Since early 2008, the Office of Sponsored Projects has teamed with the College of Arts and Sciences (CA&S) and the College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) to send five faculty members and one associate dean to the Washington, DC area to attend the Grants Resource Center’s (GRC) Fall and Spring Conferences. GRC holds an external funding conference in the Fall semester and a proposal development conference in the Spring semester. These conferences afford faculty, administrators, and Sponsored Projects staff the opportunities to gain skills and insight directly from grant agency representatives.

Dr. Inessa Levi, CA&S Dean, is pleased with the College’s cooperation with the Office of Sponsored Projects in sending faculty members to these conferences: “We thank the Office of Sponsored Projects for partnering with us on this program. This is a wonderful model for faculty development and faculty success.”

The GRC invites representatives from federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Humanities to attend, as well as representatives from private foundations such as the Kresge Foundation and Spencer Foundation. These agency representatives provide current funding information during general sessions and workshops. In addition, they allow time for individual meetings with conference attendees. Workshops and concurrent sessions are also conducted by representatives from GRC-member universities, including faculty, administrators, and Sponsored Projects’ staff.

In February 2008, CA&S faculty members Richard Musser (Biological Sciences), Susan Romano (Biological Sciences), Gilles Kouassi (Chemistry), Marie-Claire Koissi-Kouassi (Math), and Associate Dean Lance Ternasky (COEHS) attended the “Successful Proposal Development” conference.

Dr. Ternasky described his experience as follows:

I had the pleasure of attending a recent GRC conference in Washington, DC. I found the experience valuable for a number of reasons. The direct access to program officers streamlines the submission process and increases the likelihood of securing funding, if only because it reduces the chances of misunderstanding or underestimating certain key elements of an RFP. The conference also offered a forum in which colleagues from similar institutions could compare notes about grant-funding opportunities.
Fall 2008 University Research Council Grant Recipients

Matthew Blankenship, Psychology
“The Effects of Amyloid-Derived Diffusible Ligands (ADDLs) on the Acquisition of a Working-Memory Dependent Radial Arm Task and the Potentially Protective Effects of Insulin,” $4,982

Lee Brice, History
“Wealthy Corinth Revisited: A Greek Legacy of Small Denomination Coins,” $5,000

Sue Hum-Musser, Biological Sciences
“Effects of Ozone on Plant Growth: The Impacts of an Environmental Toxin on Plant Gene Expression,” $5,000

Xiaoping Pan, Chemistry
“Does Metal Oxide Nanoparticle Exposure Cause Oxidative Stress and Abbreant MicroRNA Expression?,” $5,000

T. K. Vinod, Chemistry
“Oxidative Transformations of Alkenes with Eco-Friendly Reagents,” $5,000

Pengquian Wang, Physics
“Laser Spectroscopy of Hydrated Nucleobases,” $4,700

University Research Council Members

Ken Hawkinson .................................................... Associate Provost/Associate Academic Vice President; Chairperson of the URC
Steve Axley .........................................................................................................................................................Management
Gary Daytner ....................................................................................................................................................................................Educational and Interdisciplinary Studies
Samuel Edsall ........................................................................................................................................................................Broadcasting
William Howard ........................................................................................................................................................................Art
Chris Kovacs ........................................................................................................................................................................Kinesiology
Jennifer McNabb ........................................................................................................................................................................History
Leslie Melim ........................................................................................................................................................................Geology
Lora Ebert Wallace ........................................................................................................................................................Sociology and Anthropology
Meng Yu ........................................................................................................................................................................Computer Science

URC Internal Grants Competition Announced

The University Research Council (URC) has announced that the deadline for the Spring 2009 Internal Grants Competition is 12:00 PM on Tuesday, April 7, 2009.

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.

The URC holds a grant competition twice each academic year, with one deadline in October and one in April. In the last competition (October 2008), the URC funded six new projects, with awards totaling over $29,000.

Application materials will be sent to all chairpersons and are also available on the OSP website at wiu.edu/SponsoredProjects/council.

