Council for higher level review, input and communication. For example, have ORA write policy, and then vet it through the Council for acceptance. The Council members then serve as advocates to the greater University community. (pp. 8-9)	M	<p>October, 2013 -The Sponsored Research Council was established as an ad hoc committee in. As a new committee, they suggested we meet frequently and as an entire committee.</p> <p>August, 2014 - ORA will sponsor a retreat to discuss mission, function, and membership to ensure that each member is being effectively utilized while addressing institutional/ORA needs. Outcomes will include a formalized charge for the SRC and a specific organizational structure and defined expectations for members</p>	C		<p>CRO</p> <p>Director</p> <p>ORA Staff</p> <p>SRC</p>	Quarterly

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<p>7. ORA should assess which metrics are meaningful for them to meet their goals of improving service to the research community and doubling the grant activity in the coming years, and then design a plan to monitor key elements to determine success. Consultation with the sponsored programs offices of peer institutions may provide a guide to commonly monitored data. Conversations with sister UNC schools of similar size (as well with UNC General Administration sponsored programs staff) will also provide guidance. A list of suggested institutions is attached. (p. 9)</p>	H	<p>The ORA is committed to establishing metrics to aid in strategic decision making at the institutional level and also internally for ORA. This process will begin immediately. Types of data to be tracked will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the overall number of proposals; • Increasing the number of faculty involved in submitting proposals (PIs and co-PI's); • Including graduate students on proposals; • Raising the average dollar amount of a proposal; • Improving the success rate of faculty in receiving awards; • Tracking the number of first time faculty submitting proposals; • Monitoring the sources of funds; • Tracking departments involved in sponsored research; • Conducting satisfaction surveys; • Tracking the amount of grant funds supporting graduate and undergraduate students • Forgone indirect costs/realized IDC • Committed cost sharing <p>Fall 2014 – Will visit General Administration and sister institutions to discuss how indicators are utilized; request metrics and KPI be included in the Fall UNC SPARC Meeting to develop a comprehensive plan for data collection and reporting</p>	C		ORA	Quarterly
<p>Office of Research Administration</p>						<p>Academic Affairs</p>

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<p>8. WCU should assess the resources necessary for the Sponsored Programs enterprise to achieve the strategic growth goals. In today’s ever changing environment of increased regulatory oversight and more competition for fewer funds, it is critical that resources be available for professional development, adequate staff salaries, and other resources. WCU should assess its funding for the campus-wide support of research at the University and, as necessary, implement a plan for continued expansion of resources to ensure the sustainability of infrastructure and support ongoing growth in sponsored research. (pp. 9-10)</p>	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRO and Director to meet with Deans to discuss goals for sponsored research (Summer, Fall 2014) • Development of a financial driven plan that aligns with the goals of the colleges and institution (Spring 2015) • Dean will continue to advocate for resources to support seed money for grant proposal. • Dean will continue to advocate for increased IDCs to be directly reinvested in research activities and support. 	N		CRO Director	Quarterly
<p>9. WCU should ensure that the post-award accounting staff has continued professional development. WCU should provide adequate professional development resources for the Post-award Accountant to ensure her ability to understand the changing landscape of financial obligations of sponsored research. Non-compliance with requirements can be costly to the University, both in findings and lost opportunities to expand the research component. (p. 10)</p>	H	<p>With the hiring of the new non-financial post-award grants manager, training will be necessary and additional funds will be required</p> <p>With the limited resources available within the Office of Research Administration, particularly with new staff joining the team, ORA is unable to support to post-award accounting staff financially.</p> <p>ORA will continue to engage post-award in discussions related to changes in the profession and opportunities to become more effective while maintaining compliance</p>	N	\$2000 to support training for new grant manager position	CRO Controller	Quarterly

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<p>10. WCU should immediately analyze the workload and responsibilities assigned to the post-award accountant to determine the additional resources needed to support a compliant response to post-award requirements and to provide service to faculty in managing their projects. The responsibilities of this position appear high. (pp. 10-11)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 10 - Initial discussions began between ORA and the Controller’s Office, focusing primarily on the gap in non-fiscal post-award support. • May 1 - Jolene Elkins, David Steinbicker, Nancy Foxx, Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Mimi Fenton, Andrea Moshier met and determined that a grants manager would be housed in ORA to cover this gap. The Provost has provided funding to create this position • May 2 - ORA retreat to discuss roles and responsibilities for all staff members, including the new grants manager position • July 15 - ORA non-financial grants manger hired to serve as liaison with PIs, ORA, and Nancy Foxx to provide increased support for faculty. • Administration and Finance must commit resources to “support a compliant response to post-award requirements” in the form of additional and continued training. ORA does not have funding to support training for this position. 				<p>Quarterly</p>
<p>Office of Research Administration</p>		<p>9</p>				<p>Academic Affairs</p>

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<p>11. WCU should analyze their use of reports and collection of data to ensure reports are being well utilized for efficient and accurate reports and data to the campus and sponsors. (p. 11)</p>	M	<p>The ability to fulfill this recommendation will be a direct result of the actions taken in recommendation #7 related to metrics</p> <p>These data will allow for greater communication in the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report • Strategic Planning and Resource Allocation • Periodic regular reports to Deans and Department Heads <p>Fall 2014 – Will visit General Administration and sister institutions to discuss how indicators are utilized; request metrics and KPI included in the Fall SPARC Meeting to develop a comprehensive plan for how data collection and reporting</p>	C		ORA	Quarterly