



# The Ohio State University

## College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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## About This Report

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) is a national organization of over 7,000 members. NCURA serves its members and advances the field of research administration through education and professional development programs, the sharing of knowledge and experience, and by fostering a professional, collegial, and respected community.

This document focuses on sharing knowledge and experience as a result of the recently conducted review of the research administration area of sponsored programs. Our objectives are to provide the institution with feedback on the institution's management in support of research and to share recommendations and national best practices that might be considered at the institution.

While the review utilizes the NCURA National Standards, the Reviewers recognize that policies and practices vary at institutions and that not all Standards are applicable to each institution.

The NCURA Peer Review process is based on interviews with various stakeholders involved in research and research administration areas of sponsored programs. However, the NCURA Peer Review process does not necessarily validate information or data provided by individuals or departments in preparing this report. Furthermore, the NCURA Peer Review does not evaluate the skills, qualifications, or performance of individuals; thus, the report should not be used to make human resource decisions regarding existing staff. Nor does it perform an audit function. The results of this review, therefore, should not be used to make human resource decisions. It should not be used to evaluate departments outside the scope of the NCURA review (and is thus limited to use in assessments of Research Administration/Office of Sponsored Programs). Nor can the use of the results help ensure fiscal, regulatory, or ethical compliance with federal, state, or local regulations. The recommendations offered in this review report should not be construed as an exhaustive list, as these recommendations necessarily represent an analysis by a particular set of Reviewers and at a single point in time, based on interviews and procedures and processes of certain stakeholders and Research Administration/Office of Sponsored Programs procedures and processes that are contemporaneous to the issuance of this report.

Just as a decision to follow a recommendation cannot ensure regulatory or audit sufficiency, a decision by an institution not to adopt one or more recommendations does not necessarily mean that the institution is failing to meet legal requirements. Rather, the recommendations reflect an opinion of peer research administrators who are active in the field and familiar with structures and approaches at other institutions. There may, however, be elements of the local history, environment, or culture of which

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they may not have been fully cognizant. This document does not provide legal advice. NCURA does not warrant that the information discussed in this report is legally sufficient.

The **Executive Summary** provides an overview of the report. The **Current Environment for Sponsored Programs** section discusses the many influences and pressures that have recently impacted research administration and created some of the current stresses. The remaining sections provide a detailed discussion of the National Standards as applied to this institution and includes notable practices and recommendations throughout, along with the rationale for each.

NCURA will treat the contents of this report as confidential and will not disclose nor distribute the report outside individuals affiliated with the Peer Review program. There are no such restrictions on how the institution chooses to utilize the report.

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## Executive Summary

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) would like to commend The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences for undertaking an open and comprehensive review of the college's research administration infrastructure. The strong desire for improvement in administrative efficiencies and support for research is evident with the decision of institutional leadership and the community to engage in this process that allows all members to participate and contribute.

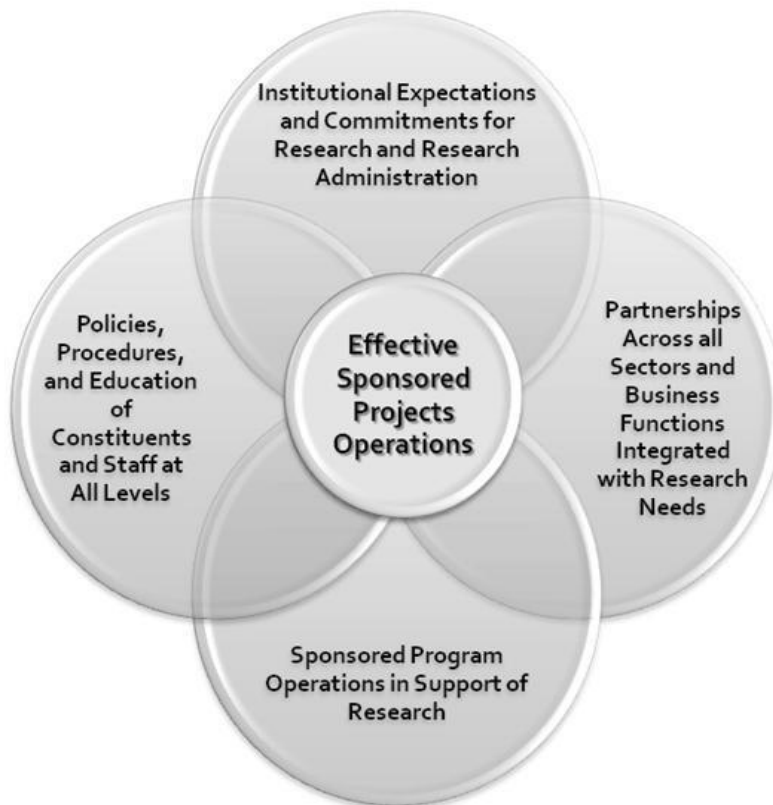
The NCURA Peer Review Program is premised on the belief that it is a critical part of this review process to include experienced research administrators who have significant careers and are engaged nationally. This external validation allows The Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences to incorporate best practices and models into their final action plans.

An evaluation of the research administration of sponsored programs at The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences was conducted at the request of Ronald Hendrick, former Acting Vice President for Agricultural

Administration and Dean. The evaluation was performed from September to December 2016 (site visit on November 1-4, 2016; Appendix C for the Charge Letter and Appendix D for the site visit itinerary) by a Peer Review Team from NCURA (Appendix B for Bios).

The evaluation was framed by the National Standards (Appendix A) for the administration of sponsored project

activities. These Standards cover institutional expectations and commitments; policies,



procedures, and education; how the central and unit-level operations work together to support research; and the relationship and partnerships across college research administration functions.

Throughout the visit, the Reviewers were impressed by the high level of commitment to research. The institution is providing additional funds to build research through recruitment of new researchers and additional investments in research infrastructure. All the leaders spoken to seemed truly invested in this review and gaining information that will allow them to make their organization stronger. Most of the faculty spoken to expressed high satisfaction in the availability of research funds with several noting that researchers who were willing to work stood a better chance of obtaining funding within OSU than they would in many other places. There was a high level of pride expressed regarding being part of CFAES. At the same time, there was confusion regarding areas such as fees, cost allocations, and F&A treatment on the Columbus and Wooster campuses. Both campuses expressed feelings that, in some aspects, the other campus “got a better deal”.

Taking time to do a review of the current infrastructure to support research at this point is essential. With the effort to grow the research enterprise, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. First, the acceptance of sponsored program funds, particularly federal, brings risk. In order to effectively manage that risk, it is imperative that an organization has an administrative infrastructure to support those activities. This means having knowledgeable individuals available to provide the principal investigators (PIs) with information regarding the status of their awards, guidance on making decisions, and to process transactions for them. The federal regulations are complex and change regularly. It is important to have someone to provide researchers with informed guidance rather than expecting researchers to independently keep up to date on these areas. Not having this support results in PIs who are more likely to make decisions without having the knowledge that they should. Uninformed decision-making can result in mischarging expenses to an award and/or not maximizing what can appropriately be charged to a federal award. Second, the PIs who are recruited from other institutions will likely expect more administrative support than is typical within CFAES. These new researchers may become very frustrated with lack of administrative support. Third, the administrative burden on PIs within CFAES is much higher than is typically observed at other institutions. PIs are spending significant time on administrative activities, many of which could be more efficiently handled by trained administrators, allowing the researchers to use their expertise to focus on research and in attracting new research funding to the college. This report will provide additional insights on the specific areas that need to be addressed.

Operating at the college level brings some limitations, as CFAES is reliant on the central administration for a variety of services. Many of the areas discussed within this

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report should be brought to the university level for discussion. Ideally, having the college and the university work together to develop a plan to address concerns would provide the greatest opportunity for improvement. Given that the university is currently doing a similar review (with Huron Consulting Group), this could be an opportune time for such an activity. However, since the college has limited power over the plan that the university moves forward with, and there are many things that need to be addressed within CFAES, the college should also be identifying how it can make improvements for the researchers within the organization (as they have begun to do by having this review conducted). One of the areas that showed great opportunity for quick improvements is in communication. There is no individual who holds responsibility for communicating to CFAES about research administration. This would include communicating on changes in federal guidelines, university systems, available resources, and related areas. Throughout the visit, a high level of confusion was expressed regarding federal regulations, obtaining services from GDSU (and the lack of cost for those services), how to use university systems, how to obtain information regarding awards from the available systems, and where to get additional assistance, if needed. Typically, colleges similar to CFAES will have an organized structure where there are administrators assigned to provide administrative support to researchers. Some departments within CFAES have been able to find funding to hire a dedicated research administrator. However, in many other cases, the researchers stated that they had to handle almost all pre- and post-award activities with the limited support they are able to receive from OSP. This situation causes a large strain for the broader university. The central office (OSP) is generally not staffed to provide significant local administrative support, which results in the central office straining themselves as they try to assist researchers with more local activities (causing delays in their other activities) and the PIs struggling to handle many administrative activities themselves.

OSP provides a comprehensive website with a good amount of information on sponsored programs administration including federal regulations. Those spoken to during the review either were not aware of this site and/or did not utilize it. Having a structure within CFAES that supports the sharing of information and utilization of currently available resources will be very valuable in any efforts to improve the effective administration of research within CFAES.

CFAES needs to develop their internal model for providing research administrative support. As they look toward further growth and adding additional new researchers, they are at a perfect point to do so. In order to manage risk, meet the expectations of the researchers, and ensure the college reaches its highest potential in research funding, it is imperative that action is taken to build an infrastructure to support research. As many universities and colleges seek ways to streamline and reduce administrative burden, some new structures have been implemented by some organizations. While providing administrator(s) within each department is commonly

seen, recently other colleges have moved to a shared service approach with a team to provide pre- and/or post-award support from one unit within the college to all researchers. This structure is already somewhat in place at CFAES (for the pre-award activities handled by GDSU). Various approaches will be discussed further within the report. No matter what the model is, having clearly defined and communicated roles and responsibilities is essential to a well-functioning organization. Further discussion of this topic, the current structure at CFAES, and the process towards more clearly defining these will be discussed later in this report.

Having a strong structure for metrics is another area that can bring high value to any research administration infrastructure. While it is generally understood that these can be valuable for forecasting and measuring research performance, they can also bring great value in managing and improving administrative performance and focus. This topic will also be discussed in greater detail later in the report.

The Peer Reviewers wish to express their gratitude to the leadership of CFAES, the members of the Sponsored Program Advisory Committee, and to those who contributed to the compilation of materials that were provided to the Review Team, as well as for the assistance and hospitality provided during the site visit.

The notable practices and recommendations from the report are listed throughout the report. Each notable practice and recommendation includes a description and rationale.

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## CONTENTS

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About This Report	2
Executive Summary	4
Current Environment for Sponsored Program Operations	11
Institutional Commitments	12
I. STANDARD for Institutional and Research Administration Planning.	12
II. STANDARD for Research Administration Organization.	17
III. STANDARD for Research Administration Staffing.	20
IV. STANDARD for Research Administration Resources.	28
Institutional Communications	29
V. STANDARD for Institutional Communications.	29
Research Administration Policy Development	34
VI. STANDARD for Research Administration Policy Development.	34
Program of Education about Sponsored Programs	37
VII. STANDARD for the Program of Education about Sponsored Programs.	37
Assessment and Institutional Preparedness	39
VIII. STANDARD for Risk Assessment.	39
IX. STANDARD for Institutional Preparedness for Research Disasters or Media Exposure.	45
Information Management	47
X. STANDARD for Information Systems Supporting Research Administration.	47
XI. STANDARD for Institutional Management of Research Administration Data.	48

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XII. STANDARD for Research Administration Data Accessible to Constituents.	49
<b>Institutional Affiliations and Relationships</b>	<b>51</b>
XIII. STANDARD for Research Affiliations with Other Organizations.	51
XIV. STANDARD for Research Affiliations with Non-Employed Individuals.	52
<b>Sponsored Program Operations: Funding and Proposal Services</b>	<b>52</b>
XV. STANDARD for Funding Resources.	52
XVI. STANDARD for Proposal Assistance.	54
<b>Sponsored Program Operations: Proposal Review and Submission</b>	<b>56</b>
XVII. STANDARD for Proposal Review.	56
XVIII. STANDARD for Proposal Submission.	58
<b>Subawards</b>	<b>58</b>
XIX. STANDARD for Subawards.	59
<b>Sponsored Program Operations: Award Acceptance and Initiation</b>	<b>60</b>
XX. STANDARD for Award Review and Negotiation.	60
XXI. STANDARD for Award Acceptance.	64
XXII. STANDARD for Award Activation and Notification.	65
<b>Sponsored Program Operations: Award Management</b>	<b>67</b>
XXIII. STANDARD for Fiscal Management.	67
XXIV. STANDARD for Administrative Management.	68
<b>Institutional Integration of Obligations Made with Sponsored Programs Activities</b>	<b>69</b>
XXV. STANDARD for Institutional Integration of Obligations Made with Sponsored Programs Activities.	69
<b>Appendix A: National Standards for Effective Sponsored Program Operations</b>	<b>71</b>

Appendix B: NCURA Peer Review Team Bios	72
Appendix C: Charge Letter	76
Appendix D: Site Visit Itinerary	78
Appendix E: NCURA Resources	83

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## Current Environment for Sponsored Program Operations

The Ohio State University operates in a decentralized business model and, thus, considerable responsibility rests with the colleges. Any institution, and for the purposes of this Report the CFAES in particular, that is focused on developing a more research-intensive program faces a number of challenges. On one front is the challenge to embrace the culture of the institution and those existing or emerging priorities as related to sponsored program activities. On the other front is the challenge to build or sustain an infrastructure that can nurture, facilitate, and support the growing demands of a research enterprise and meet both faculty expectations and institutional accountability.

Any research enterprise brings a measure of risk, accountability, and oversight to the institution that has not been previously apparent. These measures are in response to a parallel growth in attention by the federal government that is evidenced by escalating policies, regulations, and oversight. This increased involvement of the federal government in sponsored programs oversight has resulted in the need for higher degrees of specialization and education on the part of institutional sponsored programs staff. Institutions now maintain a delicate balancing act between developing the infrastructure for facilitating and moving forward research activities of their faculty and providing sufficient oversight and internal controls to demonstrate accountability and to mitigate risk.

In the last five years, institutions have been especially impacted by the external environment. Reduced funding, increasingly large-scale and multi-disciplinary research, and collaborations with businesses and foreign scientists have all contributed to complex relationships and issues of ownership. The recent federal attention on institutional operations through audits, whistleblowers, and investigations has not only exposed our institutions to the public but has brought increasing levels of Congressional attention. The resulting attention on how institutions manage their relationships and the use of the public's funds often results in tighter institutional controls and more restrictive policies imposed on both the institution and faculty.

Many of our institutions are now recognizing that the growth of infrastructure and specialized expertise has not kept pace with the complexity of the current-day research relationships and the attention to government regulations and policies that are inextricably intertwined with the external funding.

The infrastructure supporting sponsored programs is always complex and it requires a periodic review to determine if it efficiently supports the efforts of investigators while

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also offering an adequate compliance posture with the regulations that underlie federal funding.

This general discussion of the current national environment within which all sponsored programs operations exist and the special challenges for transitioning institutions will serve as a foundation for the more specific discussion of this report.

## Institutional Commitments

### I. STANDARD for Institutional and Research Administration Planning.

The institutional priorities and strategic plans as related to research are clearly articulated and tied to action plans and metrics, defined by research administration, that will support and advance the institutional priorities. The unit (research, center/institute, college, school) understands institutional priorities and has appropriately aligned their strategic directions. The relationship of research strategic goal successes and infrastructure commitments in areas that support research (such as seed or bridge funding, shared cores, release time) is understood by the unit leadership. A commitment to research and sponsored projects is clearly evident at all levels of the unit as appropriate to the culture, mission, and strategic plans.

The Ohio State University (OSU) is one of the top ranked institutions of higher education in the country. Its vision statement (August 2016) is, “The Ohio State University is the model 21st-century public, land grant, research, urban, community engaged institution.” Certainly, OSU has demonstrated considerable success in its research activities.

#### Research Highlights, Statistical Survey, Institutional Research and Planning

- Research Expenditures (2014-2015) \$962.0 million
- Sponsored Programs \$505.7 million
- Research Institute at Nationwide Children’s Hospital \$66.6 million
- Transportation Research Center \$32.5 million
- Other Research Programs (including OARDC) \$106.5 million
- Institution (Cost sharing and support) \$250.7 million
- Rank among U.S. public research universities based on research expenditures (NSF ‘14)  
12th

- Rank among all U.S. universities based on industry-sponsored research (NSF '14) 4th

The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) is responsible for the large-scale strategic planning process at OSU. The strategic planning process is well-developed, with clearly defined university vision, mission, values, and core goals. The overall role of research is clearly articulated within the vision-mission and core goals. For example, the first of four elements is “Creating and discovering knowledge to be shared for the well-being of our regional, national and global communities.” The Research and Innovation Core goal is “to create distinctive and internationally recognized contributions to the advancement of fundamental knowledge and scholarship and toward solutions of the world’s most pressing problems.”

- **Notable Practice: OSU has a well-defined strategic planning process.**
- **Notable Practice: The role of research has been articulated within the OSU strategic plan.**

Each of OSU’s 15 colleges develop individual strategic plans that align with the university’s vision, mission, values, and its four core goals of teaching and learning, research and innovation, outreach and engagement, and resource stewardship. The CFAES Strategic Plan is in its “sunset” year, having been developed for the period 2011-2016. The current CFAES strategic plan was originally developed under the leadership of Dr. Bobby Moser, then continued to be used by Dr. McPheron (2012), and reaffirmed by the current Acting Vice President and Dean.

- **Recommendation: The CFAES should begin working on an updated strategic plan.** While defining and assessing progress toward annual strategic priorities is important, it does not take the place of the multi-year, aspirational characteristics of true strategic planning. The value of having an updated CFAES strategic plan exceeds the relative merit of waiting until a VP and dean is selected. Growth in impact, space, shared equipment, interdisciplinary work, seed and bridge funding, and external funding take investment over time. One-year planning limits what can be accomplished and ultimately constrains even gifted leadership and faculty.

#### CFAES Summarized Research Highlights, NCURA Peer Review Briefing Book

- In FY 2015, CFAES submitted 461 proposals through the OSU Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) for a total request of \$130.3 million from 208 different sponsors.
- Of the 22 proposal submitting units at OSU, CFAES is fourth in submissions, only behind the larger entities of the College of Medicine, College of Engineering, and College of Arts & Sciences.

- CFAES has experienced significant success in building its base of grants and contracts. OSP expenditures for the college have increased from \$12.5 million in 2000 to \$40.5 million in 2015.
- Total award dollars have increased from \$13.7 million in 2000 to \$40.9 million in 2015.

The 2011-2016 CFAES Strategic Plan incorporates OSU's strategic core goal of Research and Innovation and includes narrative that is relevant to research administration. The following excerpted language is of particular relevance to this review:

- Create significant impacts by strategically redirecting resources to address state, national and global research priorities through Signature Areas
  - Focus internal competitive program funding (including grants, equipment, and graduate research associateships) to enhancing extramural competitiveness on Ohio's current and emerging local and global agbio-sciences issues.
  - Reallocate funding to strategic initiatives to leverage resources consistent with Signature Areas
  - Develop and implement a grant preparation strategy to provide assistance to faculty with large grant preparation, proposal submission, pre-award and post-award requirements, as well as facilitating team building
  - Develop and train staff to facilitate this initiative.
- **Notable Practice: The CFAES Research and Innovation focus area includes measurable research administration actions/tactics.**

In 2014, the OSU offices of Human Resources and Institutional Research and Planning conducted faculty and staff surveys soliciting their views of the OSU work environment. The Vice President of Agricultural Administration and Dean of the CFAES at the time (who is now the Provost of OSU) launched a follow-on initiative aimed at increasing the level of research administrative support to faculty and, in the process, stimulating conversation about transformational ways to approach research administration at the college level. The NCURA Peer Review of the CFAES is a natural extension of this initiative.