OSP will conduct two technical assistance workshops for potential applicants on Thursday, March 5, 2009. The first session will be held from 12:00 to 1:00 PM and the second identical session will be held from 3:00 to 4:00 PM. Both sessions will take place in Horrabin Hall 60 and will be broadcast to the Quad Cities Campus in room QC 106. The workshops are designed to answer applicants’ questions on how to prepare an effective URC application.

You must contact OSP at (309) 298-1191 to register for either session.
Last April I received e-mail notification from the National Science Foundation (NSF) that a proposal submitted by two WIU faculty members was receiving an award. These are my favorite e-mails! Assistant Professor Anna Valeva from the Department of Information Systems and Decision Sciences and Associate Professor Binto George from the Department of Computer Science collaborated on their proposal to NSF entitled, “Incorporating Usable Security Concepts into Computer Science Curriculum.” The proposal was reviewed favorably and it resulted in a $147,549 three-year NSF Course, Curriculum and Laboratory Improvement (CCLI) grant.

The CCLI program seeks to improve the quality of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for all undergraduate students. The program supports efforts to create, adapt, and disseminate new learning materials and teaching strategies; develop faculty expertise; implement educational innovations; assess learning and evaluate innovations; and conduct research on STEM teaching and learning. This goal makes the CCLI program a great fit for schools like WIU that focus heavily on undergraduate teaching.

I asked Binto and Anna a few questions about their grant.

Tell me how you became interested in applying to the National Science Foundation for grant funding.
We were trying to find ways to improve our curriculum and looking for funds to support these efforts. We came to know about the CCLI program from Jill Marshall in the Office of Sponsored Projects, and we decided to apply despite the fact that NSF grants are fairly competitive and the chance to secure funding was fairly slim.

Did you have any contact with your NSF program officer prior to submitting your proposal?
Yes, the NSF program officer is the most important resource for any grant proposal. It is their program; who knows better? It would be very helpful to check with the program officer before developing your proposal. This way, you can align your ideas with the program’s priorities.

What is the main goal of your project?
The main goal of the project is to add usable security to computer science curriculum. It is well-known that security is as good as the weakest link in the chain. It is probably known that the user is the weakest link when it comes to security. What is probably not known is the fact that often security professionals set users up for failure by designing unfriendly, hard to use user interfaces. This is not a job that Graphical User Interface professionals can do because they often have little background in computer security. Computer security professionals are the stakeholders here. Thus, it is very important that they be educated about usable security.

How does this grant help your students?
We have well-reputed professionals helping shape our course materials. Funds will help us seek feedback from our peers to improve the course materials further. We are able to hire a graduate assistant with NSF funds to work on the project and help students. We are really happy that we can support motivated students and provide an opportunity for professionally relevant experiences. We redesigned our computer security course this semester. Now students understand that computer security should be part of every phase of the software development life cycle. They know that threat analysis and designing safeguards are key elements of building secure software. One of the challenges we had was student background—not having much implementation skills. Although implementation is a relatively small part of the software development process, students would have to spend most of their time on implementation since they are beginning to learn programming. By focusing on the secure analysis/design process rather than implementation we were able to motivate students and help them think. We don’t need any resources other than ourselves to think. Students also did

Continued on page 6
setbacks and successes. Finally, it provided an opportunity for Western faculty to become more familiar with the research activities of their counterparts in other colleges—an opportunity that encourages the sort of interdisciplinary research that the University has long valued.

Dr. Musser and Dr. Romano took advantage of their time in the DC area. In addition to taking in the conference proceedings, they scheduled individual meetings with their program officers on-site at the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia. This was a unique opportunity for them as they were able to meet face-to-face with NSF staff and obtain advice on the preparation of additional fundable grant proposals. “The discussions at the GRC were excellent and provided us insights into successfully obtaining federal funding,” commented Dr. Musser. “In addition, while in Washington, DC, the experience was invaluable in receiving face time to discuss my grant proposal with the program directors.”

