The Source

Office of Sponsored Projects

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Fall 2011

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OSP Welcomes Jennifer Scott

Jennifer Scott is the Office of Sponsored Projects' newest employee. Jennifer took over the duties of Kathy Lantz (who retired in December 2010) in March of 2011. In her role as the post-award assistant in the office, Jennifer assists faculty members and staff who have current active sponsored projects. She is responsible for grant and contract negotiation, issuing sub-agreements, account establishment, budget modifications, personnel paperwork, and serving as the office liaison with the sponsoring agency grants management personnel.

Jennifer Scott, Grants and Contracts Administrator I (Post-Award)

Jennifer came to us from Carl Sandburg College where she served as Coordinator of the Extension Center, but she is not new to WIU. She has worked in Financial Aid and Non-Credit Programs in the past. Since Jennifer has just a few months of experience in the office, we thought we'd check in and see how things are going.

Now that you have been in your current position for a few months, tell us what the biggest challenges are for the position or for you personally.

Since each project has a different sponsoring agency, it's tough to know how each agency handles agreements, modifications, extensions, budget revisions, etc. The biggest challenges are not knowing what paperwork has to be completed in each situation and who I should contact at each agency. As I get more experienced in my position, I will learn who to contact for questions. It seems that paperwork/forms, rules, and regulations are always changing at the agencies and at WIU, so as long as I know who to contact, I should be in good shape!

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Personnel

Beth Seaton, Director of Sponsored Projects
Jill Marshall, Administrative Assistant (Pre-Award)
Jennifer Scott, Grants and Contracts Administrator I (Post-Award)
Angela J. Tee, Compliance Specialist
Danette Phelps, Staff Clerk
Kristin Schramer, Graduate Assistant
Zanny O'Donnell, Office Assistant

Spring 2011 University Research Council Grant Recipients

Julia Albaracin, Political Science
"Latinas and HIV Prevention: A Multidimensional Approach to Empowerment and Health," $3,924

Tamara Bories, Kinesiology
"Efficacy of a Rural Non-Competitive Youth Running Program," $4,580

Laurian Bowles, Sociology and Anthropology
"From Brain Drain to Capital Gain: Upper Class Market Women and Cosmopolitanism in Ghana," $3,693

Ute Chamberlain, History
"Women and Gender in Nineteenth-Century German-American Communities in the Midwest," $4,125

Jongnam Choi, Geography
"Qualifying the Impact of Rainfall on Carbon Sinks in the Subtropical Forests Using Remotely Sensed Data and CO_2 Emission Measurement," $4,200

Bradley Dilger and Neil Baird, English and Journalism
"Transfer @ Transfer: Ease, Negotiation and Writing in the Major," $4,989

Julie Herbstrith, Psychology
"Using Implicit and Explicit Prejudice Measures to Assess Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes Toward Gay and Lesbian Parents," $4,780

URC Internal Grants Competition
New Funding Cycles Announced

The University Research Council (URC) has announced that the deadline for the Fall 2011 Internal Grants Competition is 12:00 PM on Tuesday, October 4, 2011.

URC support is intended to promote research, or its scholarly equivalent, in appropriate fields by providing seed money for the initiation of new, one-year projects. Priority will be given to those proposals that are likely to result in external funding and publication in peer-refereed journals, or exhibitions and performances.

Eligible applicants include tenured or tenure-track faculty members who are not members of the URC at the time of application. An individual may not be an applicant or co-applicant on more than one proposal per funding cycle.

Proposed projects may not be for dissertation research or used in any way to fulfill degree requirements. In addition, projects cannot be considered for textbook writing, curriculum development, or personal development.

Application materials are attached and are available on the OSP website at wiu.edu/sponsored_projects/urc/urc_guide_and_forms.php.

The URC will hold this final Fall semester competition with a deadline of October 4, 2011. After that, the URC will hold one annual competition each year with project dates to coincide with the fiscal year of July 1-June 30 (see text box below). The URC will fund the one annual competition at a level consistent with what has been funded in each year's two funding cycles—no decrease in annual funding is anticipated. This consolidation of funding cycles will allow for more consistent and efficient use of available funds.

The OSP will conduct a technical assistance workshop for those interested in applying to the Fall 2011 competition. The workshop will be held on September 15 from 3:00-4:00 PM in the Malpass Library, Room 180. Please register with CITR at wiu.edu/CITR or call OSP at (309) 298-1191.