- **Notable Practice: The CFAES has expressed and acted on its intention to periodically review special administrative units within CFAES, including those supporting research administration.**

CFAES has experienced rapid changes in senior leadership. Since 2012, there have been four individuals assigned to the VP and Dean position (including interim/acting appointments). Of the 12 chairs and directors listed in the background materials provided to the Review Team, four are listed as interim or acting and six have less than three years of experience in their current positions. Multiple units have been consolidated and new positions created including the Senior Administrative Officer, the Senior Associate Dean, and the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education who is primarily focused on research. Maintaining focus on the strategic goals of an institution and college is challenging during such a time of change.

On November 3, 2016, the VP and Dean sent an email to the college community with The Top 10 CFAES Strategic Goals. These 2016-2017 Strategic Goals become the college priority areas for the year and Dr. King's focus areas for leadership transition to a permanent VP and Dean (search underway).

- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should detail measurable action items and desired outcomes correlated to each of their top 10 strategic goals.**  
Action items should be assigned to “owners” who will serve as initiative leaders and “team” members identified to assist. Metrics should be defined for each strategic goal starting with one reflecting the baseline or “current state” (2015), the “stretch” goal (2017) and Progress to Date (Q1, Q2, Q3, Final).
  - **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should develop and implement metrics measuring the effectiveness of college and department research administration services.**  
PI satisfaction with those services should be evaluated and included in the metrics. Metrics for CFAES research administrative services as a whole, as well as metrics specific to the services offered through the GDSU, should be defined and reported. Common metrics demonstrating the productivity and impact of the GDSU, for example, would include:
    - Number of proposals submitted through GDSU (metrics tracked by agency, academic unit, faculty member, and research administrator)
    - Number of individual CFAES faculty members served by GDSU (metrics tracked by agency, academic unit, and faculty rank)
    - Type of proposals submitted (e.g., individual investigator, training, equipment, etc.)
    - Time to completion/submission (i.e., days to process)
    - Awards received on proposals submitted by GDSU as compared to those submitted directly through OSP (by agency, academic unit, and faculty member)
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- PI Satisfaction (data gathered by survey)
- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should map CFAES strategic goals, i.e., specifically show relationships to the Discovery Themes and other OSU institutional priorities for research.** CFAES performance metrics should include those that measure progress toward these mapped priorities.
- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should distribute a Strategic Goals Progress Report broadly to college stakeholders on a prescribed schedule (monthly, quarterly).** Mid-term metrics should be reported on at least a quarterly basis.

At the current time, there does not appear to be a methodical process of assessing progress toward strategic objectives of the college or institution. Data was reasonably available, but generally provided ad hoc. It was not always clear what was actual data versus projected data. Data is not as deep as one might expect from a college the size of CFAES or an institution the size of OSU. For example, proposal submission data was not detailed by faculty rank, sponsor, proposal type (research, training, individual investigator, equipment, center), etc. There did not appear to be a routine report and/or tracking of performance metrics associated with the Discovery Themes. There seemed to be significant lack of data routinely available that could help the VP and Dean quickly assess the health of the research enterprise. Nor were there data and/or reports routinely available that could make a compelling case to OSU leadership for additional financial or programmatic consideration.

- **Recommendation: Once key metrics and desired performance data are defined, the Data Systems Analyst should work with appropriate CFAES leadership team members and staff to systematize reports.** The Data Systems Analyst, in consultation with Information Technology Services, should consider what “homegrown” and commercial tools are necessary to collect and report the data in an efficient, accurate, and consistent manner and make Recommendations regarding how to access or acquire these tools.

Research incentives are an increasingly important aspect of faculty recruitment and the ongoing operation of a vibrant research enterprise. CFAES is rightfully excited about its research incentives including the SEEDS program and DC Days. The SEEDS program grew from an initial budget of \$250,000 in 1996 to \$2,000,000 in 2009 but has unfortunately since been reduced to its current expenditure level of \$1.0 million. CFAES has program announcements for many of its research incentives like SEEDS and DC Days, but appears to lack written details formalizing some of the operational guidelines for their solicitation, selection, and management. Having formal operational guidelines in place for each research incentive is important to assuring the fair and transparent solicitation and review of research incentives funding requests.



- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education and/or GDSU Grants Administrator should review guidelines and procedures for each of CFAES' research incentives to determine if operating procedures are included and clear.** For example:
  - What constitutes the proposal review team, i.e., who is represented?
  - How is the review team selected?
  - What are the proposal review criteria? If numerical scoring, how a ratings applied?
  - How/when are recipients notified?
  - How/when is funding distributed?
  - By what date must funding be spent?
  - Are review comments available to successful and unsuccessful applicants?

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## II. STANDARD for Research Administration Organization.

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The unit has identified offices and structures that support the overall administration of the research enterprise and, in particular, the management of externally sponsored programs. The unit has defined roles, relationships and authority between unit-level offices and central offices, and where institutional functions in different arms of the institution may overlap with unit-level research administration activities. Effective operational processes exist between unit-level and central sponsored program activities and business functions. As appropriate to the organizational structure, senior unit-level leadership is represented in key academic and institutional groups. The institution has addressed school, college, research, or center/institute needs as relate to the research administration infrastructure that resides in those units.

Sponsored research is a complex undertaking that benefits from a robust governance structure and communication strategy. Frequently, these take place through a council or committee structure. Representation on OSU institutional and CFAES committees was described in the briefing book provided to the Review Team.

- **Notable Practice: The VP and Dean participates in OSU's VP Administrative Council, Discovery Theme Executive Team, and Council of Deans.**
  - **Notable Practice: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education participates in College Research Officers meetings organized by the Office of Research.**
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- **Notable Practice: The Grants and Contracts Administrator participates on the OSU Administrative Research Council.**

The CFAES Pattern of Administration provides a list of additional committees. While research is a potential agenda topic during each of these committee meetings, it is not the fundamental purpose of the group. The CFAES Administrative Cabinet typically meets weekly and discusses a variety of issues including research, faculty and staff position requests, promotion and tenure, budgets and the annual merit compensation process, department/school strategic plans, college-level policies and procedures, and awards. The VP and Dean also meets weekly with the CFAES Cabinet and bi-weekly with Chairs and Directors of Academic Units. Per the briefing book, research “may be discussed” in any of these sessions but is not the dedicated purpose.

As a comparison, the VP and Dean charged a specific committee, the Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee, to support the NCURA Peer Review process. The Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee demonstrates the value that a dedicated group can have in furthering the CFAES research and research administration agendas. A standing, college-level research advisory committee would provide sustained consideration of research and research administration topics ranging from simple information sharing to complex discussions and decision-making. It can help standardize understandings and practices and build community.

- **Notable Practice: CFAES established a Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee with diverse representation.** The CFAES Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee is well constructed and has played an important role, especially with respect to preparing for the NCURA Peer Review.
- **Recommendation: The CFAES should charter a college-level research advisory committee (CRAC) supporting Discovery and Innovation and research administration.** The CRAC should be chaired by the VP and Dean or the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education. The CRAC should provide advice and Recommendations to the VP and Dean regarding the strategic direction of the full spectrum of the research enterprise within the college irrespective of the location of the research, i.e., Columbus or Wooster. CRAC’s agendas, advice and Recommendations should include both the operational and policy dimensions of discovery and innovation activities. It should play a critical two-way communication role between the college and its departments/divisions. Its members should be easily recognized by those they represent and thus encourage matters to be brought to the CRAC from the stakeholders at large through their representative. Topical ad hoc subcommittees may be a frequent occurrence as the CRAC considers complex matters, gathers input from stakeholders and OSU centralized resources, and compares approaches to peers. The administrative support for research should be one of

the focuses of this committee. They should charge task forces to evaluate and gather data where a complete review requires data gathering or additional analysis.

As mentioned in Standard I, CFAES has experienced significant change in personnel and structure. Roles and responsibilities and lines of authority continue to evolve and consequently may be unclear or give the perception of being ad hoc. The briefing book, for example, details a Specific Issue/Weakness where the GDSU, “CFAES Fiscal Service Center”, and academic units’ “sponsored programs staff” may not be well aligned. The briefing book indicates that there may be service gaps and overlapping activities resulting from inadequate coordination between staff/units. The NCURA Peer Review Team received input during the site visit that confirmed this perceived issue/weakness. This lack of clarity may become increasingly problematic unless specific efforts are taken to illustrate the distribution of roles and responsibilities and relationships between positions.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should lead a working group to develop a roles and responsibilities matrix illustrating the distributed responsibilities of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education, Senior Fiscal Officer, Senior Administrative Officer, GDSU Grants and Contracts Administrator.** The merit of including the Chief Advancement Officer and Chief Information Officer in the matrix should also be considered. Roles and responsibilities related to policy and process development, communication, and training seem important to clarify as they relate to the changes in structure and personnel. The 2015 “College, Department, Central and PI sponsored programs roles and responsibilities” matrix is quite well-developed, but lacks inclusion of these recent changes in structure and personnel.

A Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed, or “RACI”, approach may work best for illustrating roles, responsibilities, and relationships of these more senior administrative positions. A RACI matrix defines who is/are:

- Responsible – Who is completing the task.
- Accountable – Who is making decisions and taking actions on the task(s).
- Consulted – Who will be communicated with regarding decisions and tasks.
- Informed – Who will be updated on decisions and actions during the project.

RACI is a typical project management tool. Information about using a RACI process is readily available on the internet and may use excel as the formatting tool.

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It seems probable that areas of overlap and/or duplication may be identified. For example, during the site visit representatives of both the GDSU and the Finance Office described activities and ideas related to training. All these positions discussed policy or process development efforts. Several indicated that their roles and responsibilities were evolving as time went by. While time consuming, work on defining roles, responsibilities, and relationships will be beneficial. Suggested changes in roles and responsibilities, if identified, should be brought to the CFAES VP and Dean for consideration and incorporated into position descriptions where approved.

- **Recommendation: The 2015 operational-level roles and responsibilities matrix (Briefing Book pages 61-64) should be updated.** Areas of overlap and/or inefficiencies that may be identified as well as gaps in assignment should be discussed in an effort to resolve for increased understanding, efficiency, and effectiveness. Suggested changes in roles and responsibilities should be brought to the VP and Dean for consideration and incorporated into position descriptions where approved. The observations and Recommendations resulting from the NCURA Peer Review should be considered during the construction of the matrix and refinement of roles and responsibilities.
- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should share the matrix with CFAES stakeholders during the final draft (i.e., available for comment) and final approval process.** Each matrix should be posted at an easily accessible location when finalized.

Because rapid change can be hard to encapsulate into a shared vision and can cause discord if not consciously managed, an external facilitator may help to bring order to conversations about roles and responsibilities and a new work environment.

The Chief Advancement Officer had been in his position for only three weeks at the time of the NCURA Peer Review site visit. Operationalizing Advancement within CFAES is still in its formative stage. It is not unusual to see tensions develop between sponsored programs operations and the philanthropic arm of an institution or college. There may be differing viewpoints on what constitutes a gift or agreement, how to count awards and dollars, and who should manage sponsor relationships. Many institutions have put considerable effort into developing shared understandings between advancement and sponsored research offices and detailing relevant operating policies and procedures. CFAES may find that NCURA and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) articles and presentations, and/or other peer institution practices may be helpful to consider if/when questions arise.

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### III. STANDARD for Research Administration Staffing.

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A sufficient number of staff are available to the unit to support the core functions of the sponsored programs operation and to meet the obligations to sponsors and the institution. The unit has an appropriate research administration staffing plan that contains elements of recruitment, retention, and succession for key positions. Clear expectations exist for training appropriate to responsibilities for all level of staff and between unit and central levels.

There are a multitude of ways to organize the personnel and services dedicated to supporting college sponsored research administration. The commonality between the various approaches typically resides in a shared understanding of what constitutes pre-award and post-award administration. This shared understanding has evolved within the university research community at large to the point that there are now professional conference offerings specific to each specialty area. (See <http://www.ncura.edu/Education/MeetingsConferences.aspx> ).

It may be useful to consider this Standard using the Grants.gov definition of the term “pre-award.”

Grants.Gov defines pre-award as follows:

- The pre-award phase is the beginning of the grant lifecycle, *which includes announcing opportunities, submitting applications, and reviewing applications. It describes the general steps of the reviewing applications process to be: Initial screening to ensure the application is complete; Programmatic review and assessment of the substance of the applications; Financial review of proposed budgets; and Award decision and announcement.*

The CFAES Grants Development Support Unit (GDSU) was initiated in the fall of 2009 and predominantly handles pre-award activities. Their activities were described in the Briefing Book as generally falling into the following broad categories. In some cases, efforts are already underway to remove and/or reassign these activities.

<b>Development, Outreach, &amp; Research Incentive Programs</b>	<b>Proposal Submission</b>	<b>Analytics</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Communications</b>
Identifies and disseminates funding opportunities  Relationship with external sponsors  SEEDS  DC Days  K-12 Outreach  Science Summer Spectacular  Facility Tours	Strategies for successful proposals  Budget development  Prepares proposal documents  Manages proposal information and files  Assists in editing narrative  Edits and formats final documents  Interprets contract requirements  Leads PI and staff through full life-cycle of research projects  Confirms final grant award in accordance with proposal/negotiations	SEEDS Annual Report  Analyze and summarize data  Provides detailed data entry	Responsible Conduct of Research  Monthly topical training for faculty & staff  Proposal development and submission course co-instructed with OSP	Maintains web and social media sites  Prepares communication and training materials for grant programs  Prepares final reports

OSU central university officers, CFAES administrators, faculty and staff who participated in the NCURA Peer Review site visit consistently applauded the creation and work of the GDSU.

- **Notable Practice:** There are proposal development services offered to CFAES through the Grant Development Support Unit.

However, two concerns were frequently shared:

- 1) GDSU charges for their service (which is no longer true, so became evidence of a communication gap within CFAES) and
- 2) GDSU is not always able to help support a proposal when requested by the PI due to low level of staffing within GDSU.

CFAES could enhance their proposal development and submission support by taking a three-pronged approach: 1) realigning position roles and responsibilities; 2) establishing a proposal development and support prioritization methodology; and 3) exploring OSP resources that may be available in support of large-scale proposal preparation and submission service.

The level of effort and staffing assigned to the GDSU for proposal submission is nominal compared to the overall volume of external proposals submitted by CFAES each year. The understaffing is exacerbated by the multitude of work assignments within the GDSU that do not relate specifically to hands-on proposal submission support. As illustrated above, the GDSU Administrator, Specialists, and Associates all have duties beyond those related to proposal development and submission.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should explore a realignment of the assignment of duties within GDSU.** Realigning similar duties to specific positions will potentially increase efficiencies and enhance performance. It may facilitate employee recruitment and retention. Eliminating ancillary duties from the grants and contracts specialists will increase the number of proposals they are able to handle.
- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should establish a goal for the number (or percentage of) external proposals that the GDSU handles in a given year.** The GDSU has evolved over time. At its inception, the GDSU was not intended to be a service that would “touch” every proposal submitted. However, during the site visit, several participants mentioned a long-range goal of having GDSU handle certain aspects of every CFAES proposal submission. While it may not be immediately possible for GDSU to “touch” every CFAES proposal submission, a long-range proposal submission support goal (i.e., 25% of proposals; 50% of proposals submitted, etc.) should be set. Participants acknowledged the beneficial impact of the proposal services offered through GDSU.
- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should work with CFAES to establish a GDSU proposal submission services staffing level commensurate with CFAES’ proposal submission services goals and objectives.** Staffing should be adjusted over time and funding availability to meet proposal submission services goals and objectives. Individual staff performance metrics should be set and tracked to



evaluate the number of proposals handled by individual GDSU administrator(s) and specialist(s) (i.e., 125 individual investigator proposal submissions per year/per specialist).

The highly competitive funding environment causes principal investigators to submit more proposals per year and to a more diverse list of sponsors than has been the case in the past. Having the GDSU touch every proposal that is submitted from CFAES, a goal that was mentioned during the NCURA Peer Review visit, may be difficult to achieve unless additional staffing is provided. The first-come, first-served proposal support service strategy currently in place may not best support the CFAES faculty or strategic initiatives.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should work with college stakeholders to develop a proposal development and submission support prioritization methodology.** The prioritization methodology should take in to consideration the strategic research initiatives (e.g., those specific to the college as well as the Discovery Themes) and the needs of new and/or junior faculty among the criteria. The prioritization methodology should be discussed by appropriate college decision makers, be transparent to all, and be easily accessible on the CFAES website.

Collaboration has become essential to solving the most complex challenges, and external sponsors have responded by offering more large-scale research funding opportunities. Proposal development and submission for large-scale collaborative projects has become a specialty with many institutions offering personnel or offices dedicated to just this kind of proposal development work. It is clear that OSU recognized this opportunity and the corresponding challenge. OSU initiated the Discovery Themes, all of which cross disciplinary boundaries, and launched the complex proposal development unit within OSP. According site visit interviews, this unit has worked on 56 proposals in the past 15 months. Of those, 26 proposals have been submitted and 15 funded.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education and/or the GDSU Grants Administrator should evaluate the opportunities and challenges that may be associated with participating in OSU's central large-scale proposal service.** For what was described as a relatively small investment CFAES may be able to benefit from the expertise available through this central resource. In addition, participation may introduce new sponsors and award mechanisms to the CFAES and encourage new research collaborations across the university.

Grants.gov defines the post-award phase as implementing the grant, reporting progress, and completing the closeout requirements. Financial post-award administration generally encompasses activities such as assisting principal



investigators and departmental administrators with timely and compliant financial management of awards, including staffing, purchasing, inventory management, monthly financial reconciliation, reporting, sometimes billing, and accurate close-out.

The CFAES Finance Office was consolidated in 2015. Its grant oversight function was formed in 2016 in part as an outcome of an internal audit. Two existing positions were incorporated into the Finance Office as a “financial oversight division, with a focus on post-award financial monitoring.” A chief driver of this functionality was an observation that financial oversight was too decentralized within the CFAES.

As is typically the case, the NCURA Peer Review identified post-award duties distributed across multiple individuals and offices including Central OSU, GDSU, CFAES Finance Office, and the CFAES departments/units. Who does what in CFAES post-award varies to a large degree by individual and department/school. The briefing book described duties generally as follows:

GDSU	CFAES Finance Office	CFAES Departments/schools
Life-cycle analysis and informational support  Serves as liaison with OSP	Approves assignment of personnel  Monitors project budgets  Monitors and reviews expenditures  Monitor Burn rates  PET/DRD certifications  Monitor Cost Share	Manage & administer projects  Monitors financial activity  Reconciles fiscal reports Administers and implements project budgets  Identifies and resolves project overruns  Budget analysis and project projections  Assists PI with effort certification and personnel expenditure transfers  Prepares budget for close-out  Cost share and release time  Provides guidance on coop

		agreements, MOUs, collection agreements, etc.  Initiates travel and reimbursement requests  Procurement card activity  Reception and back/up Fiscal/HR activities
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During the NCURA Peer Review site visit, the post-award financial monitoring positions within the Finance Office seemed to be largely focused on desk audit functions that are important, but not typically the key focus of a sponsored programs post-award office. The finance oversight function was not meant to be a post award support unit. The number and type of comments from faculty and staff (to a lesser degree) about the level of faculty post-award administrative burden being unusually high at CFAES suggested that a change in approach would be appropriate to consider.

- Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education, in collaboration with the Senior Fiscal Officer, should consider a redefinition of central college and department/school post-award functions.** Primary roles and responsibilities should better align with common definition of post-award duties and standards of practices at other high research volume universities. More focus and effort should be placed on the actual acts of purchasing, staffing, travel, expense reconciliation, and other tasks that ultimately reduce PI administrative burden, ensure the appropriate oversight of sponsored funds, and support the successful conduct of the project. The current “desk audit” or “quality assurance” role played by the Finance Office may be worthwhile to maintain, but CFAES’ priority post-award investment should be toward reducing principal investigator administrative burden.

Increasingly, institutions are embracing a “shared services” model for the delivery of pre- and post-award sponsored research administration. Under a shared services operating model, pre- and post-award administration generally share the same reporting line. A shared services approach works to reduce research administrative burden through consistent and efficient processes and can maximize the beneficial use of information technology. A shared services approach often can provide an environment conducive to cross-training, career progression and succession planning, and seamless workflow. Examples of a shared services approach are provided below:

### Texas A&M University Sponsored Research Services (SRS)

- <https://srs.tamu.edu/>
- SRS Organization Chart: [https://srs.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads//2016/08/SRS\\_Org\\_Chart\\_08-30-2016.pdf](https://srs.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads//2016/08/SRS_Org_Chart_08-30-2016.pdf)

### Emory Research Administration Services

- <http://www.ras.emory.edu/>
- <http://www.ras.emory.edu/services/index.html>

### Yale Faculty Research Management

- <http://your.yale.edu/research-support/faculty-research-management-services>

### Berkeley Campus Shared Services—Research Administration

- <http://sharedservices.berkeley.edu/research-administration/>

### Colorado State University College of Agriculture Business Center (ABC)

- <http://abc.agsci.colostate.edu/>

The GDSU and Finance Office have separate reporting lines within the CFAES. GDSU reports to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education; the two positions partially assigned to “post-award financial monitoring” (CFAES definition) report to the Senior Fiscal Officer. In a shared services model, pre- and post-award research administration generally report to the same position.

- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should designate a group/committee to be tasked with evaluating various options for the organization of research administration pre-award and post-award services and support within the CFAES with the end goal of being the development a revised structure that will best provide effective administrative support for CFAES research.** The development of the organizational structure that will work best for CFAES will be a complex process which should include a review of the needs and current allocation of duties. While the development of this structure is beyond the scope of this review, models were provided above to assist in this process. No one organizational model for research administration fits all colleges but a shared services model for research administration is one approach worthy of consideration at the CFAES.
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Irrespective of organizational structure, review and revision of research administration position classifications and descriptions to align duties within the organizational structure will solidify roles and responsibilities and reinforce the organizational changes that have taken place over the last several months. During the on-site visit, it became apparent that individuals may have the same or very similar title, but disparate duties. One effect of this disparity may be varying levels of research administration services available to principal investigators. While the Peer Review Team did not conduct a salary analysis, it seems likely that salaries across similar duties may vary. There is opportunity to work more closely with college and departmental research administrators to develop a career progression and more evident succession pathways. Once completed, this effort will help CFAES to deal effectively with vacancies.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education, Finance Office, and Department Chairs should work together to review and update position descriptions for those serving in research administrative positions. The role of department-level fiscal officers and department administrators in general may be affected by the pre- and post-award organization structure determined. (See Recommendations above.)** Aligning key performance requirements across CFAES departments may serve to enhance recruitment and retention as well as provide a platform for succession planning. Comprehensive training plans, including training in communication and interpersonal skills, should align with job competency descriptions and be incorporated into annual performance and planning reviews. Salaries can be normalized across comparable roles and responsibilities through this effort.

#### IV. STANDARD for Research Administration Resources.

The unit has in place a process to identify changing resource needs for research administration as relates to changes in the research priorities and the external environment. Such resources encompass staffing, space, information technology, and financial resources to support the staff in carrying out their sponsor program functions.

As described above, as research has grown within CFAES, the research administration needs have been addressed in a variety of ways. Frequently, rather than a thoughtful consideration of how to meet the administrative needs of researchers, the PIs have simply become the individuals responsible for the administration of their research awards. Some departments and/or PIs have seen the need for additional assistance and have identified funding (or have joined with other department(s) to share

resources) so that a research administrator could be hired to provide research administration services.

Through discussions, the Reviewers were unable to identify any process in place for regular assessment to determine if the level of staffing and related needs for IT support, space, or equipment met the evolving needs of research infrastructure within CFAES. Part of the challenge in implementing an assessment such as this would be that there is currently no clear structure for the administrative support of research. It currently appears that there is no defined planning process for determining how to best meet the administrative needs of research within CFAES. The current model seems to be that if the researcher or his/her department cannot identify funding to support a research administrator, the PI will handle all of the local administrative tasks related to their research. GDSU has been a very positive addition but has not been staffed to meet the needs of CFAES researchers and is resulting in numerous researchers reported being turned away for support due to lack of available staffing within GDSU.

Overall, the level of pre- and post-award support for researchers is significantly less than is normally seen at similar organizations. With the Discovery Themes and high level of effort to recruit additional faculty, CFAES should be aware that researchers new to CFAES (especially those who have come from other research institutions) may express surprise and frustration at the lack of administrative support for research. This could potentially create a challenge in retaining researchers. In addition, not having the appropriate infrastructure to support research, including staff with knowledge of federal/sponsor regulations, creates a high level of risk for the organization.

- **Recommendation: CFAES leadership should conduct a comprehensive assessment of the administrative resources needed to support the research administration infrastructure currently within the college.** This includes identifying the needs related to staffing, space, information technology, and equipment. Regular assessments (approximately annually) should occur to (1) review whether the levels meet the current infrastructural needs to support the current volume and complexity of research and (2) develop/refine the plan to address any gaps in resources.

## Institutional Communications

### V. STANDARD for Institutional Communications.

The unit recognizes the importance of establishing mechanisms for timely, regular communication with key stakeholders regarding sponsored programs trends and activity levels, policies and
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procedures, expectations, roles and responsibilities, changes in policies, and risk areas. Appropriate lines of communication exist between the unit research administrator and the institution's overall senior leadership team. The institution has defined mechanisms that make available information about research activities and successes to the public.

Research administration provides regular communication to the unit's faculty and staff as well as opportunities to provide feedback. The unit provides clear guidance to current institutional and central policies and procedures. Strong communications exist between unit-level staff and central offices.

Research administration periodically assesses the effectiveness of their communication practices.

There has been an understandable reluctance to make too many changes with interim administrators in key positions, but the need for improved communication throughout the college can, and should, be tackled as soon as possible. Better and more clearly defined paths of communication can help transitions at central administrative levels go much more smoothly. A good communications plan has the potential to break down the biggest silo in the college—the two campuses. There are many times that it appears there is little or no connection between the campuses. When faculty with research appointments are referenced as OARDC-faculty, when the “research” tab on the CFAES web page links to the OARDC home page (as if research only occurs there), when there is no clear explanation of differences in the F&A policies, it gives the impression that the two campuses are in competition and are two separate entities.

- **Recommendation: A Task Force convened by the VP and Dean should evaluate the merits of continued use of the OARDC label.** It appears that the continued use of the name is causing friction between the campuses and will continue to make it difficult for the two campuses to view themselves as vital and essential parts of the college. The Task Force should solicit input from stakeholders to develop a “one college/two campuses” approach to help unite the campuses.

A carefully devised and effectively implemented communication strategy is vital to the efficient operation of an organization. Absent routine and predictable communication to faculty and staff about policies, procedures and standard operating procedures (SOPs) surrounding research and research administration, the void is likely to be filled with misinformation, incomplete information, or misinterpreted information. It is especially important in a college such as CFAES, which has separated campuses, that the lines of communication be open so that important information can be easily and appropriately disseminated.

A variety of communications methods are utilized throughout the CFAES with varying degrees of success. Administration and staff may use email, telephone, face-to-face meetings, or video conferencing to reach faculty on the Columbus and Wooster campuses.

- **Notable Practice: CFAES has excellent videoconferencing capabilities on both campuses, in some areas from desk to desk.** This capability makes it possible for groups of staff and faculty to gather on both campuses and exchange information on a regular basis.

As with many institutions, email is frequently used as an easy communication method but because so many emails are received in the course of a day, it is not surprising to hear that many faculty routinely delete emails (particularly those without subject lines) from administrative offices without reading them. The same holds true for receipt of newsletters via listservs. Although the information in the newsletter is likely to be useful to individual faculty members, they are unlikely to open the email. Some indicated there was too much information and it was too time consuming to get through it. A case in point—when GDSU announced it had rescinded its policy of charging for services, the announcement was made to CFAES faculty via the newsletter and to departments heads in the summer. Yet at the time of the site visit, almost six months later, the Reviewers found that a significant number of faculty and staff were unaware of the change giving rise to the notion that a more effective communications strategy should be developed.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should charge a working group with developing a more robust research communication plan for CFAES.** CFAES should take advantage of the expertise that is available in the Department of Agricultural Communication, Education and Leadership to assist in developing the communication plans. A modernized plan should utilize a variety of formats and appropriate delivery methods.

YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and other social media are being used more frequently by research administration offices to relay information to stakeholders. Examples from the University of Texas-Arlington, University of Texas-Dallas, American University and University of California-Irvine can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/utaresearch/>

[@UTDResearch](#)

[@AU\\_OSP](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgLNHs7QkW2BPBCbzHQu84w>

CFAES has a well-organized and presented web page that includes information about research projects and extension efforts in the college, highlighting faculty and students, and providing links to other offices around the university that faculty and staff are likely to need. The site is easy to navigate and appears to be in a format dictated by the university's Communications group.



The GDSU web page provides information regarding its services and resources. There does not appear to be a link from the GDSU web site to the university's Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) web page, which would be useful for researchers and research administrators. The site describes the services available through GDSU and some special programs the office oversees (SEEDS and DC Days), but does not provide physical locations for its offices in Columbus or Wooster. Minor oversights such as this are easily remedied and project the image to CFAES that these offices are open and available to faculty and staff on both campuses.

There are a variety of administrative meetings during which information is presented, but they are often scheduled too far apart to make them useful as a way to effectively communicate information. The vice president and dean's administrative team meets quarterly with academic unit chairs/deans but research items are not always on the agenda. The associate dean for research and graduate education holds ad hoc meetings with chairs and faculty to discuss items including research performance and goals as well as research policy, but there is no set schedule for when these meetings occur. In addition, it is unclear that information filters down in any systematic way to the staff and faculty who really need it. There are other occasional meetings scheduled but not on a regular basis. There was a large variability in both researchers and administrators understanding of the rules related to the administration of sponsored programs. This creates a risk for the college and the overall institution. Having a multi-faceted solid communication plan is critical to maintaining an environment at an appropriate level of compliance risk.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should convene a working group to establish appropriate groups (or realign existing ones) to meet and then set regular meeting schedules.** Not only can these meetings be used to relay pertinent research administration information but they can also be forums to discuss best practices or work through problems encountered by members of the group (for example, the post-award group might want to include time to discuss accurate reporting of cost share). These regularly scheduled meetings can also be settings for discussing policy revisions or additions or sponsor-specific related issues.

Several new faculty expressed concerns about the lack of “on-boarding” and the fact they often learned how to do something by first doing it wrong. GDSU sees the need to provide information to new researchers and research administrators, but reported it was difficult to know who was new to CFAES.

- **Recommendation: GDSU should work with the CFAES Human Resources group to develop a standardize procedure to receive regular notification of new research hires (faculty or staff).**
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As CFAES continues to grow its research faculty and staff it is important to provide those individuals with the information they will need on how the research enterprise works. It is not unusual for individuals who have worked at other research institutions to assume that they all work in essentially the same way. It is frustrating for new faculty and staff to try to find their way through a new system without assistance.

- **Recommendation: GDSU should develop an introductory briefing regarding research and research administration with information suitable for new research faculty and staff in CFAES.** These briefings can be done individually, in person, offered as on-demand videos, or scheduled on a regular basis (quarterly or early in each semester, for example).

There seem to be numerous points in the college at which communications break down. Although administrators often spoke of their concerns about silos in the college, there does not seem to be an effort to move away from them. The college reorganization which included the centralization of some services (HR, IT and Finance) began about two years ago but numerous groups are unclear about what the reorganization hopes to accomplish and where responsibility for functions now resides.

The grants oversight now being provided by the CFAES Finance Office is poorly understood (and perhaps misnamed) and was not rolled out well. In more than one meeting with faculty, the Review Team heard frustration about not knowing who to go to for help and the inconsistent communication from OSP; they reported it was hard to know when rules changed and how those changes would impact researchers. The confusion expressed was related to both the inconsistency of post award service received from the departments and the grant oversight function of the Finance Office.

- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should charge a Task Force (which should include the CFAES Director of Communications and a faculty member from Agricultural Communication, Education and Leadership) to create and implement a comprehensive college communication plan developed in alignment with the Roles and Responsibilities Matrices noted in Standard II (Standard for Research Administration Organization).** The OSP web site is well organized and contains a great deal of information, yet many faculty do not seem to know about it. Because researchers in the college are more likely to search the CFAES web site for information, the GDSU web pages are likely to be the first place CFAES faculty and research administrators look.
- **Recommendation: GDSU should develop a series of “how to” fact sheets.** These bulleted lists of information on tasks such as the steps for submitting a proposal, or a “who to contact” list posted on its web page will assist researchers

and research administration staff. The information should not be lengthy and should be kept updated.

An example of a contact list can be found at:

<https://research.okstate.edu/sites/default/files/pictures/publications/whotocontact.pdf>

## Research Administration Policy Development

### VI. STANDARD for Research Administration Policy Development.

The unit works with institutional and central administration to interpret and apply institution and central policy; for those policies not proscribed externally (such as by specific federal regulation). There is a clear understanding and approach for policy clarification, policy ownership, and the associated approval process.

Unit-level research administration has developed appropriate relationships and communications to align their unit's policies and practices to those of the central operations.

There appears to be little direction provided for how policies and procedures should be developed or how those policies should be vetted by appropriate groups within CFAES. The lack of clear policy is leading to confusion and frustration about processes and lines of authority within the college. It is probably also contributing to the miscommunication regarding issues such as appropriate F&A rates, F&A waivers, recovery and distribution.

The distributed model at OSU has the advantage of allowing colleges to develop policies and procedures that may be a better “local” fit, but it becomes even more important for the college to be proactive in developing policies as necessary. College policies should be in alignment with any overarching university policies as well. CFAES administration has recognized that gaps exist in policies and is working to close them.

- **Notable Practice:** CFAES has recently created a new position, **Senior Administrative Officer**, which has responsibility for identifying where policy gaps exist and then convening ad hoc groups to assist in developing appropriate policies and standard operating procedures.

Several administrators pointed to the lack of policies and clearly articulated decision making processes in CFAES as a concern. The Pattern of Administration is generally regarded as a guiding document for the college, but it is in need of major revisions that are unlikely to be made until a permanent VP and Dean has been named. In the interim, however, it is still possible to identify where there are critical operational policy needs and to begin work on them.

While the Pattern of Administration indicates that the vice president's executive group has responsibility for policy development, it fails to provide any additional guidance on how policies should be developed, who should review and comment on proposed draft policies, or how final approval should be granted. Properly developed and communicated policies can result in more consistent operations and in dealing with a variety of research sponsors. For example, in several interviews there were concerns voiced about the application of F&A rates and its distribution. This may be due in part to a lack of adequate training, which will be discussed later, as well as inconsistent communication. However, until there is a strong F&A policy developed and consistently applied, improvements in training and communication will not improve the situation. In addition, the inconsistency on how various costs (plot space, greenhouse space, parking, etc.) are charged between campuses creates confusion and some frustration. While a couple of individuals interviewed were able to describe why they believed the differences existed, which may or may not have been correct, most just expressed frustration about being treated differently. How these costs are charged varies at Agricultural Colleges across the country. The development of a cost structure is a complex process beyond the scope of this review. The strategy needs to be developed with consideration to institutional costing policies, federal guidelines, and an understanding the college's culture. Contacting OSU's Central Finance Office for assistance with the development or for guidance on a recommended external source would be best qualified to assist in this project are recommended options.

- **Recommendation: The Senior Administrative Officer should form the appropriate working groups and begin to identify CFAES policy needs in areas impacting research administration.** An F&A policy is among the first that should be developed. The inconsistent stance on F&A and other costs, particularly between the two campuses, has been cited in this report in several standards. A well-written F&A policy and well-communicated message regarding why the costs are charged as they are could help to build a stronger relationship between the Columbus and Wooster campuses. Costing should be based upon the guidance provided in 2 CFR 200, in program solicitations, and the costing practices as outlined by University policy.

A good resource regarding policy development is available at:

<https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/policy/>

Sample documents regarding F&A are available at:

<https://cga.msu.edu/PL/Portal/DocumentViewer.aspx?cga=aQBkAD0AMQA2ADUA>

<http://www.research.psu.edu/sites/default/files/FAFAQ.pdf>

<https://www.purdue.edu/business/sps/post-award/bs/accountmgmt/fahome.html>

Policies in research administration frequently cross “jurisdictional” lines (research, human resources, business and finance, academic affairs). It is important that as policies are developed, individuals from across the college have the opportunity to review and comment on drafts to avoid unanticipated consequences of policy impacts.

- **Recommendation: CFAES should consider developing a portal that will allow faculty and staff to comment on policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).** This will not only empower impacted constituencies and improve communication, but will alert policy makers to unanticipated impacts.

A sample input site can be found at:

<http://ras.emory.edu/>

A review of the CFAES web site failed to locate any college compilation of policies impacting research administration in effect in the college or linking to university-wide policies. Policies should be presented using a standardized format that includes initial development or revision dates. They should be in an easy to find location on the website.

- **Recommendation: GDSU should identify the policies and procedures impacting research and research administration at the university and college levels.** The GDSU web page should provide links to those policies.

At the time a policy is released or revised, there should be a consistent method of communicating with stakeholders by using a standardized distribution list which should be developed as part of the communications plan. Unless there is a situation that demands quick action in developing and implementing a policy or policy revision, policy effective dates should take into consideration the time it will take to make necessary changes for implementation. Advance notification of policy implementation plans and the participation of stakeholders should allow for smooth policy implementation across the college.

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## Program of Education about Sponsored Programs

### VII. STANDARD for the Program of Education about Sponsored Programs.

The unit research administration staff take advantage of educational and training programs offered within the institution regarding institutional and sponsor expectations for the conduct of sponsored programs and research. Unit research administrators participate in institutional networking opportunities where such exist.

Unit research administration recognize the importance of introducing faculty, staff, administrators, students and postdocs new to the unit to appropriate research resources and information. Mechanisms are in place to identify such individuals.

It is vital that anyone who will be participating in sponsored projects, as a PI or research administrator, be aware of and understand the complex regulatory environment in which they will work. This ongoing need to receive education in areas ranging from responsible conduct of research to research administration topics, such as budget preparation, is critical to the efficient and compliant operation of the research enterprise across CFAES.

There appears to be inconsistency among CFAES departments in grants and contracts knowledge. Some departments have specialists assigned to do research administration; others may be human resources or fiscal specialists who handle post-award research administration as an additional duty. In some cases, staff may be offering advice in areas in which they are not adequately trained. Although members of the staff try to take advantage of the training opportunities available, it is difficult for them to work into their already busy schedules.

The Briefing Manual provides examples of participation in external training and outlines a representative level of internal training offered at the institutional and college level. GDSU provides monthly training opportunities to faculty, staff and students on various grants management topics and partners with other colleges to offer training and encourage attendance by CFAES employees.

- **Recommendation: New research administrators should be required to complete, or provide evidence of having received, adequate on-going education about research administration issues.** OSP offers training for new research administrators, but attendance is not mandatory and site visit participants described sporadic attendance.

It was clear in conversations the Review Team had with various members of the staff that the level of understanding on changes brought about by Uniform Guidance appears to be inconsistent across the college. OSP has a continuing series of training opportunities available, but it is difficult to find information about it. As discussed earlier in this report, the lack of an “on-boarding” strategy for new researchers and research administrators and the ability to consistently identify individuals new to CFAES has made it difficult to provide appropriate information and training for them. Development of a plan to identify those individuals as soon as they arrive at CFAES will make it easier to provide them with the information they need to successfully navigate the OSU and CFAES systems. It will also allow them to select appropriate training opportunities.

An online training and tracking system, Buckeye Learn, provides a number of training opportunities for researchers, particularly in research compliance areas. For someone not part of the university, the system seems to be challenging to locate. It is likely it is equally difficult for someone new to the university to find (or know about) as well. Information about the system should be included in the on-boarding document suggested earlier in this report.