Please don't hesitate to contact OSP at (309) 298-1191 for further information.

Future anticipated funding cycles and deadline dates are as follows:

	Anticipated Deadline	Anticipated Project Dates
Fall 2011	October 4, 2011	November 1, 2011 – October 30, 2012
FY13	April 15, 2012	July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013
FY14	April 15, 2013	July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014
FY15	April 15, 2014	July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

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What qualifications or skills do you think you brought with you that have best prepared you for your position?

I think working with various types of people with different personalities is tough sometimes, but my experience working with faculty, staff, and students at Carl Sandburg College and even my experience in previous management positions prepared me in many ways for this job. I also think that my organizational skills and being able to effectively prioritize has helped me in my position. It is essential for me to be able to jump from one project to another, be aware of the status of each project, and always follow-up on pending issues.

When you were hired for this position we told you that the answer to almost every question you will encounter is, "It depends." Can you comment on that? Do you find that frustrating?

First of all, you were right! Every situation is different, and there aren't many definitive answers. I don't find it frustrating. I find it interesting because it makes me dig deeper to find the right way to handle that particular situation. Overall, it allows me to learn more about each project and more about my position.

Sometimes, no matter how much we would like to allow an expenditure or activity on a grant or contract to take place, we have to tell a faculty member "No." Has that been hard?

No, it hasn't been hard because I think if you politely explain why the expense or activity isn't allowed, people may not like the answer, but they usually understand. We are here to help, so I would hope that they appreciate the fact that I am telling them no because it is in their best interest and in the interest of the University to only allow expenses and activities that are permitted in the grant or contract. If we don't make the right decisions, it jeopardizes the funding of that particular project and even funding of future projects.

What do you like the least about the work you now do?

I haven't found anything in my position that I don't like, but what I like the least is playing the waiting game. Sometimes it can take weeks or even months to get one simple task completed. There are usually multiple steps involved in finalizing paperwork, so everything takes time to process when materials have to pass through so many people and offices at WIU and each agency. The plus side of that is there are many approvers who look over documents, so if there are pieces of the puzzle that one person may not be aware of or if there are new laws or regulations, someone will catch it.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I have three favorite parts of my job. First of all, I enjoy learning about the interesting projects that our faculty and employees are involved in. Secondly, I get to work with many types of people at all levels across our campus, as well as other campuses and agencies. Lastly, I like that every day brings new challenges. Because every project is different and every agency is different, it makes every day different!

Greetings from the American Council of Learned Societies!

ACLS is pleased to let you know that the 2011-2012 ACLS fellowship competitions are now open. You will find the most updated and comprehensive information on all ACLS programs on the ACLS website: www.acls.org/programs/comps. As in previous years, the majority of competition deadlines are in the early fall.

ACLS awarded nearly $15 million in research support to over 350 scholars worldwide during the past year. Fellows' profiles, along with research abstracts, are accessible at www.acls.org/fellows/new.

ACLS is looking forward to an equally successful fellowships season in 2011-2012.

Remember to check out the Grants Resource Center (GRC) for the latest news on grant announcements, upcoming grant deadlines, federal agency updates, and much more.
Go to aascu.org/grc and enter the username "WIU" and the password "grants."

Faculty Spotlight – Andrea Porras-Alfaro, Department of Biological Sciences

Dr. Andrea Porras-Alfaro started her scientific training a long way from Macomb in Costa Rica, where she completed her undergraduate degree. From there, she moved on to the University of Puerto Rico for her Master's degree in Biology and then to the University of New Mexico to complete her Ph.D. in Biology. She served as research faculty at UNM before coming to Western Illinois University in the fall of 2009. I sat down with her recently to talk about her research.

How did you choose to come to WIU?

I came to Western because I wanted to teach courses in the area of mycology. Many biology departments at other schools do not have positions for mycologists, but WIU did. Coming here allowed me to teach what I know best and pursue my goal of preparing students to conduct research in mycology and microbiology. I enjoy teaching in the classroom and in the lab; at Western, I can do both.

Since I am not a biologist, can you explain to me what mycology is, and why is it important?

Mycology is the branch of biology that studies fungi. Fungi are extremely important because of their role as nature's recyclers. They have medical applications, are commonly used in industrial processes, and are major human and plant pathogens. In my lab, we use molecular methods to study fungal communities and their role in nature.

You have some funded projects ongoing right now. Can you tell me about those?

Right now, I have three funded projects. The first one is a three-year project in collaboration with the University of New Mexico and the University of California, Berkeley, funded by the National Science Foundation. In this project, we are studying fungi associated with plants in an alpine tundra in Colorado. We are also studying the effect of nitrogen on plant and fungal communities. We have another project, funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, to study white-nose syndrome. White-nose is a new fungal disease that has killed at least a million bats in the U.S. I collaborate with the Forest Service and University of Florida on this project. My third funded project is in collaboration with Los Alamos National Laboratory-DOE. We are working on an automated-system to classify fungal sequences from environmental samples.

How do these funded projects provide opportunities for your students?

I have four to five students working on each of my funded projects. Field and laboratory work are very expensive, but through my grant funding, my students are able to participate in meaningful research activities. They learn the entire scientific process hands-on in a way that cannot be taught in the classroom. At present, students do need research experience to be competitive, both in academia and industry.

Thanks to grant funding and support from the Biology department and the College of Arts and Sciences, my students gave more than 20 presentations in the last two years and obtained 10 small grants and awards. This year, my students presented their research at meetings in Alaska and Missouri. They have been able to interact with nationwide experts and to do collaborative work with colleagues from different areas of expertise. One of my students conducted field work in Colorado, and I had the visit of a post-doctoral researcher from UC-Berkeley to work with my students in the lab. All these research experiences are needed to train the future generation of independent researchers and entrepreneurs.

The benefits of cutting-edge research projects extend beyond those students working directly on the projects. For instance, I frequently use examples of research conducted by my students in my lectures (including FYE courses) to show that WIU students have opportunities of carrying out quality research even if Western is not considered a research institution. I am glad to see that the administration understands that to accomplish our goal of excellence in higher education, we must offer research experiences to our students, which cannot be given unless research activities are vigorously supported.

I know you have been involved in some outreach activities as well.

Yes, my students and I have organized a series of outreach activities to promote science to the general public and other students. It is imperative that scientists work with the public to ensure that all members of society understand the importance of scientific inquiry. I also enjoy being part of activities that get children excited about science. We had a mushroom display table at the 2010 Earth Day event at Macomb High School, and we held a Biology/Astronomy night for preschool children

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in collaboration with the Physics Department and the Physical Sciences Library.

If you were asked to give advice to new faculty members who want to get started pursuing grant funds for their research, what would you say?

I would tell them to start small, to get some experience on what they may realistically be able to handle before trying to get a big grant, particularly in the case of faculty with heavy teaching loads. Have other faculty members read the draft proposals, and work with the Office of Sponsored Projects and program officers. Review funded grants and published papers to see the scientific level that is expected. At present, funding is very hard to get, and the standards are very high, which is quite evident when studying prior successfully funded proposals. Also, I would say not to get discouraged when a proposal is rejected. Rejection is part of the process. It is also really important to let the Chair and Dean know all research needs.

For more information about the Fungal Molecular Ecology Lab, visit http://faculty.wiu.edu/a-porras-alfaro.

Outreach activity: 2010 Earth Day at Macomb High School – Mushroom display for general public with participation of WIU undergraduate and graduate students

WIU Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day 2010 – Undergraduate and graduate students from the Fungal Molecular Ecology Laboratory: Srivathsan Vijayaraghavan, Zachary Gossage, Adam Ochoa, Tabitha Williams, Dr. Porras-Alfaro, and Sagar Yeraballi

AERA Education Research Grants

Grants Resource Center members, like WIU, are always interested in education research funding to support faculty development. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is often the first choice, but many research administrators may not be aware of other organizations that sponsor education research opportunities. The American Educational Research Association (AERA) is one such organization that faculty members can look to for support in this popular funding area.

AERA was founded in 1916 "to improve the educational process by encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education and evaluation." It maintains a membership of over 25,000 professionals with varied experience as educators, administrators, behavioral scientists, counselors, and evaluators. AERA, in partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and ED's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), offers Research Grants and Dissertation Grants through its AERA Grants Program. Competitions occur three times per year, and topics can cover a wide range of educational issues:

- Research Grants support researchers who have received their doctoral degrees by the start of the grant. Applicants may be U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or non-U.S. citizens. Awards are up to $20,000 for one-year projects or up to $35,000 for two-year projects.