Over the past few years, GDSU, as well as the Office of Research and the OSU Libraries, has been offering workshops, class presentations, and a series of faculty luncheons on topics ranging from SEEDS to finding funding and contract management. More recently, staff members from the CFAES Finance Office have begun teaming with GDSU to provide more in-depth training in areas such as contract management. There have been overview presentations on the ePA005, but only a basic level session on using the PI Portal. The Review Team heard complaints from a number of researchers that they did not really know how to correctly complete the ePA005 or to use the PI Portal effectively. Many of those same faculty felt they did not need to spend a great deal of time learning how to find funding. Staff who have conducted training reported that often it was not faculty who attended the training intended for them, but instead post-docs or graduate students sent by the faculty.

- **Recommendation: To better align the training opportunities it provides, GDSU should survey CFAES faculty and research administrators about their training needs and preferred methods of delivery.**
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- **Recommendation:** GDSU should begin to compile information about existing training opportunities, develop new training, and present that information on its web page including appropriate links to registration or training sites.

As with discovering better methods of communication, CFAES has built-in education experts in the Department of Agricultural Communication, Education and Leadership who can assist in developing appropriate training modules.

Delivering training and educational programs does not have to happen face-to-face or in long, online sessions. There are a number of topics that can be explained using either short, online explanations, through FAQs or via the use of You-Tube type short videos. An excellent set of training documents is available at:

<https://doresearch.stanford.edu/research-administration>

<https://doresearch.stanford.edu/training/certificate-program/cardinal-curriculum-level-1-dor-prog-1001>

## Assessment and Institutional Preparedness

### VIII. STANDARD for Risk Assessment.

The unit research administrators periodically assesses risk tolerance of research activities and emerging risk areas. The unit periodically participates in reviewing their practices against sponsored program policies and performs appropriate audit and assessment activities. There is an expectation for a regular and thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the unit's research administration operation. The unit has mechanisms to monitor the national landscape for emerging areas of risk that may emerge within that unit's research activities.

The OSU University Policies website provides access to university-wide policies and rules. Individual units may maintain additional policies applying to that unit, so long as they are not in conflict with university-wide policies. The University Policies website directs "all individuals to identify and familiarize themselves with all applicable university and unit policies."

- **Notable Practice:** The university has a policy website that provides easy access to university-wide policies and rules.

According to the OSU Business and Financial Services, "One of the strategic goals for The Ohio State University is to become the model for an affordable public university



recognized for financial sustainability, unsurpassed management of human and physical resources, and operational efficiency and effectiveness.” The University Internal Controls Policy #1.11 describes the university as operating in a decentralized internal control environment. The Dean or Vice President of each college or support unit is responsible for the financial operations, budget, internal controls and monitoring activities of their area. Internal controls are defined as the “mechanisms that reduce the probability of errors and inappropriate transactions and formally establish accountability.”

The Department of Internal Audit at OSU conducts periodic reviews of college operations including internal controls and sponsored research administration on a three-year cycle. It looks at central processes on a five-year schedule. The Department of Internal Audit conducted a review of CFAES in 2015. The objectives of the 2015 internal audit were to:

- Assess the effectiveness of risk management, internal control, and governance relative to the selected research activities.
- Assess compliance with university policies, procedures and applicable laws and regulations relative to the selected research activities.

The 2015 CFAES Audit Results commented on human subjects, personnel expenditure transfers, cost share, research conflict of interest, research equipment, research travel and expenditures, and research governance and administration. In the on-site discussion with Internal Audit representatives, additional concerns were mentioned regarding the amount of control focused on the principal investigator and the level of decentralization within CFAES.

- **Notable Practice: There is periodic review of CFAES sponsored programs policies and procedures that may take the form of internal controls.**

According to University Internal Controls Policy #1.11, each operating unit is required to develop and maintain an Internal Control Structure document that has been formally approved by the appropriate dean or vice president and distributed to all employees within the unit who have responsibility for financial related functions or processes. The CFAES Briefing Book background materials provided to the Reviewers did not provide this document; nor was it referred to during the site visit. Given the level of responsibility delegated to the dean or vice president, a thorough awareness of the CFAES Internal Controls Structure policy document, and shared understandings about how controls are performed, seems critical to effective oversight.

- **Recommendation: The CFAES Finance Officer should communicate the Internal Controls Structure to CFAES stakeholders and establish it as an essential element to the daily business operations of the CFAES.**
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**Translating the CFAES internal controls structure document into SOPs**

**(See Standard VI) may be helpful in this regard.** The Internal Controls

Structure document should be a ready reference point for administrators, well-known and easily accessible.

The 2015 Internal Audit mentioned that there were “no formal guidelines or expectations that help ensure the departments understand the types of monitoring practices that should be in place.” The CFAES Finance Office increased fiscal monitoring and oversight as an outcome of the 2015 Internal Audit. Two employees were assigned to financial oversight of post-award activities. Their main focus is on:

- monitoring post-award financial activities (burn-rate, cost share progress);
- performing routine compliance reviews, including pay/supplemental compensation charged to grants;
- verifying Level of Effort (LOE) on certain employees;
- reviewing Off Duty Pay Requests (ODP) charged to grants; and
- ensuring timely approval of effort certification documents and related documents.

They are also responsible for conducting training, increasing consistency in financial knowledge/processes across all CFAES departments, and providing general financial support. The majority of these activities generally aligned more with post-transaction desk audits than they do with typical post-award research administration support.

Standard III of this report includes recommendations regarding post-award duties and structure.

Post-transaction desk audits are more typically handled by comparable institutions as an “additional duty as assigned” in response to an identified area of vulnerability. The post-transaction desk audit approach, currently the focus of the Finance Office “post-award” team (See Standard III), is less effective because the CFAES internal controls structure document is not well publicized or easily accessible.

- **Recommendation: The CFAES Finance Office should develop and implement a process to systematically monitor internal controls, (distinct from the post-award activities described in Standard III), including their application to sponsored research administration.** This may take the form of desk audits focused on after-the-fact transactions or adherence to work processes. The topical focus of the desk audits should be determined by college leadership, informed by internal audit, OSP and department administrative staff, and based largely on identified high risk areas.

The combination of Internal Audit reviews and CFAES Finance Office internal control monitoring activities gives visibility to CFAES risk areas, especially with respect to

financial oversight. It does not, however, constitute an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the sponsored programs operation

Many universities prescribe a schedule for assessment of administrative units. Similar to academic unit reviews, administrative assessments may be prescribed on a 3-5 year schedule. Inputs may include faculty and staff surveys, analysis of productivity and satisfaction metrics, progress toward strategic objectives, and comparison to peers, as examples. An ad hoc committee is sometimes formed to conduct the assessment under the direction of an executive team sponsor.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should establish a process to periodically review the effectiveness of the sponsored research operation.** An important function of the initial assessment team may be to evaluate outcomes from the NCURA Peer Review process

The Federal Government established requirements for audits of States, local governments, and Indian tribal governments that administer Federal financial assistance Programs. The Office of Management and Budgets (OMB) Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200; Subpart F) provides the current guidelines for Single Audits. (These were formerly provided by OMB Circular A133.) A non-Federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single audit conducted for that year in accordance with the provisions of this OMB Circular. The Single Audit provides the Federal government with assurance that recipients of federal funds are in compliance with federal guidelines and fiscal regulations by having an independent external source (auditing firm) review/report on such compliance. NCURA Peer Review of CFAES did not include in depth consideration of the OSU's single audit and/or other audit initiatives where appropriate. However, it was noted during the site visit that there was a positive relationship between OSP, Internal Audit, and CFAES staff and a spirit of working together toward OSU's and CFAES' requirements and stewardship goals. Ongoing communication about the single audit process is good for the institution and helps raise sensitivities to areas of potential vulnerability and error. Consequently, many institutions communicate from central offices to the colleges including information such as when the audit is going to begin, anticipated areas of review, areas of potential concern and/or emphasis, ways to successfully prepare for an audit, contacts that the colleges might have throughout the process, preliminary and final findings, and action items. Such communication can both benefit the audit process and serve to educate faculty and staff who work with sponsored research administration.

- **Recommendation: The Senior Fiscal Officer in collaboration with the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator should discuss with OSP and other pertinent offices how they can best be involved in, or learn from audit**
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**outcomes of, the Single Audit and/or other audit initiatives.** The primary outcomes of this activity will be to most accurately reflect the institution and college practices and to provide exposure to faculty and staff of audit topics/outcomes that leads to the continuous improvement of sponsored research administration. A typical communication path for this type of interaction would be from the university's central OSP to CFAES Finance Office as currently structured, and then coordinated and shared with departmental administration. The CFAES executive team and department/unit chairs should receive at least an annual high-level briefing on the single audit and other institutional audit initiatives. It may be appropriate to provide a targeted debriefing to faculty as well.

Sponsored research administration is an ever-evolving operational area with frequent changes in funding opportunities, sponsor requirements, and compliance considerations. Active monitoring of the external environment, then interpreting and applying it to the CFAES environment, is an important aspect of research administration management. OSP has a central responsibility in this regard. However, Review Team briefing materials and interviews seemed to indicate a trend of assigning significant responsibility to the colleges to manage the discovery and dissemination of pre- and post-award information. For example, there was general understanding that the Uniform Guidelines brought certain changes to research administration, but specific consistent interpretation, application, and communication had not yet been accomplished. Faculty acknowledged that funding opportunities were being shared, but were not necessarily well targeted to their interests and funding needs. Increased responsibility for Conflict of Interest (COI) monitoring and Responsible Conduct of Research (RC) training is another example.

Increased responsibility has staffing and expenditure implications for the CFAES. To really stay abreast of relevant changes in sponsor requirements, trends in audit and compliance, and risk areas at the national level, specific responsibilities should be assigned in position description(s), funding and time made available to employees to attend national professional meetings and trainings, and systems in place to provide internal training, report trends and opportunities to the CFAES community, and update policies and procedures. These responsibilities will likely be distributed across more than one position. For example, new funding opportunities and compliance trends might be the responsibility of the Grants and Contracts administrative staff. Communication and training might be the responsibility of an individual assigned specifically to communication and outreach (e.g., new position to CFAES). Maintaining updated policies and procedures might be the responsibility of the Finance Officer. However organized, individual employees with these assigned responsibilities should confer regularly.

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- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should request that the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator, working in conjunction with the Senior Fiscal Officer, articulate specific responsibilities for monitoring sponsor requirements, external trends in audit and compliance, and risk areas.** Assigned responsibilities should be articulated in position descriptions and individual performance assessed on an annual basis. The individual(s) assigned these responsibilities should be readily identifiable by CFAES department administration, faculty and staff and thus easily accessible by various means of communication. The coordination between these efforts; faculty, staff and student participation level; and satisfaction surveys should be recorded and reviewed on a regular basis.

Like many other colleges of agricultural sciences, extension and experiment stations across the country, CFAES both leases its own space to outside entities (example, USDA-ARS collaborative research), and leases non-OSU space for their own internal research activities. The availability of space for research activities was mentioned throughout the site visit as a growing area of concern. The University Planning and Real Estate Office (PARE) is responsible for all real estate transactions, physical and space planning developments, and facilities related information. OSU's institutional procedures for the periodic assessment of research activities performed under leased space, its impact on F&A, compliance considerations, and other risks were beyond the scope of the CFAES Peer Review. However, it does seem clear that there is opportunity to derive both financial and research collaborative benefit from the external use and/or lease of CFAES space. There also is risk associated with a lack of easy access to space information (or perhaps understanding of the university property related information systems), oversight of compliance and risk factors, and potentially improper treatment of costs.

- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should articulate and assign specific responsibilities for property and physical inventory within the college. This individual may reside within the CFAES Finance Office and will be the primary liaison between CFAES and PARE.** The individual will be responsible for inventory control, internal/external lease agreements, identification of costing issues (F&A implications, cost assignment and recovery, etc.), development of relevant CFAES procedures, and communication to CFAES on related matters. The near-term commissioning of new BSL-3 space may raise new considerations that should be addressed in a transparent manner. Space assignment, use, cost recovery and compliance recovery should be determined and communicated through written CFAES policies/procedures.
  - **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should consider creating a standing college Research and Outreach Space Committee. The Space Committee**
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**could advise CFAES leadership on policies, procedures, and assignment/use of CFAES space.** The Space Committee could draft a 5-year strategic plan for space development, management and control for consideration by the dean and vice president. This plan could help inform the CFAES strategic planning process.

The efforts of a property “manager” within the college, and a Research and Outreach Space Committee should complement rather than supplant responsibilities of the department chairs or directors.

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## IX. STANDARD for Institutional Preparedness for Research Disasters or Media Exposure.

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The institution has a disaster recovery and emergency preparedness plan. The unit is cognizant of that plan and specific research activities that are impacted by disasters. The unit periodically assesses its preparedness for disasters and ensures that appropriate areas are informed and research activities are covered. As appropriate to the breadth of research activity, the unit has a written and communicated media-response plan or is cognizant of the institution’s plans that cover the unit’s activities.

The OSU Department of Public Safety provides emergency management planning and other public safety services to “create a safe and secure environment for university students, faculty, and staff.” OSU Emergency Management provides “preparedness planning, training and exercises, incident management and coordination, emergency warnings and public information, policy formulation, and resource allocation and prioritization before, during, and after disasters and incidents” on the OSU campuses. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) “assists the university community in providing and maintaining a safe, healthful work environment for students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors.” The EHS mission also acknowledges a responsibility to protect the local community and environment from potential hazards generated by university activities.

- **Notable Practice:** The OSU Department of Public Safety has a **Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)** that defines disaster recovery and emergency procedures for dealing with catastrophic events. The CEMP includes protocols related to biohazard incidents, chemical releases, radioactive materials releases, and management of animals used in teaching and research. Roles and responsibilities are assigned.
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- **Notable Practice:** Safety and emergency management is viewed as being the responsibility on all members of the campus community, not just the responsibility of EHS.
- **Notable Practice:** EHS conducts inspections, accident investigations, and training. It also assists in developing safety protocols and programs.

The CFAES Crisis Communication Plan “provides procedures for notifying appropriate personnel in the event of a crisis, emergency or disaster situation and outlines policies to determine messages for internal and external audiences.” The plan includes protocols for dealing with the media, including social media. It identifies audiences, including faculty and staff, and assigns communication roles and responsibilities. The plan distinguishes between a “crisis” and an “emergency” and contains a number of useful appendix items.

The CFAES Crisis Communication Plan was last updated in 2016.

The Briefing Book identified a specific issue/weakness that “sponsored research activities” were not acknowledged or addressed in the CFAES Communication Plan. The examples of emergencies specifically called out in the 2016 Crisis Communication Plan are fire, flooding, violent crime, fatality, and building evaluations. Appendix F, which provides a table of Priorities of key Objectives, by Crisis, does not include content specific to sponsored research activity.

- **Recommendation:** The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should charge College Communications, in collaboration with the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator and Finance Office, to draft content for the CFAES Crisis Communication Plan specific to sponsored research activity. Advice on content should be solicited from other central OSU regulatory offices. Significant audit disallowance, misconduct in sciences, BSL-3 events, data protection and recovery, animal care and use, and human subjects may be among the content areas. Appendix F of the CFAES Crisis Communication Plan should be expanded to include Priorities of Key Objectives, By Crisis specific to sponsored research risks. Generic Holding Statements and Talking Points (Appendix G) should be expanded to incorporate sponsored research risks.

CFAES has considerable experience with emergencies related to natural disasters as a result of the tornado that devastated the Wooster campus on September 16, 2010. This experience helped to solidify emergency management and communications procedures currently in place. There may be opportunity to more fully develop strategies around technological and/or man-made incidents or disasters. For example, some concerns were expressed about the CFAES Enterprise backup process during the on-site

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interviews. Technology-related incidents may be an area to develop more fully within CFAES' emergency and communication planning.

- **Recommendation:** The VP and Dean should charge the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator to work in concert with the Finance Office to conduct a Business Continuity Plan exercise specifically tailored around scenarios that disrupt externally funded sponsored research.
- **Recommendation:** The VP and Dean should charge the CFAES Chief Information Officer to work in concert with the GDSU and Finance Office to conduct a Business Continuity exercise specifically tailored around scenarios involving loss of research data or disruption of access to research data.

Lessons learned from these exercises should be used to enhance the Business Continuity Plan to identify and develop needed policies/procedures if gaps are determined.

- **Recommendation:** The Crisis Communication Plan should incorporate planning for regular communication to/from the regulatory oversight committees (such as use of animals or humans). The significant number of research and agricultural animals used by CFAES, and the fairly common mention of human subjects research during the on-site interviews, suggest that more information on these topics should be included in the Crisis Community and Business Continuity Plans.

## Information Management

### X. STANDARD for Information Systems Supporting Research Administration.

The institution has in place appropriate information systems for research administration and sponsored programs and has processes that integrate proposals, awards, financial management, and compliance reviews. Unit research administration utilizes the institutional systems or has in place unit-specific systems that interface with the institutional systems. The unit periodically assesses research administration technology needs and ensures all appropriate research administration staff attend appropriate training courses, seminars, and lectures in order to be proficient in the use of institutional systems.

OSU has Cayuse available for the development of proposals. Both researchers and administrators within CFAES use this tool in the proposal development process.



Feedback on Cayuse was positive. PIs are required to submit an ePA005 – ePA005 is an electronic form with workflow built in which acts as a routing system for proposals. It is a very basic, homegrown system/form which includes information similar to a 424 cover sheet. Much frustration was expressed regarding this form (required by OSP). The frustration could likely be reduced with trained administrative staff completing the form rather than PIs. GDSU is able to assist with the completion of these upon request but is not staffed to assist all researchers. PeopleSoft is utilized for the financial grants management of awards received. The PI Portal is used for the management of awards. These are discussed further in the sections below.

When asked about representation from CFAES on the development of Workday, one person was identified from CFAES as participating on a related committee. One of the staff reporting to the Senior Fiscal Officer participates on this team. Researchers and other administrators reported not having the opportunity to provide feedback regarding this development.

- **Recommendation: The CFAES committee representative on the development of Workday Project should communicate progress to the broader CFAES community and should gather information from the community regarding their needs.** This broader communication will help to fully represent the interests of CFAES.

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## XI. STANDARD for Institutional Management of Research Administration Data.

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Accurate and accessible data on sponsored programs activity and management is maintained and protected and the data covers areas of sponsored projects activity that relate to efficiency and research management metrics. Trends in activity over time is tracked and appropriately reported. Policies and processes are in place for data security and data related to any classified research. As appropriate to the unit, research administrative data also includes clinical trials, clinical research, and other externally sponsored activities.
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CFAES has not defined expectations for collecting research administration metrics. When asked about review of these metrics, it was noted that this is usually done on an annual basis.

The college is able to pull a variety of metrics regarding awards, proposals, expenditures, and other areas from the system. While this could be done monthly, it was reported that it is generally done annually and that monthly metrics are not generally evaluated within CFAES. Annually, a very limited review of metrics is

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conducted. Processing times and workload related metrics are not utilized. The researchers and administrators who met with the Review Team noted that they do not review monthly metric reports (regarding turn-around times, trends in funding, volume of proposals, etc.).

CFAES is not fully taking advantage of the data resources and tools currently available to them. Metrics can be a very useful tool providing information regarding areas of concern and areas of progress that can greatly assist in making managerial and strategic decisions. They can identify trends and provide a tool for motivating and rewarding staff (and improving staff performance).

- **Recommendation: The College Research Administrative Council (to be formed, see Standard II) should charge a Task Force to evaluate the information currently available and what metrics could assist CFAES in identifying trends, concerns, and progress allowing them to be in a stronger position for making business decisions and directing efforts.** NCURA has a webinar available with additional information on developing a metrics structure for research administration which may provide some assistance in this process. NCURA and other organizations offer additional resources.

The systems/processes to handle confidential data are managed at the institutional level. Some researchers reported confusion regarding the systems in place, the reasons for them, and frustration with the required training not operating correctly. There appears to be a lack of communication from the OSU Office of the Chief Information Officer in this area.