- Dissertation Grants support advanced graduate students while they are writing their dissertations. Applicants may be U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or non-U.S. citizens. Awards are up to $20,000 for one-year projects.

Interested applicants may view AERA's website at www.aera.net/Default.aspx?id=26 for details on these programs and others as information becomes available. Additionally, interested applicants are encouraged to view abstracts of past funded research (www.aera.net/grantsprogram/abstract_list/FundResGrants.html) and dissertation (www.aera.net/grantsprogram/abstract_list/FundDissGrants.html) projects.

WIU Finalizes DoD Contract for QC Manufacturing Lab

June 27, 2011

MACOMB/MOLINE, IL — In the last decade, the U.S. military has seen an increased demand for high performance structural materials that are also lightweight. More specifically, the Army has seen an increased demand for lightweight armament systems using titanium, aluminum, and magnesium. This challenge has led to the creation of the Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab (QCML), a nonprofit research and development company at the Rock Island Arsenal, which is operated under contract with Western Illinois University's College of Business and Technology (CBT).

Last month, the QCML and WIU finalized a five-year contract with the Department of Defense for research and development of technologies and capabilities associated with manufacturing and processing parts using titanium, aluminum, magnesium, and other lightweight metals and metal composites.

"Current military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have clearly demonstrated the need for lightweight materials to be placed into service in a broad range of military equipment," said Col. James O. Fly, Jr., commander, Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center. "It is imperative that strategic advances be made to exploit existing and emerging manufacturing techniques and lightweight materials."

The development capabilities of the QCML will have an immediate application in armament manufacturing to provide better resources for the U.S. military and will provide manufacturing opportunities for commercial industries, especially in the Quad Cities area.

"Western and the Rock Island Arsenal have been successful partners in education for many years, and we are pleased to enter into this new partnership with the Arsenal and Department of Defense that provides a boost to the region's economic development opportunities while also providing experience to our Engineering students," said WIU President Al Goldfarb.

The QCML cooperative contract is based on annual funding of $4 million which will provide for the acquisition of additional sophisticated equipment to conduct high-level manufacturing research and development.

"The QCML's goal is to meet the dual objectives of technology development and prototype application. The goal of the program is to transfer technology through prototype demonstrations in manufacturing of various armament applications to the Rock Island Arsenal," said QCML Executive Director Jim Sears, a national leader in manufacturing technologies with a background in titanium processing technologies, NNSM, additive manufacturing approaches, powder metallurgy, and emerging technologies. "The focus of this program is Near Net Shape Manufacturing (NNSM) of titanium and other advanced metals for armament systems."

Long term, the vision is to build a technological "cluster" of new companies in the Quad Cities region that focus on advanced metal technologies. Through this venture, Western would transfer or license QCML proprietary technologies to other manufacturing companies. Several companies have already expressed interest in locating their operations near the QCML to benefit from these opportunities, according to Sears. He noted that HF Webster has already started planning for relocation to the technology cluster, with the potential of retaining a significant number of jobs at the Arsenal and adding new jobs to the QC region.

"This venture is a win-win all around. It's perfectly aligned with WIU's Engineering program," said CBT Dean Tom Erekson. "Through the QCML, our Engineering students have opportunities to work with sophisticated equipment, complete internships, conduct research, and help in the development of these new technologies."

WIU's first two Engineering graduates participated in research at the QCML last year.

The region's interests are represented through the QCML's nine-member board of directors. The team includes leaders from the military, manufacturing, and higher education across the region.

"This has been such an outstanding community effort. From the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce to the cities' mayors, all of this wouldn't exist if it weren't for the cooperation and vision of the community," QCML Board Chair Rick John pointed out.

"Through these efforts within the community, we're also helping to secure a more stable future for the Arsenal," Sears added. "I can't thank our national legislators enough—Senators Durbin, Grassley, Harkin, and Kirk and Representatives Braley, Loebsack, and Schilling. With their help, we're creating a viable long-term entity that will create advanced, technology-based jobs for the Quad Cities region."

For additional information, contact Jim Sears at JW-Sears@wiu.edu or visit QCML.org.

Posted by University Relations, WIU
Phone: (309) 298-1993
Fax: (309) 298-1606

Compliance Corner

Welcome to another edition of Compliance Corner. For this edition, I would like to talk about a hot topic in research compliance. For the first time in 20 years, the Common Rule may be revised. The Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP), in coordination with the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), announced an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM), requesting that the research community provide comment on the need for revisions to the current regulations protecting human subjects who participate in research. The federal regulations protecting human subjects in research, referred to as the Common Rule, have been in place for three decades. Recent legislation, including the President's Executive Order requesting federal agencies to review, modify, and streamline current regulatory provisions, has been the impetus for the conversation regarding whether the current human subjects in research regulations are inadequate and in need of updating. As stated by OHRP, the goal of the ANPRM is to implement more effective and efficient ways to protect human subjects in research, "while facilitating valuable research and reducing burden, delay, and ambiguity for investigators."

The ANPRM outlines seven major areas for proposed change to the current regulatory guidelines:

1. Refinement of the existing risk-based regulatory framework.
2. Utilization of a single IRB review of record for domestic sites of multi-site studies.
3. Improvement of consent forms and the consent process.
4. Establishment of mandatory data security and information protection standards for all studies that involve identifiable or potentially identifiable data.
5. Establishment of an improved, more systematic approach for the collection and analysis of data on unanticipated problems and adverse events.
6. Extension of federal regulatory protections to all research, regardless of funding source, conducted at institutions in the U.S. that receive some federal funding from a Common Rule agency for research with human subjects.
7. Improvement in the harmonization of regulations and related agency guidance.

The document which sets forth the proposed revisions is available at www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2011-18792_PI.pdf. Comments are due by 5:00 PM (ET) Wednesday, October 26, 2011. A summary table of the proposed changes is available from OHRP at www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/anprmchangetable.html.

The advanced notice of proposed rulemaking is step one in a long process. The research community's comments will be reviewed from the ANPRM period and followed with a notice of proposed rule making (NPRM). There will be an open comment period during the NPRM step as well. Finally, once comments have been received and reviewed, new regulations will be created and implemented. The Office of Sponsored Projects will continue to keep the campus community current of new developments. If you have questions about the notice of intent to revise the Common Rule, please contact OSP at (309) 298-1191.

Remember to submit your complete electronic grant applications to OSP at least two working days prior to the funding agency's deadline.

First Summer Proposal Writing Program

The Office of Sponsored Projects hosted a grant proposal planning program on May 20, 2011. The program was presented to 11 faculty members completing their first year at WIU.

Program topics included the following:

- Introduction to OSP
- Funding searches
- How to read a grant solicitation
- Parts of a proposal
- Budget development
- Compliance issues
- Writing tips
- Review process
- Grants administration
- Lessons learned by current faculty grant recipients

Current successful grant recipients participating in the panel discussion included Sean Jenkins, Biological Sciences; Mike Godard, Kinesiology; Win Phippen, Agriculture; and Joyce Johanson, Center for Best Practices in Early Childhood Education.

Participants will receive $1,000 for expenses related to their research upon successful completion and submission of an approved competitive grant proposal to an external agency.

The following first-year faculty members participated in the program:

Laurian Bowles, Sociology and Anthropology
Rebekah Buchanan, English and Journalism
Christopher Carpenter, Communication
Jonathan Day, Political Science
Ray Diez, Engineering Technology
Denise Gravitt, Engineering Technology
Hyeyoung Lim, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration
Shawn Parmanand, Counselor Education
Bridget Welch, Sociology and Anthropology
Seung-won Yoon, Instructional Design and Technology
Doshik Yun, Communication

New NSF Data Management Plan Requirements

As of January 18 of this year, proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) must include a supplementary document of no more than two pages labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results. Proposals that do not include a DMP will not be submitted. For more information about this new requirement, please see the *Grant Proposal Guide*, Chapter II.C.2.j, at www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp#dmp and the Data Management and Sharing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmpfaqs.jsp.

Office of Sponsored Projects Events – Fall 2011

Understanding the Applicability of FERPA and PPRA Regulations in Educational Research Projects
Tuesday, September 13 ***10:00-11:00 AM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

This session will provide Principal Investigators with an introduction to the FERPA and PPRA regulations as they relate to research conducted at WIU and by affiliates of WIU. Attendees will be provided with relevant regulatory requirements and best practice examples to utilize in the field.