- **Recommendation: CFAES Finance office should communicate systems issues impacting PIs to the OSU Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).** In particular, the difficulty by PIs to approve subcontract invoices has created frustration. (New software requirements have resulted in them not being able to access or approve subcontract invoices.) Ongoing dialogue between the Fiscal Office and CIT will continue to address specific areas of confusion.

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## XII. STANDARD for Research Administration Data Accessible to Constituents.

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Unit research administration data can be manipulated to respond to internal and external constituent needs. Data and reports are presented in a manner that is easily understood by faculty, department and/or school administration, and other key stakeholders.
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Information regarding awards and financial data is accessible from eReports. eTools is available for OSU staff and faculty to pull information from PeopleSoft. Those familiar with and utilizing eTools said that the information is accurate and timely.

A PI Portal is a home grown system that pulls information from PeopleSoft to provide an overview of the current financial state of the sponsored projects. This Portal is provided by OSU Central Administration. The feedback on this Portal is very mixed with most of the feedback received being negative. Most PIs expressed a very high level of frustration with the PI Portal and noted that it does not seem like it was developed to meet the needs of a PI. The issues/concerns related to this system that were most frequently noted included:

- Lack of ability to identify “how much is available to be spent”
- Errors and/or inconsistencies in how salary is encumbered
- Expenses taking 3-4 weeks to be reflected in the portal
- Lack of understanding regarding how to read the portal
- Inability to understand or reconcile to what is reported in the portal

It was noted that at the OSP Central Office held a session for PIs to provide input on the PI Portal but only three PIs attended the meeting.

In addition, many administrators expressed similar frustration and have developed shadow systems and other methods to obtain information about the financial status of their projects. When questioned as to how the award is managed during the life of the award, most responded that they rely on the shadow systems set up (in Excel). Some are pulling information from the system (using eTools) to develop their own reports and to populate the Excel spreadsheet shadow systems. The PIs, researchers and staff do not appear to be sharing information regarding the various methods they are using so resource time within the college is being used to develop a variety of different methods. Others reported limited review of projects/award expenditures. It appears that no one is coordinating efforts in this area or conducting any analysis of whether the necessary tools are available (and knowledge shared). Communication and education seems to be heavily lacking in these areas.

CFAES is in the position where it is generally reliant on the central university to provide the information technology to manage their sponsored programs. The university is in the process of moving to Workday (implementation noted as planned to occur in 2018). Based upon this, it is likely that modifications to the current system and PI Portal might be extremely limited as central resources could be heavily focused on the development/preparation for the Workday implementation.

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- **Recommendation:** The College Research Administrative Council (to be formed, see Standard II) should charge a Task Force to conduct an analysis of the information needed for award management and identify the gaps between what is needed and what is provided by the PI Portal (and other available resources). CFAES leadership should meet with central OSU offices to communicate the challenges identified and to understand if any modifications can be done to the current portal. If modifications are not possible pending the implementation of Workday, the Task Force should evaluate what is currently being used within CFAES and other OSU Colleges to identify the best alternative solution for the short term prior to the implementation of Workday. Once best practices are identified, these should be shared throughout CFAES so that there are no longer multiple people developing a variety of solutions.

Information regarding research operations is available but, as noted above regarding metrics, this information is not shared frequently. There is a Resource Planning Analyst who appears to have a strong knowledge of how to pull this information, as well as develop dashboards to share the information, who could be a potential resource for developing some tools and/or report for this area.

- **Recommendation:** CFAES leadership should identify what institutional data on research operations could be compiled and distributed on a regular basis. A focus on the metrics noted above would be an appropriate starting point.

## Institutional Affiliations and Relationships

### XIII. STANDARD for Research Affiliations with Other Organizations.

The unit is aware of institutional policy concerning research affiliations with other organizations. The unit has clearly defined all relationships with hospitals or other organizations that are participating or collaborating in research activities. These relationships apply to research activities flowing in through the affiliate as well as flowing out to the affiliate. Defined relationships additionally include research-related institutional services (such as oversight for regulatory compliance areas such as human or animal research) provided to other organizations.

As with most land-grant universities, CFAES has a long-standing agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service. This Master Memorandum of Agreement is a standard one seen at other land-grant institutions and covers the usual areas, including space, personnel and equipment. The MOU was first

signed in 1957 and the last lease amendment, effective until 2019, was signed in 2014. There are ARS employees on both the Columbus and Wooster campuses.

- **Recommendation: None.**

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#### XIV. STANDARD for Research Affiliations with Non-Employed Individuals.

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The unit is aware of institutional policy concerning research affiliations with non-employed individuals. The unit has clearly defined the relationships with individuals who are engaged in conducting research, but who are not employees. Such individuals include but are not limited to visiting scholars, courtesy or adjunct faculty, or other zero percent appointment individuals who are afforded space and responsibilities associated with the unit's research activities.

In addition to ARS employees, there are employees of the Forest Service, visiting scientists, adjunct faculty, students completing independent projects or summer internships and tenants of the BioHio Research Park working on the Columbus and Wooster campuses. Non-employees working in CFAES facilities are covered by rules promulgated at the university level. Visiting and adjunct faculty are not permitted to serve as principal investigators unless they have permission from the university senior associate vice president for research but they may be involved in collaborative research. The university policies also provide clear definitions for clinical practice, visiting, and adjunct faculty.

- **Recommendation: None.**

## Sponsored Program Operations: Funding and Proposal Services

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#### XV. STANDARD for Funding Resources.

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The unit research administrators direct faculty, staff, and students to resources and information on prospective sponsors (such as federal, state, local, private foundations) as offered through central offices. Unit faculty are provided tools and assistance as appropriate to the culture of the institution, the level of activity, and the relative importance of research in strategic goals.

OSU utilizes the InfoEd SPIN database accessible via the OSP web page. The page also provides a list of Special Funding Opportunities, a group of limited submission opportunities, and funding opportunities internal to OSU. SPIN allows for active searching or for automated daily notifications. Researchers can set search parameters to narrow notifications to specific areas in which they are interested.

GDSU prepares a monthly newsletter containing some funder information but it is not clear that researchers are reading the newsletter or that the information provided is targeted well enough to be useful. GDSU also provides a link on its web page entitled “Finding Funding” that does not have much value-added. It does provide links to InfoEd SPIN, grants.gov, NSF and NIH. In an area called “New Funding Opportunities” there is a list of NIFA, USDA, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and SEED programs, all with due dates more than a year old. There are several other links that are no longer active and programs with no indication that the information is current (for example, the Faculty Development Grants for Support of International Travel, Conference Support and Invited Lecturers was effective July 1, 2007). It is important to keep information such as this up to date or not to present it at all. When so much of the information is out of date, all the information becomes suspect.

- **Recommendation: GDSU should establish a regular schedule (at least once per year) to check the information presented on the “Finding Funding” web page to make sure it is current and that links are active.**

Faculty reported quite different views of the usefulness of funding source information provided to them. Some reported that the information was nothing out of the ordinary that an active researcher would not already know about; others commented that the information was too focused in one area or another and not covering the college adequately; still others were looking for more assistance in identifying funding opportunities from foundations rather than more traditional federal sources. The Review Team also heard from researchers who said they received no help locating grant opportunities and some who did not need help with funders but instead with forming partnerships within the college. This issue is another one that clearly suffers from inadequate lines of communication discussed earlier in this report.

- **Recommendation: GDSU should survey CFAES PIs and researchers to determine the kinds of information regarding funding they would like to have made available to them.** If survey results showed that the time spent on providing funding information was of little utility to researchers, GDSU could reduce that effort or refocus it without adversely impacting CFAES.

Not every researcher needs assistance in locating possible funding opportunities. Rather than trying to provide information for everyone, targeting searches or assisting

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in developing collaborative relationships may be a better tactic to pursue. Discovery Theme areas in CFAES seem to be the most likely for the targeted searches.

- **Recommendation: CFAES should develop and maintain a database of faculty research interests.** Such a database would allow for better targeted searches of funders, could assist in developing partnerships necessary for interdisciplinary projects, and provide information useful for CFAES's recently appointed chief advancement officer.

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## XVI. STANDARD for Proposal Assistance.

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Appropriate to the size and needs of the institution, central and/or unit-level assistance is extended to assist faculty and research personnel in responding to funding opportunities and preparing proposals.
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CFAES's GDSU provides proposal development services to researchers throughout the college. Originally established in 2009 on the Wooster campus with a single staff member, GDSU grew to a staff of three by 2014. In addition to providing proposal development services, the unit also supports several OARDC Outreach/STEM activities as well as the SEEDS program, equipment grant program and DC Days. The unit was also charged with developing CFAES's online RCR training and monitoring the training modules.

CFAES estimates more than 300 researchers in the college and OSP reported 464 proposals from CFAES in FY15 with GDSU supporting 40 of those. At the time, GDSU had a full-time staff of three. The staff has been further reduced due to resignations, but plans are in place to replace personnel. At the time of the review, only the Department of Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering had a grant development specialist providing proposal pre-award assistance to its faculty.

Since it was established, GDSU has always been housed on the Wooster campus although it provides services for CFAES researchers in Columbus as well. As the empty positions are filled, the plan is to place at least one of the grant and contracts specialists in Columbus. Having a presence on both campuses will be important in advancing the idea that GDSU is a college service, not a campus-centric one. Columbus researchers have not always felt that they could take advantage of GDSU's services because it was located in Wooster. It is no longer necessary for a proposal development specialist to sit in a room with the researcher in order to assist with any part of the proposal development process. Much of the work is done electronically and, in those cases where face to face interaction will aid in the process, the excellent

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videoconferencing capabilities on the two campuses make it an easy interaction to facilitate.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should require that GDSU house at least one staff member of GDSU on each campus.** The staff should be assisting researchers on both campuses. Having a staff member available on each campus sends a very clear message that GDSU is a college asset.

GDSU has a document that provides a clear description of the responsibilities of the PI and the unit when working together, but the document does not appear on its web page. Researchers are not provided with guidance about timing; for example, how far in advance should a researcher request GDSU's assistance? It is also not clear from the web page what kinds of proposals the unit can assist with preparing; nor is it clear if they will only take on entire proposals or can provide assistance in preparing specific sections (assist with only a budget narrative or gathering CVs, for example).

CFAES researchers are not required to use proposal development services provided at either the college or university level. The roles and responsibilities matrix currently in use indicates that principal investigators have primary responsibility for virtually every step of the proposal development process. The matrix also indicates GDSU is available to assist in almost all the steps as well. There is no indication that editing services are provided, but it is likely at least some editing is being done at the time GDSU staff are preparing final drafts. It is not clear that a PI could send a draft to GDSU for the sole purpose of having it edited.

Although GDSU is highly regarded across the college, there are increasing concerns about its ability to provide services to the faculty. In several cases, faculty who made use of the unit earlier found they were unable to get assistance now. The unit currently uses a "first-come, first-served" model and does not appear to be looking for an alternative model to provide services. There is not a clear understanding amongst CFAES of how proposal due dates are tracked. It appears that, while one exists, there has not been consistent use of a single, shared master schedule so it is unlikely that the GDSU administrator or the research and graduate education associate dean are able to see in advance when the unit will be over its carrying capacity. A shared scheduling document will also be critical to efficient unit operations when there are offices on both campuses.

There is also no indication in writing that GDSU is there to assist on any particular kind of proposal. During interviews on-site it was not apparent if the unit is assisting primarily with single investigator proposals or if they are more likely to work on large, complex, multiple-PI projects; does the unit have more requests from established investigators with large research portfolios or new investigators? There has not been

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much in-depth data collection to be able to track the unit's performance. This lack of information is also making it difficult to know who the unit's customers are and whether or not there should be adjustments made in services provided, the load which the unit can maintain, or if the goals of the unit are in line with the expectations of CFAES administration.

Given OSU's focus on hiring in the Discovery Themes initiative and the likelihood that CFAES will be a major player in the initiative, it will become even more critical that the services provided by GDSU are appropriate to the need.

- **Recommendation: GDSU, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education, should develop a set of tracking metrics for the unit.** When the unit understands what kind of PIs are seeking assistance, what kind of assistance is required, how much lead time GDSU has on projects, the return rate of proposals by OSP when GDSU has been involved in preparation, etc. it will be easier to make adjustments in unit services and in staffing.

GDSU has a Grants Toolkit that contains a budget template for USDA that PIs may use as they develop a project budget. OSP does not have a specific budget template it requires, but its web site instructs PIs to use the budget format prescribed by the sponsor. The toolkit also includes the OSP-required Sub-recipient Commitment Form, data management plan tips, and information on post-doc mentoring plans. Although forms and templates are available if a PI knows where to look, there is not a clear list of required documentation or a step-by-step description of the proposal submission process for PIs to follow that could be located on any of the research administration web pages.

## Sponsored Program Operations: Proposal Review and Submission

### XVII. STANDARD for Proposal Review.

The unit has an appropriate interface with central research administration offices to provide a consistent approach for reviewing and processing proposals that is in compliance with institutional and sponsor guidelines and requirements. The roles and responsibilities associated with the proposal review and submission activities are clear across unit and central staff. Appropriate management systems are in place and the proposal review process interfaces smoothly with regulatory process/systems and the systems/processes for accepting and managing any subsequent awards.

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is the central university office charged with responsibility for proposal submission. Sponsored Projects Officers (SPOs) are the authorized signers for the university and perform the final proposal review prior to submission.

It is widely acknowledged that the OSP staff is stretched nearly to the limit (each SPO has 350-500 projects and 100 proposals active at any one time) and that their ability to do in-depth reviews of proposals prior to submission is nearly impossible at this time. OSP does not have a formal deadline set for proposal submission but plans to institute a tiered review system (the earlier a final proposal is submitted to OSP, the more in-depth the final review). SPOs have cradle to grave (non-financial post-award) responsibilities for their departmentally-based constituencies. One group handles business and industry projects, another handles everything else. Until about 2012, there was a SPO embedded in the college. Currently, only the College of Engineering still has a SPO in the college.

There is no requirement about who a PI must interface with during proposal development, although at some point they must interact with OSP for proposal submission. Some researchers reported having very good working relationships with SPOs and counted on their counsel when putting together budgets, budget narratives, proposal narratives, and other required proposal documents. Others either felt their SPO was too inexperienced (SPOs tend to turn over in the job frequently) or too difficult to contact and so they did almost everything on their own. Because SPOs will accept proposals from PIs until virtually the last minute before submission, it is likely that many receive only cursory reviews at best. The interim director of OSP admitted that more and more responsibilities were being pushed down to the college level.

Oddly, there is no specific mention of RFPs, etc. to which a specific proposal is responding on the OSP page, in the roles and responsibilities matrix or on the ePA005. It is reasonable to expect that a SPO would ask for that information to confirm that a proposal was responsive and there were no terms and conditions that would be problematic if an award were made. GDSU does review calls for proposals and helps PIs comply with them when asked.

In order to submit a proposal, a PI must first submit a budget to OSP for approval. OSP reviews the budget and approves it. This has proven to be more complicated than it appears on the surface. The sponsors often approached by CFAES researchers were described by OSP as challenging. There are also issues with cost share, inconsistent F&A rates or failure to include F&A, due in part to the lack of a college F&A policy. After budget approval is obtained, the PI must then complete the ePA-005 (Authorization to Seek Off-Campus Funding). This routing document includes information on sponsor, investigator(s), department(s) and award allocation, budget, award period, amount of request, cost sharing, research compliance, space availability,

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COI information and comments. In addition, the form provides notification of the potential for classified research and export controlled projects. The form also allows for uploading any additional documents that may be necessary for review. The form electronically routes through the department head and the college for review and approval. Signatures on the ePA-005 are used as an indication of the willingness to accept the terms under which the proposal was submitted. It is not clear from discussions with PIs or administrators that they carefully reviewed those terms for each submission. Several times during interviews research administrators and department heads noted that, because the budget had been approved prior to the initiation of the ePA-005, PIs assumed that the budget was locked in and it became more difficult to change cost share, award allocations or F&A rates. It was also reported that ePA-005 documents were sometimes initiated and completed after proposal submissions. It is not clear that a fully signed ePA-005 is required by OSP before a SPO can submit a proposal.

- **Recommendation: None.**

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## XVIII. STANDARD for Proposal Submission.

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The institution has adequate understanding of submission requirements for electronic and non-electronic proposal submissions. Delegated submission authorities to the unit are clearly understood and appropriate interfaces exist with central offices.

The Ohio State University uses Cayuse 424 and FastLane for electronic proposal submission. Researchers seem to be comfortable using Cayuse and frequently upload required proposal documents on their own. Only SPOs are authorized to submit proposals on behalf of the institution. GDSU is also well-versed in the use of both systems and is available to assist researchers in uploading proposals.

The responsibility for maintaining required institutional registrations and profiles and the ability to integrate with federal-wide and agency specific processes for proposal submission are at the institutional level.

- **Recommendation: None.**

## Subawards

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## XIX. STANDARD for Subawards.

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Outgoing subawards are reviewed and negotiated to reflect sponsor flow through requirements and institutional policy. Scope of work, budget and supporting documentation (including compliance data) should be provided by unit to central administration prior to subaward documents being issued. Unit will verify compliance data is current and will notify central administration should such compliance expire

OSU has a comprehensive sub-recipient monitoring program which appears to be in compliance with the requirements included in 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Guidance) and requires that all necessary compliance approvals are issued prior to the agreement being executed. There is a clear process for evaluating whether the agreement is a sub-award or vendor agreement. There is a strong risk assessment document that is required with all new agreements and is, reportedly, being provided. FFATA reporting is an institutional level activity which CFAES is not directly involved in.

The CFAES PIs generally work directly with the OSP institutional offices on their sub-awards. The PIs seemed to have an overall understanding of the process but expressed confusion regarding the need for the new requirements and frustration with the new processes. Also noted was a recent change regarding how they approve sub-recipient invoices, requiring them to go into a different system for data security. The roll out of this new system reportedly included system malfunctions, incorrect links, and lack of appropriate guidance. Some PIs gave up, so seemingly there are currently sub-recipient invoices held up due to lack of PI approval. These PIs reported that there was not anyone within CFAES to assist them with resolution of these issues. Some reported extensive delays with sub-awards issued by OSP. Some CFAES PIs and staff reported knowing how to check on the status of sub-award issuance while others did not know how to do this.

- **Recommendation: The Senior Fiscal Officer should prepare a communication, in consultation with OSP, for CFAES PIs and staff that covers some of the changes brought forward by the implementation of 2CFR Part 200 (Uniform Guidance) including the changes in sub-recipient monitoring requirements.** Because PIs are likely not to be as well-versed in Uniform Guidance language, the communication should be written for the lay audience, with clear references to regulation.
  - **Recommendation: The OSU Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) should ensure that all PIs have the knowledge and access necessary to approve sub-recipient invoices.**
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# Sponsored Program Operations: Award Acceptance and Initiation

## XX. STANDARD for Award Review and Negotiation.

The institution has a consistent process to review terms and conditions of grant, contract, and agreement awards. Incoming subawards are reviewed for the terms of the subaward and the flow-through terms of the prime award. The unit administration and faculty closely review the budget, scope of work and agreement conditions to verify proposed terms are achievable and consistent with original proposal.

The institution evaluates all awards for sponsor restrictions on such items as the use of funds, appropriate project personnel, publication rights, or intellectual property to assure compliance with institutional policies that govern the research activities of the campus. Restrictions are immediately submitted to unit administration and faculty prior to fully executing documents for review and/or comment.

OSP reviews and negotiates agreements and conditions for grant, contract, and other types of awards. The Office of Business and Industry has responsibility for nongovernmental award review and negotiation. Central OSP research administration practices were not within the scope of this NCURA Peer Review.

- **Notable Practice: OSP is in the final report stages of an external review of research administration.** The results of the external review could have an important impact on how colleges plan and perform their sponsored research administration roles and responsibilities. (See Executive Summary.)
- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should propose to the Senior Vice President for Research that a task group be established to conduct a joint systematic review of the central OSP external review and the CFAES NCURA Peer Review. Representatives from central research administration and CFAES should work together to identify common issues, opportunities, and approaches.** Observations and Recommendations from the OSP external review should be compared and contrasted with the NCURA Peer Review Notable Practices and Recommendations specific to CFAES.