URC Technical Assistance Workshop
Thursday, September 15 ***3:00-4:00 PM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

This workshop is designed for faculty who are planning to submit a proposal to the Fall 2011 University Research Council grant program. OSP staff will answer both application preparation and programmatic questions.

Understanding the Applicability of FERPA and PPRA Regulations in Educational Research Projects
Wednesday, September 21 ***10:00-11:00 AM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

This session will provide Principal Investigators with an introduction to the FERPA and PPRA regulations as they relate to research conducted at WIU and by affiliates of WIU. Attendees will be provided with relevant regulatory requirements and best practice examples to utilize in the field.

Grants at WIU: How to Get Started
Thursday, September 29 ***2:30-4:00 PM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

OSP staff will introduce participants to the steps that should be taken when applying for grant funding at WIU. We will review the University policies and procedures to follow to ensure a smooth proposal submission.

Resources for Grant Funding Source Identification
Monday, October 10 ***12:00-1:00 PM*** ***Malpass Library, 3rd Floor Computer Lab***

This workshop will give participants the opportunity to identify external sponsors for their research, instructional, or public service projects. Participants will learn to search IRIS, Grants.gov, GRC GrantSearch, and other sources of grant funding.

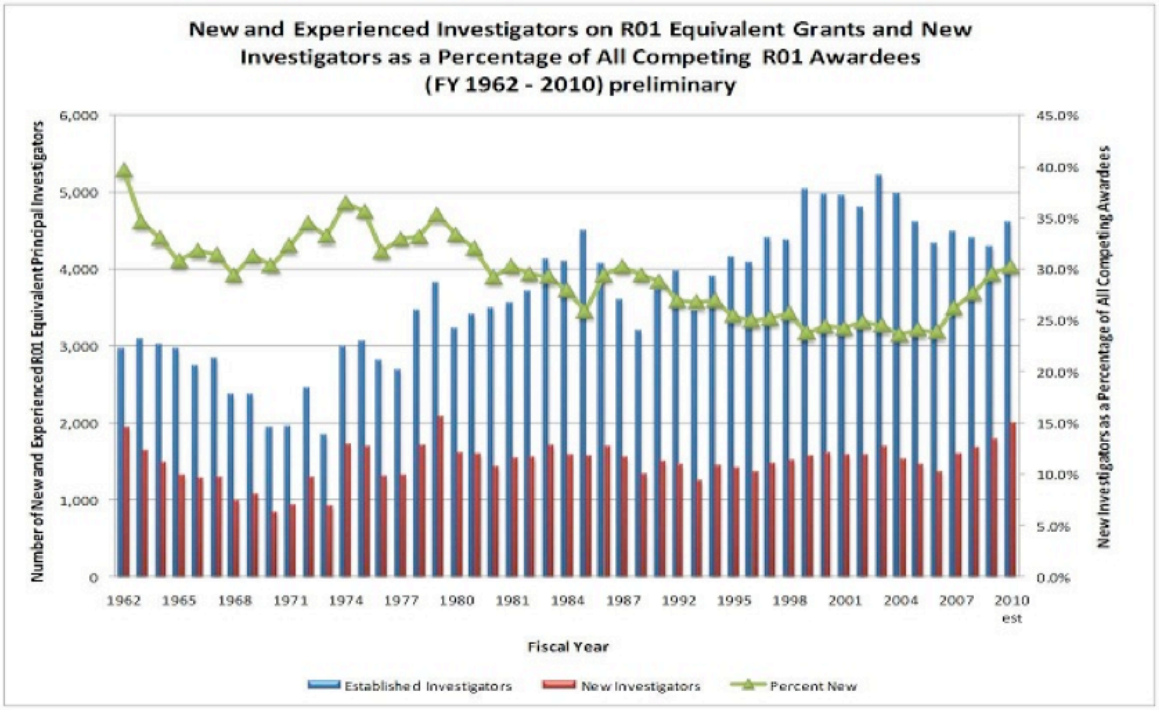
Basics of Grant/Contract Proposal Budgeting
Thursday, October 20 ***3:00-4:00 PM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

This workshop is designed to assist faculty in preparing budgets for their grant proposals. We will discuss issues involved in budgeting for faculty salaries (release time/supplemental pay), graduate assistants and undergraduate students, and fringe benefits. We will also cover State of Illinois travel regulations, equipment purchases, indirect costs, and other costs normally included in grant/contract budgets.