CFAES and OSP practices are sometimes interwoven, and always related, so relevant OSP-related observations regarding Award Acceptance and Initiation will be shared within this Report. In the limited Peer Review Team interaction with the OSP Interim Director, it appeared that there was staff trained to review and negotiate agreement terms and conditions. The low staff levels, heavy work load, and rapid turnover in OSP were shared concerns throughout the on-site interviews. CFAES had an overall



positive regard for their contacts in OSP, although CFAES did note some variation in how responsive and timely staff members were.

There was limited input provided to the NCURA Peer Review Team regarding the policies and practices related to the ownership of intellectual property and/or publication rights. Somewhat incidental comments during the faculty advisory group discussions centered on the time it took to negotiate intellectual property terms within some agreements. Faculty did not understand, in some cases, why the IP terms were such a major negotiation issue and why they took so long to resolve. The faculty advisory groups mentioned the time it sometimes took to negotiate seemingly irrelevant IP terms. OSP's Policy on Patents and Copyright can be found on the University Policies website. CFAES' portfolio of sponsors and historical relationships, like those with certain commodity groups and/or federal agencies, can complicate IP ownership arrangements. The NCURA Peer Review Team was not able to assess the effectiveness of institutional policies and practices for patents and copyrights across the CFAES portfolio.

- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should consider convening a discussion group involving representatives from the OSU Office of Research, OSU Sponsored Research Office, OSU Technology Commercialization Office, CFAES executive team, and faculty advisory groups to consider unique CFAES opportunities and challenges related to ownership of intellectual property and copyrights.** The outcome of the discussion group should be a white paper recording the challenges and opportunities as well as correlating standards of practice and/or common approaches. Roles and responsibilities should be reviewed and methods of communication to PIs discussed.
- **Recommendation: The VP and Dean should request that OSP assign a specific administrator to CFAES. The unique portfolio of sponsors and historical relationships, like those with commodity groups and/or certain federal agencies, are indications that a specifically-assigned administrator would be beneficial to the college and university.** One PI in CFAES is reputed to have six different OSP contacts for his portfolio of 10 projects. There is precedent for assigning and co-locating a CFAES-specific administrator. CFAES had an OSP administrator assigned and located with them in the past, until 2012. At least one other OSU college unit has a specifically assigned administrator at the current time.

Access to legal assistance is managed through OSP. The NCURA Peer Reviewers did not identify any specific issues related to access to legal assistance.

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The OSU Board of Trustees established The Ohio State University Office of Sponsored Programs as the organization legally authorized to accept awards and agreements for sponsored programs on behalf of OSU. OSP is responsible for managing communications between the PI, sponsor, and OSP prior to execution of agreements.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should request that OSP, GDSU, and the CFAES Finance Office map the workflow of the award acceptance and negotiation process. The workflow map should include the life cycle of the award so that the processes for award modifications/project changes are well understood.** A step-by-step analysis and formalization of the workflow will improve understanding, efficiency, and communication. Efforts should be taken to identify and eliminate redundancies and/or unnecessary steps. As part of the analysis, the role of the PI should be carefully considered. It seems probable that CFAES can reduce PI administrative burden by having a more direct contact with OSP during the award negotiation and acceptance process. A copy of the completed workflow map should be made available to the Office of Research and to CFAES faculty and staff. The workflow map should be shared with the WorkDay implementation team.

Ancillary agreements such as nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) and material transfer agreements (MTAs) were not discussed during the site visit. Nor does the Research Administration: Roles and Responsibilities Matrix, April 2015, include NDAs or MTAs in its descriptors or assignments. The use of NDAs and MTAs is prevalent within vibrant research portfolios across the country and are likely to increase within CFAES' research and outreach activities.

- **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should request that the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator and Senior Fiscal Officer discuss with OSP the relevance and frequency of use of MTAs and NDAs to the CFAES research portfolio.** Roles and responsibilities associated with MTAs and NDAs should be added to the 2015 Roles and Responsibilities Matrix.
  - **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should initiate outreach to department chairs, unit directors, and researchers to share opportunities and challenges associated with the use of MTAs and NDAs.**
  - **Recommendation: The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should request shared on-line access to a site that records executed and pending MTAs and NDAs including at least an overview of primary terms and conditions of each. Access to the site should be made**
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available at least to the Associate Dean, GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator, and Senior Fiscal Officer.

- **Recommendation: The 2015 Roles and Responsibility Matrix, April 2015, referenced throughout this Report, should be updated to include additional national compliance requirements like export control, nondiscrimination.**

As part of the award acceptance process, OSP requires that the PI provide a revised budget prior to account initiation. This ensures that any significant changes in the proposed scope of work or budget are accurately reflected in the award agreement and account set up.

- **Notable Practice: Award budgets are compared with proposal budgets prior to account start.**

Departmental research administrators and PIs expressed frustration with the ePA-005 and process used to submit revised budgets. The rationale behind needing to submit a revised budget on a separate PDF form at award stage was not well understood or supported. PIs considered it to be a waste of their time unless the budget was significantly changed from the proposals. Departmental research administrators thought that they could be more integral to the process of updating budgets at award especially if they became the primary POC for this process with OSP.

- **Recommendation: The GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator should discuss with OSP the potential to change the award budget update process.** The process should “add value” to the understanding and performance of the actual award, or it should be considered for elimination. If the process must remain as is, the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator should work with OSP to establish a more complete understanding of the rationale for the process.

OSP and CFAES both have various training offerings aimed at establishing a sufficient level of understanding among college and department staff and thus ensuring the proficiency of support and effective operations. These have included training on e-systems and e-forms that may be used during the award review and acceptance process. However, disparate practices across the college make effective training particularly challenging in terms of targeting the appropriate audience and content of the training. Just as one example, some PIs submit their proposals through GDSU while others work directly with OSP. Some PIs have access to departmental research administrators while others do not. Much of what PIs and research staff administrators do has been learned through trial and error and/or experience rather than as a result of written CFAES policies and procedures that are consistently applied. The effectiveness of these efforts will be improved through the better understanding of workflow, roles and responsibilities, operating procedures, and enhanced training as recommended throughout this Report.

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## XXI. STANDARD for Award Acceptance.

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The institution has a process in place that allows the formal acceptance of a sponsored award by designated individuals or offices. The award acceptance process interfaces smoothly with processes for proposal submission and award management. Should award documents vary from original proposal, the unit administration and faculty are notified to verify the proposed modifications are acceptable and do not indicate a change in scope of the proposed project or additional financial implications.

Faculty and departmental research administrators shared the impression that it can take an overly long time to get an account established after receipt of an award or check. They mentioned, in particular, the difficulties in the start process for sub-awards and grants transferring from another institution to OSU. There was not an easy mechanism for the PI to determine where in the start-up workflow a negotiation or new award might be. At times, it seemed a negotiation/award in progress was deferred by OSP in lieu of a perceived higher priority agreement. A few faculty members gave examples of anticipated awards being made to another institution because of award negotiation and acceptance delays at OSU.

The GDSU and Finance Offices have very little functional responsibility for the award acceptance process, although OSP acknowledges that the award process benefits when GDSU has been involved during proposal development and submission. OSP interacts directly with the PI and at times fails to provide critical information to the CFAES central and/or departmental representatives. Examples were given to the NCURA Peer Review Team by central, faculty, and department staff of modifications made to an award via discussion with the PI that ultimately had a financial impact on the college or department; changes in F&A recovery rate was used as one example.

- **Recommendation:** The GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator and Senior Fiscal Officer should request that OSP provide access to an appropriate interface that allows data, documents and notes from proposal and award review to be available to GDSU and Finance. The PI Portal summarizes important administrative aspects of an award but may not include important notes and ancillary information. Although CFAES has created an email box to receive important information from OSP, gaps in communication continue to be present. A systems approach, perhaps through the PeopleSoft Grants module, should be identified and implemented. This interface should include appropriate links to institutional regulatory systems/approvals. Ideally, the interface will include the ability to pull reports. Increasing the amount of
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proposal/award-specific information to CFAES, i.e., increasing communication in general, will help expedite processes and potentially decrease PI administrative burden.

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## XXII. STANDARD for Award Activation and Notification.

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The institution has a defined process to place a sponsored award in the accounting system and to make funds available to the principal investigator for expenditures. The institutional notification process for award activation is timely and clearly conveyed to appropriate positions, such as investigator and unit-level staff. Unit administration has defined process in place to verify account has been created and funds allocated appropriately and consistent with award document.

The NCURA Peer Review Team did not identify any institutional systems in place to track awards from the date of receipt until award setup in the accounting system. Information was not available that would allow the Peer Review Team to compare the timeliness of account starts for CFAES awards to comparable account starts at other institutions. Award review, acceptance, and account start processes are necessarily complex and it takes dedication and attention to improve the time taken from award receipt to account start.

- **Recommendation: CFAES should partner with OSP to identify a sample of awards to study time from receipt to account start-up.** At a minimum, the outcome of the study should be used to establish benchmark goals from which to evaluate future performance. Importantly, the study could also be used to identify typical reasons for delays and determine off-setting mitigation strategies. Time-to-process studies at other institutions have generally found that award starts are laden with “reliances” on other parties to complete a particular step or provide particular information before the next step can be completed. To the extent these can be identified and resolved, time to account start will improve. Because award notifications are received directly by the PI or OSP, CFAES has no way to monitor or improve the efficiency of the account start process without working in partnership with OSP.

The Briefing Book included screen shots of award acceptance and account initiation processes. It was not clear from the header tabs that compliance approvals were documented and included within the Generate Award process. The Authorization for Expenditures/Commitments in Excess of Funds Available (OGC-005), used for “pre-award costs,” did not include notation of regulatory compliance approvals. Consequently, it is not clear that institutional funds are not made available for

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expenditures until after compliance requirements are satisfied, i.e. animal care and use, human subjects, conflict of interest are approved.

- **Notable Practice:** OSP has a process which allows for issuance of a project account number prior to award receipt or execution. Issuing an “advance” account can facilitate correct and timely allocation of allowable costs, reduce the requirement for after-the-fact cost transfers, and facilitate the successful technical conduct of the project.
- **Recommendation:** The GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator should work with OSP to make clear the status of regulatory compliance approvals before award funds are made available either through pre-award/award advance spending or actual account start.

The Briefing Book included examples of New Award email communications from the Sponsored Programs Officer to the PI. The New Award email provides general project information like award number, title, sponsor, amount, dates, PI and department. Information is presented in a clear and precise manner.

- **Notable Practice:** The Documentation tab within the PI Portal contains a copy of the award notice and proposal.

The Briefing Book and on-site interviews identified the email distribution process as a candidate for enhancement. Email notification does not consistently include notice to appropriate college and department research administrative personnel. This results in unnecessary gaps in information, like providing department fiscal staff notice when an award has been set up in the PeopleSoft grants system, and consequent inefficiencies at the project administrative level.

- **Recommendation:** The GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator should continue to work with OSP to refine award activation and notification procedures. Significant progress on this objective may be constrained by the PeopleSoft Grants system. At a minimum, an improved notification procedure should be a component of WorkDay implementation planning. Until then, interim notification strategies should be identified and implemented.

Gaps in notification processes can be exacerbated if caused by poorly defined and communicated roles and responsibilities. Both CFAES and OSP share the challenge of rapid changes in personnel and, in the case of CFAES, restructuring. This environmental reality underscores the importance of clear and frequent communication on assignments.

- **Recommendation:** The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education should request that the GDSU Contracts and Grants Administrator and Senior Fiscal Officer define and implement procedures
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**to ensure that OSP is provided with up-to-date notification of CFAES pre- and post-award position assignments and their roles and responsibilities.**  
A parallel request should be made to OSP to do the same for CFAES.

## Sponsored Program Operations: Award Management

### XXIII. STANDARD for Fiscal Management.

The institution's control environment provides reasonable assurance regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of operations; reliability of financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The unit processes flow from the institution's requirements and they maintain appropriate internal controls through processes, systems, and tools to ensure compliance with institutional and sponsor guidelines and requirements. Fiscal data for the unit leadership, research administration, and faculty is readily available through published reports, queries, or integrated systems for transaction processing, review and tracking of activities and reporting.

Awards are set up by OSP in the PI Portal, where they will be managed for the life of the project. Externally funded projects and their allocable transactions are appropriately reflected in discrete accounts. Source documentation regarding expenditures is reported to be retained in the procurement and payroll systems for most charges. However, the process by which some backup documentation is retained within CFAES is unclear and appears inconsistent by individual.

CFAES is required to comply with institutional policies. While in many cases, these provide the necessary foundation for transactions, the lack of an F&A policy for CFAES is causing many concerns.

Throughout the site visit, the Reviewers heard confusion regarding the allocation of indirect costs (see Standard V above). Once policy is defined, further clarification and education in this area is needed.

OSP has a strong policy related to the allowability of costs and has extensive information on their website regarding allowability including the impact of Uniform Guidance. There is a lack of understanding and confusion regarding allowability and the impact of Uniform Guidance during discussions with CFAES PIs and administrators. While OSP provides a comprehensive website which provides a large amount of information, there appears to be limited to almost no outreach or training in these areas.



As previously noted, most PIs and staff interviewed reported a low level of knowledge in understanding the PI Portal. Some noted a new course on the PI Portal was recently offered by CFAES Fiscal Office and was helpful. Some were aware of other methods via eTools to obtain financial information, but most PIs were not aware of how to use this tool. Some said they thought there was training and some reported attending an informal training in the past. While these systems provide confusion in obtaining some of the information desired to manage projects, those familiar with the data systems reported that the information is accurate and once one knows how to use the system, they can get the information they need to manage and close out the awards. The majority of PIs met with reported that they do not receive or have access to timely or regular reports which provide the financial status of their project(s).

- **Recommendation: The College Research Administrative Council (to be formed, see Standard II) should develop a plan to address the broad needs of the CFAES research administration infrastructure.** A lack of resources, knowledge and tools results in a high level of risk for the college (and the broader institution).

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## XXIV. STANDARD for Administrative Management.

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The institution has established management systems for the non-financial administration of awards and unit processes flow from or interface with these management systems. The central offices and/or unit have established processes to monitor and report program performance. Unit administration should meet with faculty monthly, not less than quarterly, to verify program performance of all parties subject to the award/agreement for which the research is being performed. Any findings of non-adherence to the terms and conditions of the award should be reported to central administration immediately.
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Nationally, there is much discussion regarding the administrative burden on researchers with concern for the time they spend on administrative activities that could be more productively directed towards conducting research. Within CFAES, the amount of PI time spent on post-award research administration is at a concerning level. Many researchers have almost no or absolutely no post-award administrative support from the local/departmental level (beyond central OSP). Beyond the potential impact on research productivity, this creates an environment of higher risk for the college and university. The PIs have not been trained in how to appropriately administer awards and most expressed gaps in their knowledge.

Within the CFAES Finance Office, there is a team of two people who hold post-award administration responsibilities. These individuals worked in Extension previously and

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continue to dedicate approximately 50% of their time to Extension. This leaves the equivalent of 1 FTE dedicated to post-award administration. It was noted that the movement of these responsibilities to these individuals occurred as the result of a recommendation from Internal Audit. These individuals are moving faculty appointments, do cash draws and reporting for capacity funds (only), and limited other fiscal compliance related monitoring activities and some training activities. These activities would more commonly be referred to as post-award compliance monitoring. The extremely limited staffing level does not allow them to provide any substantive level of direct administrative support to CFAES Departments, PIs and researchers.

- **Notable Practice:** The dedication of staff time to post-award activities and introduction of some related training activities is commendable.
- **Recommendation:** A Task Force should be formed to identify the additional post-award support needed by the PIs to (1) ensure compliance with federal/sponsor rules and regulations and (2) ensure PI's ability to successfully meet PI appropriate administrative responsibilities while most effectively utilizing their time (thus maximizing time available to conduct research and seek additional funding).

The PI Portal does provide information on effort certification and, overall, those interviewed felt that they were able to access their effort information and monitor their effort certification(s) as needed. Questions regarding the proper treatment/charging of effort were noted by some.

There is some confusion regarding how to appropriately track annual updates related to protocol approvals.

## Institutional Integration of Obligations Made with Sponsored Programs Activities

### XXV. STANDARD for Institutional Integration of Obligations Made with Sponsored Programs Activities.

The institution has developed mechanisms to interface separate oversight research areas within the institution that may be related to sponsored program activities. Where research compliance oversight exists at the unit level, compliance is interfaced with sponsored programs. Unit-level research administration has a basic understanding of such areas as impact their unit's research activities. Unit leadership and research administration is appropriately tied to and informed about research activities

that contain export controlled technologies, and to faculty that have financial research conflicts of interest.

CFAES works regularly with the IRB, IACUC and Biosafety Committees. The OSU Office of Research Compliance is reported to provide administrative support to the university research community and the committees responsible for research review and oversight (IRB, IBC, IACUC, and COI) with a goal of assisting faculty and staff navigate the requirements and to ensure regulatory compliance. Frustration and confusion regarding requirements were expressed as challenges in all these areas. In particular, strong concerns were vocalized regarding the IRB related to approval times and general protocol processing. It was noted that PIs often receive their protocols returned with red-lines without an explanation of what needs to be corrected and/or guidance that is incorrect regarding what is needed. Researchers have noted that IRB approvals can take up to or longer than a year and that loss of funding has resulted due to delays. Some concerns regarding delays with the IACUC were noted, but significantly less concern was expressed than with the IRB.

The process for Conflict of Interest (COI) appears to be appropriate for compliance, but there was a lack of understanding about what was required. While it is noted that follow up occurs at the college level, it was unclear whether this occurs consistently.

There does not appear to be a consistent system for confirming whether institutional commitments are appropriately adhered to.

- **Recommendation: the CRAC (to be formed, see Section II) should contact central administration to discuss (1) the delays related to IRB and IACUC approvals and (2) what is the process for confirming that institutional commitments are appropriately adhered to.** Discussions should include current efforts to improve protocol review times, guidance on how CFAES may be able to work with the IRB/IACUC to improve turnaround times, and development of a plan for working towards improving support to CFAES in these areas as well as a discussion regarding the proper process to track and confirm institutional commitments.

## Appendix A: National Standards for Effective Sponsored Program Operations

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) developed these National Standards to represent the institutional baselines that provide a supportive environment for the conduct of research and other sponsored activities as well as the broad operational and core functional areas of sponsored programs management.

Unlike an audit, this peer review performs an assessment of your research administration “program” that goes beyond merely highlighting deficiencies in process. The assessment contains three interrelated features: senior and experienced research administrator Reviewers, the National Standards, and a philosophical approach that provides consistency in the review process with an understanding of institutional culture. These key features result in an assessment of **effectiveness** of sponsored research environments at the institutions undergoing peer review.

The NCURA National Standards are used by experienced and senior research administrators to assess the effectiveness of the research administration program. While recognizing that institutions differ in organizational structure and institutional priorities, these Standards reflect how the institution integrates the research enterprise with its institutional goals and expectations and operationalizes effective sponsored programs administration. The Standards allow Reviewers to assess how closely that integration relates to institutional and stakeholder goals and expectations. The Standards contain a list of over 165 features that are utilized by the Reviewers during their assessment and that are used as the basis for the written report.

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## Appendix B: NCURA Peer Review Team Bios



### NCURA Peer Review

#### The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: Review Team Bios

The National Council of University Research Administrators offers a formal system of assessment for offices of sponsored programs. As an international organization that supports the field of research administration, this formal assessment program provides information on effective practices, techniques for success, and models of excellence. Setting standards and identifying quality of organizational performance are expected functions of all organizations.