Understanding Indirect Costs
Monday, November 7 ***3:00-4:00 PM*** ***Malpass Library, Room 180***

What are indirect costs and why must they be included in my grant/contract budget? OSP staff will explain what indirect costs are and how the University's rate is negotiated. We will also discuss how to calculate the amount of indirect costs to include in your budget and what happens to these funds when they come back to the University.

NIH: Supporting Early Stage Investigators



The entry of new investigators into the ranks of independent, National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded researchers is essential to the health of this country's biomedical research enterprise. I believe they bring fresh ideas and technologies to existing biomedical research problems, and they pioneer new areas of investigation. Over the years, NIH has created special programs to assist new investigators in obtaining independent research funding. These programs have resulted in the recruitment of more new investigators; however, new investigators are often still many years past their degree-conferral date. Recently, we have focused our attention on encouraging earlier transitions into independent research careers by developing programs that focus specifically on early stage investigators (those researchers who are within ten years of their terminal degree). By shifting new investigator incentives to those at earlier career stages, we hope to shorten the prolonged periods of training.

Beginning in fiscal year 2009, NIH pledged to support new investigators on R01 awards at success rates equivalent to that of established investigators submitting new R01 applications. We continued this policy in fiscal year 2010, and based on preliminary data, we successfully reached our goal. More than 30% of all investigators receiving competing R01 equivalent awards were new investigators, replicating entry rates for new investigators that have not been seen since 1987. It also appears that the average age of new investigators with a Ph.D. has leveled off at slightly less than 42 years.

I can assure you that the NIH remains committed to the support of a stable and sustainable scientific workforce. With innovative ideas, optimism, energy, and fresh perspectives, early stage investigators are an absolutely critical component of the groundbreaking work required to improve the health of our nation. I look forward to the coming year and working with you in partnership to enhance opportunities for tomorrow's scientific workforce.

By Dr. Sally Rockey, Deputy Director for Extramural Research. Reprinted from *OER Nexus*, December 2010.

NIH Launches New Website

By establishing a new interactive website, Feedback NIH (http://feedback.nih.gov), the National Institutes of Health is providing a forum in which individuals throughout the biomedical and behavioral research community can comment, express concerns, and ask questions about the agency's activities. Comments are currently being sought on separate proposals to create a new NIH institute—the Institute for Substance Use, Abuse, and Addiction—and a new NIH center—the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences.

Comments and questions not related to the current discussions may be submitted at any time to NIH-Listens@mail.nih.gov.

What Is OSP?

The mission of the Office of Sponsored Projects at Western Illinois University is to provide comprehensive support services to the University community for the successful administration of externally sponsored projects.

OSP is committed to providing a full range of administrative services to the faculty, staff, and administrative units at Western.

The goal of the OSP staff is to deliver our support services in an efficient and professional manner, which is in full compliance with external sponsoring agency guidelines.

Who to Contact

Beth Seaton, Director – Contact Beth for matters related to the review and approval of proposals to ensure compliance with University and agency policies and procedures, authorized organizational representative approval (official University signature for proposals in addition to certification, assurances, and representation), and administration of University Research Council (URC) selection and awards.

Jill Marshall, Pre-Award Services – Contact Jill for assistance with funding searches, procurement of grant application materials, development of proposals and budgets, electronic submission of proposals, and requests for internal approval forms.

Jennifer Scott, Grants and Contracts Administrator I – Contact Jennifer for services involving the administration of awards, including the receipt and negotiation of all award documents; account establishment; review and processing of all requests for modifications, extensions, and amendments of sponsored projects and processing of payroll forms.

Angela J. Tee, Compliance Specialist – Contact Angela for federal compliance issues, including questions about human subjects in research and Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and procedures.

Danette Phelps, Staff Clerk – Danette's responsibilities include the copying, mailing, and tracking of all proposals; maintaining the database of proposals and awards; making arrangements for workshops and seminars; administration of URC awards; and performing all those other assignments that keep the office running efficiently.

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