#### **Kerry Peluso, TEAM LEAD**

*Number of Years in Research Administration:* 25

*Institutions:* Emory University, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University

**Kerry Peluso** is a CPA and MBA with over 25 years of experience in research and grants administration. Her experience includes a background in both public and private Universities as well as experience in Medical and non-Medical institutions. She is an Associate Vice President for Research Administration at Emory University where she has held responsibility for oversight of both pre- and post-award (including financial) central administration functions. This included oversight of the activities related to effort reporting, facilities and administrative rate proposal preparation/negotiation, and the administration of service center activities. In her current role, she provides oversight for central pre-award and non-financial post-award activities. She is also responsible for the development and implementation of research administration policies as well as oversight of general research administration support activities related to compliance, training, communication, system development, reporting, and research administration performance metrics. Kerry has been a leader in the development, planning, and implementation of a successful restructure of the research administration infrastructure at Emory from a traditional departmental support model to a shared services organization.

Prior to joining Emory in February 2007, Kerry held the position of Director of Post Award Financial Administration at the University of Pennsylvania. Her background also includes several years of experience as a Senior Accounting Manager at Rutgers University in the Division of Grant and Contract Accounting and five years of experience with proposal preparation and managing grants for non-profit organizations at the local/departmental level. She has led the development of research administration certification educational programs at both Emory University and University of Pennsylvania. Beyond grants and research administration, Kerry's background includes five years of experience in tax, private and public accounting.

Kerry currently serves on the Council of Governmental Relations (COGR) Board of Directors, as a member of the COGR Research and Regulatory Reform Committee, is Co-Chair of the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) National Development and Leadership Committee, and serves as an NCURA Faculty Member for the Leadership Workshop. She is an NCURA Peer Reviewer and has served in a variety of other roles for NCURA including serving as Regional and National Treasurer, Financial Research Administration Workshop Faculty Member, Co-Editor for NCURA's Magazine, and Chair of NCURA's Peer Review Select Committee. In 2011, Kerry received the NCURA Distinguished Service Award. Kerry also holds an appointment at Rush University, College of Health Sciences where she teaches the Finance course for the Masters of Research Administration program. She is a frequent speaker at national conferences.

**Toni Shaklee***Number of Years in Research Administration: 31**Institutions: Oklahoma State University*

Toni Shaklee serves as Assistant Vice President for Research at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. She has held the position since October 2004. Prior to moving the Division of the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, Toni served in a variety of capacities in the College of Arts and Sciences' Research Support Services. She became a Certified Research Administrator in 2003.

A member of NCURA's third Leadership Development Institute (LDI) class, Toni served as an at-large member of the Region V executive committee, was a member of the program committee (departmental track coordinator) for the Pre-Award Research Administration II Conference, and presented at PRA I and II. She has also presented or led discussion groups at NCURA annual, regional and FRA meetings, is on the program committee for the 53<sup>rd</sup> NCURA annual meeting, and has served as a workshop evaluator. She has made invited presentations in several states to both university and small business audiences and at SBIR conferences. She became a member of the Research Administration Certification Council's Board of Directors in October 2007. She was also named to the faculty of NCURA's Fundamentals of Sponsored Programs Administration traveling workshop in 2007.

She has responsibility for research policy development and implementation, the university's cost share program, and limited submissions internal competitions. In addition, she provides oversight for the university's dedicated interdisciplinary research building (Henry Bellmon Research Center). She is responsible for the RCR program, assists in contracting with industrial partners and provides administrative assistance in the inquiry and formal investigations of research misconduct.

Toni holds a B.A. in political science from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, an M.A. in political science with an emphasis in public administration from Oklahoma State University, and Ph.D. in environmental science with an emphasis in environmental law and policy from Oklahoma State University.

**Kathi Delehoy***Number of Years in Research Administration: 30**Institutions: Colorado State University*

Kathi Delehoy served as the Senior Associate Vice President for Research Administration at Colorado State University until her retirement in 2014. CSU is a Land Grant University with research expenditures totaling over \$300M for each of the past 5 years placing CSU among the top 5 like institutions in the Country in Federally-funded research expenditures. As the Senior Associate Vice President for Research Administration (SAVP), Kathi played a lead role in accomplishing CSU's research and discovery goals. Kathi served as an advocate and an advisor to the Vice President for Research on a broad array of research administration and operational activities including high-level oversight of sponsored research administration. She effectively interfaced in a leadership capacity on behalf of the VPR and served in the VPR's stead regarding matters that arose in his absence including representing the VPR in meetings on a vice presidential level as necessary. One such example was her role serving as the Research Executive Sponsor for the Kuali Coeus financial and research administration enterprise system. Among her position priorities were research infrastructure activities, recruitment and retention of leading investigators, strengthening collaborative relationships, promoting interdisciplinary approaches, sustainable budget approaches and good business practices, and building synergy and collaborative efforts among division directors and affiliated organizations.

Kathi spent her career at CSU working in increasingly complex and responsible positions in the areas of sponsored research administration, financial management, compliance, and reporting and maintained

strong relationships with faculty, department and college staff, and central administration. As of 2014, Kathi was the only CSU employee to have been nominated for and received each of the University's top performance awards: the Classified Personnel Outstanding Achievement Award (1991), the Administrative Professional Service Outstanding Achievement Award (2005) and the Oliver P. Pennock Distinguished Service Award (2012).

Membership and participation in NCURA activities has played a foundational role in Kathi's career. She has served in numerous regional and national roles including as Region VII chair and officer, twice member of the Board, member of many regional and National program committees including an initial NCURA offering in electronic research administration, presented on a range of topics at NCURA meetings, participated on the Nomination and Leadership Committee, and currently serves as an institutional peer review member. Additional professional service includes the Kuali Coeus Board, NACUBO, COGR, and the COGR Research and Compliance Committee.

#### Assisting the Review Team and Reader for Review Report

##### **Peggy S. Lowry, Director, NCURA Peer Programs**

*Number of Years in Research Administration:* 39

*Institutions:* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Oregon State University, Ball State University, Murray State University

Peggy has been a team member or team lead on over 30 peer reviews of research administration offices, received evaluations of her offices, and has taught national workshops on sponsored program assessment. Peggy has led office self-studies and participated in institutional accreditation self-studies. She authored the chapter: "Assessing the Sponsored Research Office" (NCURA/AIS *Sponsored Research Administration—A Guide to Effective Strategies and Recommended Practices*) and published peer review articles: "But the Emperor Has No Clothes On! Or Assessing Your Operation with Fresh Eyes" and "Learning Your ABCs: Adaptability, Balance, and Culture" (NCURA Magazine). Peggy currently serves as the Director for the NCURA Peer Programs (Peer Advisory Services and Peer Review Program) as well as serving as a Peer Advisor and Peer Reviewer.

Peggy served until her retirement in 2007 as Director of Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance at Oregon State University where she oversaw sponsored programs (\$250+ million in awards), non-financial research compliance areas, and served as Conflict of Interest Officer. She returned from retirement to assist by leading the University's new Office of Research Integrity, until 2011 when she retired again. She currently serves as Director for the NCURA Peer Programs. Her career includes 11 years at Oregon State; 22 years at the University of Illinois--Urbana-Champaign as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research/Director, with 10 years as a College-level administrator; and seven years in predominantly undergraduate universities: Ball State University and Murray State University in Director and Associate Director positions. At all of her universities she has worked extensively with faculty, Deans, and senior leadership, as well as departmental administrators and administrative offices. She served on numerous university/faculty committees, created/implemented university-wide policies, and engaged in department-central research administrator networking groups. At Ball State and Murray State she additionally focused on faculty development, institutional incentives for research, and integrating research with undergraduate education. While at Murray State University, she created a faculty Research Policy Committee to help promote the role of research at a predominantly undergraduate university; increased emphasis on research led to doubling the sponsored programs award level.

Peggy has given over 300 national, regional and local presentations and workshops. She has served on numerous national NCURA committees and twice served on their Board of Directors. During her career she served as a NCURA national workshop faculty for Fundamentals of Research Administration and Sponsored Projects Administration Level II, Chair of the Nominating and Leadership Committee, a member of the Editorial Review Board for *A Guide to Managing Federal Grants for*



*Colleges and Universities*, and co-Chair of the NCURA newsletter. Peggy received NCURA's national Award for Distinguished Service in Research Administration in 2006 and the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration in 2011. She additionally served several terms on the Board of Directors of the International Society of Research Administrators and received several national awards from that organization. She has been a member of the Council on Governmental Relations.



## Appendix C: Charge Letter



**Dr. Ronald Hendrick**  
Acting Vice President for Agricultural Administration & Dean  
2120 Fyffe Rd., Columbus, OH 43210

Phone: (614) 292-4218 - Fax: (614) 292-0452  
E-mail: [hendrick.15@osu.edu](mailto:hendrick.15@osu.edu)  
<http://cfaes.osu.edu/>

February 17, 2015

National Council of University Research Administrators  
1015 18<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 901  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Lowery,

The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) has requested a NCURA Peer Review of CFAES sponsored programs administration. In the interest of maintaining an effective responsible research organization, we intend to periodically review various special administrative units within CFAES.

In 2014, the OSU Offices of Human Resources and Institutional Research & Planning partnered to conduct surveys of faculty and staff about their views of the Ohio State work environment. Based upon culture survey results, the Vice President of Agriculture Administration and Dean of the College – who is now the Interim Provost – initiated a project to explore the context of the survey, increase the level of support to faculty in the realm of research administration, and stimulate conversation as we explore transformational ways to approach research administration at the college level.

CFAES investigators have been successful in obtaining extramural funds while the college and University has experienced major changes in key leadership positions and, in some cases, organizational structure. Currently, CFAES has a robust research portfolio with significant growth noted over the last 15 years in proposals submitted, awards received and expenditures.

- In FY 2015, CFAES submitted 461 proposals through the OSU Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) for a total request of \$130.3 million from 208 different sponsors.
- Of the 22 proposal submitting units at OSU, CFAES is fourth in submissions, only behind the larger entities of the College of Medicine, College of Engineering, and College of Arts & Sciences.
- CFAES has experienced significant success in building its base of grants and contracts. OSP expenditures for the college have increased from \$12.5 million in 2000 to \$40.5 million in 2015.
- Total award dollars have increased from \$13.7 million in 2000 to \$40.9 million in 2015.


Although the college has grown significantly in research activities in the last 15 years, the infrastructure to support these activities has not necessarily kept pace. In your review, I ask that you address the following:

- Proposal development, assistance, review, and submission processes
- Organizational structure
- Staffing and resources
- Compliance and risk assessment
- Pre- and post- award management
- Research ethics and compliance
- Financial reporting
- Recommended policies and procedures (e.g., F&A waivers, summer salary, cost sharing, etc.)
- Communication and training

I understand the review will follow NCURA National Standards. I anticipate the NCURA Peer Review will strengthen many of our current processes and operations, as well as provide insight into areas requiring additional attention and/or resources. I strongly believe that such information will help CFAES better invest resources and energy to enhance and grow the research enterprise. As a result, I ask that your review and report include as much input and information as possible regarding areas of improvement that we can utilize as a roadmap for the future.

CFAES looks forward to your report and very much welcomes your observations and suggestions. Thank you in advance for your willingness to undertake this activity. If you have any questions, please contact Lori Kaser, Grants & Contracts Administrator, [kaser.37@osu.edu](mailto:kaser.37@osu.edu) or 330-263-3647.

Sincerely, \_\_\_\_\_



Ronald L. Hendrick  
CFAES Acting VP and Dean

## Appendix D: Site Visit Itinerary

**NCURA Peer Review**  
**College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CFAES)**  
**The Ohio State University**

**Monday, October 31, 2016 (Reviewers arrive to Columbus site)**

<b>DAY ONE:</b>	<b>Tuesday, November 1, 2016</b>	<b>Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus.</b>
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8:00 – 8:30	Set up by NCURA review Team
8:30 – 9:15	Dr. Caroline Whitacre, OSU Senior Vice President for Research
9:15 – 9:30	Executive Session
9:30 – 10:15	Interim Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, Dr. Lonnie King
10:15 – 10:30	Executive Session
10:30 – 11:30	Lori Kaser, Grants and Contracts Administrator
11:30 – 11:45	Executive Session
11:45 – 12:30	Dr. Jerry Bigham, Interim Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education
12:30 – 1:30	NCURA Team Executive Session – Working lunch
1:30 – 2:00	Dr. Roger Rennekamp, Associate Dean and Director, Extension Dr. Kenneth Martin, Associate Director and Department Chair, Extension
2:00 – 2:15	Executive Session
2:15 – 3:00	<b>CFAES Sponsored Program Advisory Committee</b> Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus to video link with Research Services 109, Wooster Richard Lomax, Committee Co-Chair, Associate Dean of Research, College of Education and Human Ecology Tim Haab, Committee Co-Chair, Department Chair, Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership Niqui Beckrum, Fiscal Officer, Plant Pathology Daniel Clark, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Animal Sciences Lori Kaser, Grants and Contracts Administrator Andy Michel, Associate Professor, Interim Associate Chair, Entomology Lauren Pintor, Assistant Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources Terry Snoddy, Senior Finance Manager, CFAES Finance Office
3:00 – 3:15	Executive Session
3:15 – 3:45	Eric Bode, CFAES Senior Fiscal Officer
3:45 – 4:15	Mike Cheney, Senior Auditor, OSU Department of Internal Audit Brian Newell, Associate Director, OSU Department of Internal Audit

4:15 – 4:30 *Executive Session*

4:30 – 5:00 **Dr. Terry Niblack, Acting Senior Associate Dean**

**DAY TWO: Wednesday, November 2, 2016 Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus.**

8:00 – 8:15 *NCURA Peer Review set up*

8:15 – 9:00 **Institutional Level Director, OSU Office of Sponsored Programs**  
**Christine Hamble, Interim Director, Office of Sponsored Programs**

9:00 – 9:15 *Executive Session*

9:15 – 10:15 **Faculty Focus Group (Maximum of 20)**

Joyce Chen, Assistant Professor, Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics  
Elizabeth Dayton, Research Scientist, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Richard Dick, Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Jeffrey Firkins, Professor, Animal Sciences  
John Fulton, Associate Professor, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Monica Giusti, Associate Professor, Food Science and Technology  
Denny Hall, Director, Ohio Bioproducts Innovation Center  
Laura Lindsey, Assistant Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Jay Martin, Professor, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Mary Rodriguez, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership  
David Shetlar, Professor, Entomology  
Frances Sivakoff, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Entomology  
Jason Slot, Assistant Professor, Plant Pathology  
Mark Sulc, Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Guo-Liang Wang, Professor, Plant Pathology

10:15 -10:30 *Executive Session*

10:30 -11:30 **CFAES Department Chairs/Directors Focus Group**

*Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus to video link with Research Services 109, Wooster*  
Carol Anelli, Interim Chair, Entomology  
Sheryl Barringer, Chair, Food Science and Technology  
J. Mark Erbaugh, Director, International Programs in Agriculture  
Tim Haab, Chair, Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics  
Tracy Kitchel, Chair, Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership  
Larry Madden, Acting Chair, Plant Pathology  
Jim Metzger, Chair, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Jeff Sharp, Director, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Scott Shearer, Chair, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Bill Weiss, Interim Chair, Animal Sciences  
Tom Worley, Director, OSU South Centers

11:30 – 1:00 *NCURA Team Executive Session – Working lunch*

1:00 – 2:00 **Columbus based - CFAES Department and College Level, Pre- and Post-Award/Fiscal and HR Staff**

Steve Baker, Fiscal Officer, Entomology  
Niqui Beckrum, Fiscal Officer, Plant Pathology  
Rachel Cornell, Fiscal Officer, Department of Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Andrea Gorzitz, Grants Development Specialist, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Laura Keesor, Grants and Contracts Associate, CFAES Finance Office  
Angie LeMaster, Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist, CFAES Finance Office  
Cheryl Lyman, Fiscal Officer, Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development  
Economics, Department of Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership  
David Mackie, Grants and Contracts Specialist, International Programs in Agriculture  
Dennis Wilt, Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist, School of Environment and Natural  
Resources

2:00 – 2:30 *Call back time*

2:30 – 3:00 **Andy Gurd, CFAES Chief Advancement Officer**

3:00 – 3:30 **Dr. Graham Cochran, CFAES Senior Administrative Officer**

3:30 – 3:45 *Executive Session*

3:45 – 5:45 *Lori will transport team from the Columbus Campus to Wooster, Ohio (appx 2 hour trip)*

<b>DAY THREE: Thursday, November 3, 2016</b>	<b>Gerlaugh Hall 122, Wooster</b>
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8:00 – 8:30 *Set up and Executive Session*

8:30- 9:00 **Dr. David Benfield, Associate Vice President, Agricultural Administration, and Director, Wooster Campus**

9:00 – 9:15 *Executive Session*

9:15- 10:00 **Rhonda Billman, Assistant Director, Wooster Campus**

**Terry Snoddy, Senior Finance Manager, CFAES Finance Office (Capacity grants, financial reporting, NIFA REEPORT)**

10:00 – 10:15 *Executive Session*

10:15 – 11:15 **Grant Development Proposal Unit, Internal SEEDS program**  
Pam Schlegel, Grants Development Specialist  
Shelly Whitworth, Graduate Scholarships Coordinator

11:15 – 11:30 *Executive Session*

11:30 – 12:00 **Chip Styer, Resource Planning Analyst (CFAES Sponsored Programs analytics, reporting systems)**

12:00 – 1:00 *NCURA Team Executive Session - Working Lunch*

1:00 – 1:30 **Ken Scaife, Assistant to the Director of the Wooster Campus, Agricultural Operations**

1:30 – 2:30 *Executive Session*

2:30 – 3:30

**CFAES Associate Chairs Focus Group**

*Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus to video link with Gerlaugh Hall 122, Wooster*

David Barker, Professor, Associate Chair (Columbus), Horticulture and Crop Science  
John Cardina, Professor, Associate Chair (Wooster), Horticulture and Crop Science  
Charles Goebel, Professor, Assistant Director, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Harold Keener, Faculty Emeritus, Associate Chair, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Andy Michel, Associate Professor, Interim Associate Chair, Entomology  
Anthony Parker, Associate Professor, Interim Associate Chair, Animal Sciences  
Brian Slater, Associate Professor, Associate Director, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Guo-Liang Wang, Professor, Associate Chair, Plant Pathology

3:30 – 3:45 *Executive Session*

3:45 – 4:45

**Faculty Focus Groups (20 maximum)**

Lisa Bielke, Assistant Professor, Animal Sciences  
Shauna Brummet, President, BioHio Research Park  
Steve Culman, Assistant Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources  
Doug Doohan, Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Anne Dorrance, Professor, Plant Pathology  
Imed Dami, Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
David Francis, Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Ryan Haden, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Technical Institute  
Melanie Ivey, Assistant Professor, Plant Pathology  
Daral Jackwood, Professor, Food Animal Health Research Program  
Shelia Jacobi, Assistant Professor, Animal Sciences  
Matt Kleinhenz, Professor, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Chang-Won Lee, Professor, Food Animal Health Research Program  
Elizabeth Long, Assistant Professor, Entomology  
Tea Meulia, Adjunct Associate Professor, Plant Pathology  
Fred Michel, Associate Professor, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Peter Piermarini, Associate Professor, Entomology  
Chris Taylor, Associate Professor, Plant Pathology  
Victor Ujor, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Technical Institute  
Anastasia Vlasova, Assistant Professor, Food Animal Health Research Program

4:45 – 5:00 *Executive Session*

**DAY FOUR: Friday, November 4, 2016 Gerlaugh Hall 122, Wooster**

7:45 – 8:00 *NCURA Review Team set up*

8:00 – 8:45

**Matt DeVore, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology, Data Management**

8:45 – 9:00 *Executive Session*

9:00 – 10:00

**Wooster based - CFAES Department and College Level, Pre- and Post-Award/Fiscal and HR)**

Peggy Christman, Office Associate, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering  
Clare Knebusch, Office Associate, Horticulture and Crop Science  
Julie Morris, Administrative Associate, Animal Sciences

	Ken Nanes, Grants and Contracts Associate, Plant Pathology Kimberly Nolletti, Office Administrative Associate, Horticulture and Crop Science Laura Williams, Business Manager, Horticulture and Crop Science
10:00 – 10:15	<i>Executive Session</i>
10:15 – 12:00	<b>Travel from Wooster Campus to Columbus Campus (Lori to transport)</b> <b>Available call back time for reviewers and follow up questions.</b>
12:00 - 1:00	<i>NCURA Team Executive Session - Working Lunch</i>
1:00 – 2:30	<i>Call back time, Deans Suite, Columbus</i>
2:30 – 3:00	<b>Dr. Linda Martin, Associate Dean and Director, Academic Affairs</b>
3:00 – 3:30	<i>Executive Session</i>
3:30 – 5:00	<b>Exit meeting, CFAES Cabinet and Guests</b> <i>Ag. Admin. Building 140G, Dean's Suite, Conference Room, Columbus to video link with Research Services 209, Wooster</i> Dr. Lonnie King, Interim Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean Dr. Terry Niblack, Acting Senior Associate Dean Dr. Graham Cochran, Senior Administrative Officer Dr. Jerry Bigham, Interim Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education Dr. Roger Rennekamp, Associate Dean and Director, Extension Dr. David Benfield, Associate Vice President, Agricultural Administration, and Director, Wooster Campus Dr. Linda Martin, Associate Dean and Director, Academic Affairs Eric Bode, Senior Fiscal Officer <i>CFAES Sponsored Program Advisory Committee:</i> Richard Lomax, Committee Co-Chair, Associate Dean of Research, College of Education and Human Ecology Tim Haab, Committee Co-Chair, Department Chair, Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership Niqui Beckrum, Fiscal Officer, Plant Pathology Daniel Clark, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Animal Sciences Lori Kaser, Grants and Contracts Administrator Andy Michel, Associate Professor, Interim Associate Chair, Entomology Lauren Pintor, Assistant Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources Terry Snoddy, Senior Finance Manager, CFAES Finance Office



## Appendix E: NCURA Resources



### CONTENTS

**NCURA MEMBERSHIP**

- Benefits .....2
- YouTube Tuesday .....3
- NCURA Global .....3
- Grow Your Network .....3

**MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

- Annual Meeting of the Membership .....4
- Financial Research Administration (FRA) ....5
- Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA) ...5

**TRAVELING WORKSHOPS**

- Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration .....6
- Level II: Sponsored Project Administration: Critical Issues in Research Administration (SPA II) .....6
- Financial Research Administration Workshop (FRA) .....6
- Departmental Research Administration Workshop (DRA) .....7
- NCURA Workshops: Global Edition .....7
- Export Controls Workshop .....7
- Research Administration: The Practical Side of Leadership Workshop .....7

**ONLINE EDUCATION**

- NCURA 8 Week Online Tutorials .....8
- Webinars .....9
- Life Cycle Series .....9

**PUBLICATIONS & PROGRAMS**

- Publications .....10
- Research Management Review (RMR)- NCURA's Online Scholarly Journal .....10
- NCURA Magazine .....11
- Fellowship Program .....11
- Peer Review Program .....11
- Peer Advisory Services .....11




One cannot underestimate the power of engaging with other research administrators to create new and innovative solutions to the challenges they face at their institutions. NCURA gives its members the opportunity to harness that power. NCURA membership is an essential resource at every point in your research administration career.

**ARE YOU TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF YOUR NCURA MEMBERSHIP?**

Your membership benefits include:

- ✓ Access to our **professional networking site Collaborate**. Collaborate is the home to our listservs, communities, discussions, and resource libraries. This is a great place to connect with other research administrators, discuss hot topics, share best practices, and stay ahead of the curve in the administration for research.
- ✓ **Automatic membership** into one of our **eight regions** connects you with other research administrators in your area.
- ✓ **Volunteering** gives you the opportunity to establish a strong network of peers, to acquire new skills and experiences, to help guide the future of NCURA, and to help advance the field of research administration.
- ✓ **NCURA Magazine's e-Xtra** is a compilation of the very latest news and must-read information sent directly to your inbox each Monday.
- ✓ NCURA members who enroll in the **JHU online Master of Science in Research Administration Program** will receive a 10% discount.
- ✓ **Exclusive member pricing** for all NCURA meetings, conferences, education, and bookstore purchases.
- ✓ **Free postings to NCURA's Career Center** (a savings of \$300 per posting) as well as access to all current job listings.
- ✓ Access to NCURA's **Member Directory**.
- ✓ Access to **community discussions, resource libraries, blog postings, and Volunteer Central** on Collaborate.
- ✓ Access to both current and past issues of the **NCURA Magazine**, published six times a year.
- ✓ **Members-only access** to educational videos from meetings and conferences including full session videos.



*"Collaborate is my "GO TO" tool...  
when I have a question and I need an  
answer fast, I can count on my  
Collaborate peers to give me the  
answers quickly and offer additional  
feedback as well."*

Erica Gambrell,  
Coordinator of Research Services,  
The University of Alabama

### YouTube TUESDAY

NCURA produces 2-3 minute videos on diverse research administration topics and posts them on our YouTube channel each Tuesday. Institutions are welcome to use these videos in their on-campus training programs. With over 1,100 subscribers and over 330,000 views on the channel since its July 2011 inception, this is a resource we encourage you to check out! Find us at <http://www.youtube.com/user/ncura1959>

### NCURA GLOBAL

NCURA Global seeks to be the foremost provider of professional development, knowledge, and leadership in the global research administration and research management community. We serve all NCURA members in the International Region and all U.S. members who are involved in global research administration. In addition, NCURA Global advances the overall NCURA mission by promoting research administration as a profession on a worldwide basis. We do this by providing a global network of support and collaboration for our members, offering professional development through top-notch research administrators and managers, and partnering with sister organizations to build the requisite infrastructure for the global research enterprise.

### GROW YOUR NETWORK

Find the colleague that you need by searching in our online Member Directory by area of expertise and responsibility. Make sure that you have updated your profile so that your colleagues can find you too!

**Not a member yet?**

*Join today at  
[www.ncura.edu/](http://www.ncura.edu/)*

### WHO ARE RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS AND WHAT IS NCURA?

The research administrator works with dedicated and brilliant researchers and scholars who often are on the cutting edge of their field and with the government and private sponsors that require stewardship for the funding they provide. NCURA is the professional home to 7,000+ research administrators, and we foster innovative and collaborative education and networking as we support research...together.



## MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

NCURA's 3 national conferences range from the specialized areas of Pre-Award and Post-Award Administration to the Annual Meeting with offerings spanning the breadth of the profession.



## NCURA HOSTS 3 NATIONAL MEETINGS A YEAR

### Annual Meeting of the Membership

The annual meeting of the membership is held in August each year in Washington, DC. Over 2,000 of our 7,000+ members attend.

We begin with a full day of workshops and senior level seminars which are a supplemental training program open to all registrants of the annual meeting. This in-depth, targeted training and professional development includes offerings from those new to the profession to our most senior level members.

We then embark on two and a half days of presentations, discussions, open forums and networking opportunities spanning all areas of research administration including, but not limited to, Pre-Award, Post-Award, Compliance, Departmental, Intellectual Property, Contracts, International, Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions, Electronic Research Administration, and Medical Center/Hospital Issues. Attending the annual meeting gives our members the opportunity to participate in sessions over a full range of topics to support their need for information in a variety of areas.

This annual reunion of the membership also includes our Sunday dinner, Tuesday evening event, dinner groups, regional networking events and numerous volunteer activities that create the opportunities for you to meet and connect with your colleagues and create your peer network.

In addition to the education and networking opportunities the annual meeting of the membership provides, our sponsor and exhibitor partners will be available to share information on the products and services to support you and your institution.





*“NCURA keeps you one  
step ahead of the curve.”*

Tom Wilson  
Assistant Vice President/  
Senior Research Administrator,  
Rush University Medical Center (Emeritus)

### Financial Research Administration (FRA)

The community of those engaged in the financial administration for research was brought together in 2000 for a special topic conference on post-award issues. This community has come together each year since for their own conference which has grown from 300 participants in the year 2000 to over 1,000 in 2016.

This conference travels to a new location each year and is held between February and late March. NCURA members enjoy a discounted registration fee, and the conference is open to all members of the research administration community.

### Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA)

In 2006, the NCURA Board of Directors unanimously agreed to offer a Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA) Conference.

The vision for this conference is to create an annual PRA Conference complementing the existing FRA (Financial Research Administration) annual conference.

This conference of over 600 participants travels to a new location each year and is held back-to-back with the FRA conference noted above. NCURA members enjoy a discounted registration fee, and the conference is open to all members of the research administration community.

## NCURA MEETING DATES

### Annual Meeting

**58th Annual Meeting:**  
August 7 – 10, 2016 ~ Washington, DC

**59th Annual Meeting:**  
August 6 – 9, 2017 ~ Washington, DC

**60th Annual Meeting:**  
August 5 – 8, 2018 ~ Washington, DC

### PRA

March 8 – 10, 2017 ~ San Diego, CA

### FRA

March 11 – 13, 2017 ~ San Diego, CA



## TRAVELING WORKSHOPS

NCURA offers 6 different workshops that are 2 or 2 ½ days and travel around the country throughout the year. And, with a commitment of 60 participants, NCURA can bring one of these 6 workshops to your campus!



### LEVEL I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration

Individuals involved in sponsored projects administration are faced with a multitude of challenges: becoming knowledgeable about federal regulations and individual agency requirements, providing assistance to faculty, gathering information, administration of awards, and many other tasks. The purpose of this program is to provide participants (this program is intended primarily for the newcomer – less than 2 years experience) with a broad overview of the various aspects of sponsored projects administration, including preparation and review of proposals, negotiation and acceptance of awards, financial and administrative management, closeout and audit, as well as the relevant compliance issues.

### LEVEL II: Sponsored Project Administration: Critical Issues in Research Administration (SPA II)

For more experienced research administrators, NCURA created Sponsored Project Administration: Level Two, Critical Issues in Research Administration (commonly referred to as “SPA II”). This program offers participants an opportunity for in-depth instruction in four core aspects of research administration: institutional compliance responsibilities, proposal creation and submission, contract and subaward review, and post award financial administration. Each of these topics will be explored through a combination of case study analysis and discussion.

### Financial Research Administration Workshop (FRA)

The Financial Research Administration Workshop focuses primarily on the financial aspects of research administration. This workshop provides an in-depth look at financial compliance issues through a combination of lecture, case studies, review of Federal audit reports, and a discussion of best practices. The workshop presents the financial issues of sponsored programs management using a cradle-to-grave award lifecycle approach, and discusses the impact of the financial issues at each stage of award management.



*"I greatly enjoyed the dynamic employed by the presenters, who were all clearly collegial and comfortable with each other's differing styles. The depth and breadth of their knowledge and passion for the subject matter was clear, yet they were still accessible and entertaining."*

Michael Gouin-Hart  
Grant Developer, Spectrum Health Hospitals

## Departmental Research Administration Workshop (DRA)

Administrators who work at the department and college level have unique challenges. Like central offices, we must have the knowledge of pre- and post-award functions. What distinguishes the departmental research administrator from other research support functions is being intimately involved with all facets of the administration process, daily interaction with faculty, as well as other departmental-specific responsibilities.

This program examines the foundations of research administration in the context of departmental administration – the transactional level. The program will concentrate on applying best practices to a department administrator's day-to-day activities.

### **NEW** NCURA Workshops: Global Edition

NCURA currently offers the following workshops globally:

- ✓ Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
- ✓ Level II: Sponsored Project Administration, Critical Issues in Research Administration (SPA II)
- ✓ Financial Research Administration

*For information on how you can bring this workshop to your country, please send your request to [NCURAGlobal@ncura.edu](mailto:NCURAGlobal@ncura.edu)*

## Export Controls Workshop

This NCURA workshop will introduce the primary U.S. export control regulations and explain how they apply to an academic environment. With this understanding, helpful tools and exercises will be introduced which will show participants how to identify export controls risk at their institutions and then how to establish an effective program to manage this risk.

## Research Administration: The Practical Side of Leadership Workshop

For many involved in sponsored programs administration, moving into a management position is a goal. While a wealth of information is available on leadership, this workshop is focused on the practical aspects of leadership in the research administration profession. The workshop will be valuable for managing your career path to reach your goal, for enhancing your existing leadership skills, or for building strengths as a senior research administrator.

This workshop will broadly concentrate on the following areas as they relate to research administration.

- ✓ leadership and management
- ✓ education and communication
- ✓ goal and priority setting

### UPCOMING WORKSHOP DATES

#### May 16-18, 2016 ~ Washington, DC

Host Hotel: Georgetown University Hotel and Conference Center

- ~ Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop

### Registration now open!

#### June 27-29, 2016 ~ Chicago, IL

Host Hotel: The Drake Hotel

- ~ Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop
- ~ Departmental Research Administration Workshop
- ~ Financial Research Administration Workshop
- ~ Export Controls Workshop



## ONLINE EDUCATION

Find out more at  
[ncura.edu/education](http://ncura.edu/education)



### NCURA 8 Week Online Tutorials - Learn at Your Own Pace!

*These primers are intended for those new to each area or who have had very limited exposure.*

#### **Primer on Clinical Trials**

The course will focus on key administrative, financial, and regulatory issues that arise in planning, funding, conducting, and closing-out clinical trials.

#### **Primer on Federal Contracting**

Since Federal contracts are very different from federal grants, we have developed a thorough overview of this complex process.

#### **Primer on Subawards**

This online tutorial is focused on subcontracting programmatic effort under federal grants and other financial assistance awards. "Subcontracting" and "third party agreements" cover a wide variety of activities. The course has been divided into a series of lessons that deal with aspects of the subaward crucial to the Research Administrator.

#### **Primer on Intellectual Property in Research Agreements**

This online introductory course is designed for university personnel working in contracts and grants, sponsored research and technology transfer offices. Its goal is to provide a basic background in issues of intellectual property management and practice in analyzing and drafting research and licensing agreements.





*“NCURA provides what I have found invaluable in becoming the person and professional that I am today.”*

Judy Fredenberg,  
Director, Research and Sponsored Programs,  
University of Montana

## Webinars

Check out NCURA's outstanding Video Webinars!

- ✓ The Right Metrics: Choosing, Measuring and Evaluating Metrics to Drive Performance Success in Your Office
- ✓ Is it a Gift or a Grant and other Critical Funding Mechanisms Your Staff Should Know
- ✓ Save Your Institution Millions: Mitigating Institutional Risk of Research Misconduct
- ✓ Going Global: What Your Institution Needs to Know about Managing Research Without Borders
- ✓ Crowd Funding: An Enormous Opportunity at Your Fingertips
- ✓ Creating the Cohesive Team Your Office Needs to Thrive

Check out these and more at [onlinelearning.ncura.edu](http://onlinelearning.ncura.edu)

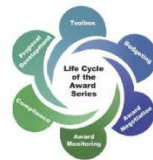
Here's what people are saying  
about our webinars:

*“The presenters were excellent!”*

*“Thank you, I learned some important  
concepts that I had not even considered!”*

*“I really love the NCURA webinars!”*

## Life Cycle Series



Research Administration in its many varied facets continuously evolves, and most universities and colleges are challenged to keep up with the increasingly complex, ever-changing environment. Perhaps the most compelling of these challenges is how institutions will create and sustain a

knowledgeable professional workforce – research administrators who not only understand the new rules and regulations, but can also apply this knowledge in a fast paced environment.

NCURA has developed a unique approach to meeting this challenge, offering a new video webinar series, with a twist. The Life Cycle of the Award Series is designed to offer institutions options in providing professional growth opportunities for grant managers and research administration personnel.

**Format:** The series can be viewed as live video webinars, and/or as a recorded training tool for institutions to build customizable training programs for grant managers at all levels.

This new companion Workbook will include multiple examples of forms, policies, case studies, and recommendations for using other NCURA resources available to the membership.

### Life Cycle Series

- ✓ The Toolbox for Research Administrators
- ✓ Proposal Development – 3 Part Series
- ✓ Pre-Award / Budgeting – 3 Part Series
- ✓ Award Negotiation and Acceptance – 3 Part Series
- ✓ Award Monitoring/Award Management
- ✓ Compliance

Available at [onlinelearning.ncura.edu](http://onlinelearning.ncura.edu)



## PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMS

Find out more on  
[www.ncura.edu](http://www.ncura.edu)



### Publications

Need to expand your knowledge but have a limited training budget? Visit the NCURA Store for more information on these affordable resources!

- ✓ A Primer on Clinical Trials for the Research Administrator, Second Edition
- ✓ Cost Sharing: An Overview, Second Edition **NEW**
- ✓ Cost Accounting Standards
- ✓ Compensation – Personal Services: Managing and Reporting Effort **NEW**
- ✓ Facilities and Administrative Costs in Higher Education, Second Edition **NEW**
- ✓ Establishing and Managing an Office of Sponsored Programs at Non-Research Intensive Colleges and Universities, Third Edition
- ✓ A Primer on Intellectual Property, Second Edition **NEW**
- ✓ The Role of Research Administration, Third Edition
- ✓ Writing and Negotiating Subawards Under Federal Prime Awards, Second Edition
- ✓ Circular A-21 Mini-Guide
- ✓ Circular A-110 Mini-Guide
- ✓ Circular A-133 Mini-Guide
- ✓ OMB Uniform Guidance Desk Reference **NEW**
- ✓ Regulation and Compliance: A Compendium of Regulations and Certifications Applicable to Sponsored Programs
- ✓ Sponsored Research Administration: A Guide to Effective Strategies and Recommended Practices

### Research Management Review (RMR)– NCURA's Online Scholarly Journal

As the online scholarly journal for the National Council of University Research Administrators, the RMR is concerned with the broad range of issues affecting the administration of research and the changing research environment at the national and international levels. The RMR provides a forum for the dissemination of knowledge about the study and practice of the research administration profession.



*“NCURA is the best organization  
for developing those relationships  
that are going to get you through a  
career in research administration.”*

Cindy Hope,  
Assistant Vice President for  
Research & Director, Sponsored Programs,  
The University of Alabama

### NCURA Magazine

NCURA's magazine is published six times a year with cutting edge pieces on management, perspectives on federal policy written by members and non-members, and the latest information and explanations on topics of interest to research administrators. NCURA Magazine's Monday's e-Xtra, a supplement to the Magazine, provides timely and important information for NCURA members in an easy to read, brief format sent directly to your inbox each week.

### Fellowship Program

The Fellowship program has two underlying objectives: (i) the training of research administrators, and (ii) enhancing U.S. and foreign research collaboration. This program is intended to reduce barriers to international research administration and create an administrative environment conducive to international collaboration.

The program will provide an opportunity for U.S. research administrators to travel to research organizations abroad and immerse themselves in a program of mutual learning and knowledge exchange.

### Peer Review Program

Are you looking to enhance your sponsored programs operation or to engage leadership in a discussion about research administration? In a confidential process similar to an academic program review, NCURA matches a team of senior research administrators to your institution. The review uses National Standards that represent the core and vital functions of sponsored programs regardless of size and type of institution. After reviewing background materials you provide, the Reviewers conduct 360-degree interviews with institutional stakeholders during a site visit. At the completion of the review, the institution receives a detailed written report that provides valuable feedback addressing program strengths and areas for improvement. Use the peer review for risk management/ compliance, enhanced faculty service, operational efficiencies, business process improvement, and improved communications.

### Peer Advisory Services

**Research Administration Planning** is geared to institutions that would like assistance in conceptualizing the process for developing new or revised policies, procedures, and management structures, in the context of U.S. based best practices. The focus assists the institution in integrating commitments for extramural funding and conceptualizing and strategizing longer-term plans for establishing a solid foundation for research administration.

**Focused Analysis** brings to you senior research administrator expertise to analyze a specific research administration function drawn from the National Standards and to provide an analysis based on U.S. best practices.

**Directed Education** brings the senior research administrator's expertise to provide targeted education at your institution in an area that is critical to helping you build a solid research administration infrastructure and to manage risk. The directed education is tailored to your specific topic or need.

*“NCURA's was the most detailed and  
thorough external review we have received.  
It was objective, incisive, and provided  
recommendations the university will act on  
to improve our research administration.”*

Vice President for Research, Research University

*Coming Soon: On-demand downloadable publications*