Since that time, Dr. Musser along with Dr. Sue Hum-Musser, has been awarded the grant, “RUI: Deciphering Plant-Herbivore Interactions,” from NSF for $350,000 over a three-year period. Dr. Susan Romano, with Dr. Mike Romano, has earned an award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the project, “Genetic Relationship of Decurrent False Aster (Boltonia decurrens) Populations of the Illinois and Mississippi River Floodplain” for $6,600 over a three-year period.

In October 2008, Redina Herman (Geography) and Becky Morrow (Foundation and Development Office) attended the conference, “Targeted Grantseeking: Aligning Institutional Resources and National Priorities,” held in Alexandria, Virginia. Dr. Herman states, “I had a great time and certainly learned a lot for my own use and that I can pass on to colleagues in my department and college. I encourage you to continue to bring along a faculty member to the GRC conference. This trip has certainly opened my eyes to the issues faced by OSP and some of the road blocks in (and ramps to) finding funding.”

The next GRC conference, “Your Competitive Advantage,” will be held in February 2009, and OSP, CAS, and COEHS plan to send the following five faculty members: Michael Godard (Kinesiology), Amy Brock (Geology), Xiaoping Pan (Chemistry), Fedor Andreev (Math), and Kishor Kapale (Physics). We hope these faculty members will find this conference as beneficial to their research endeavors as past attendees.
Compliance Corner

Welcome to another edition of Compliance Corner. For this edition, I will cover some of the basic issues related to conducting research with human subjects here at WIU.

All research that involves human subjects, whether funded or not, that is undertaken by a WIU faculty member, academic staff member, or student, or that is supported by Western Illinois University must be reviewed by the WIU Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval must be granted by the IRB prior to collecting data from any human subjects for research purposes or soliciting subjects for a research study.

Helpful Tips for Conducting Human Subjects Research

1. Applications for review need to be fully completed with all supporting documentation, material, consent, or cover letter needed to complete the study. Failure to turn in complete applications may delay approval. Exempt and Expedited reviews normally take seven to ten days for review, while the Full review process may take up to 30 days. Dates and times for Full review may be found at wiu.edu/sponsoredprojects/news/news.html.

2. Avoid discipline-specific jargon in the IRB application and informed consent. They should both be written so that an individual with limited education can easily read and understand what it is that you are doing.

3. A faculty or staff member must serve as the Primary Investigator (PI) on any research project conducted by a student. This includes all graduate and undergraduate projects, theses, or dissertations.

4. Informed consent documents need to have two types of contact information (e.g., e-mail, office phone) for the PI and IRB administrator. In addition, a statement describing the amount of risk involved must be included. If risk is minimal, the following statement should be used:

   "Risk is no greater than that experienced in normal daily activities."

5. IRB approval, copies of completed informed consents, and data from the study should be organized and stored in such a manner so that the confidentiality of the participants is protected. In the event of an audit, it is the PI’s responsibility to be able to produce this material and demonstrate how it is stored for confidentiality. This includes student research.

6. Complete the NIH online training tutorial for conducting research with human subjects and have a copy on file with our office. The training must be completed for those who are serving in any capacity on a research project. The online training can be found at http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php.

If you have questions about human subjects research and the IRB process at WIU or are interested in discussing the topic in a class, at a faculty meeting, or departmental colloquium, contact the Office of Sponsored Projects at (309) 298-1191. We look forward to helping you with any of your research compliance needs. Additional information can be found at wiu.edu/sponsoredprojects/research_policies/rp_Human_Subjects.html.

– Submitted by John W. Smith

The Office of Sponsored Projects Says Goodbye to Compliance Specialist John W. Smith

The staff of the Office of Sponsored Projects is sadly looking for a new Compliance Specialist. John W. Smith, our Compliance Specialist for the past three years, has taken the position of assistant director of Beu Health Center, effective January 16, 2009. We wish John all the best in his new position!
Continued from page 3

a scaled-down implementation. Next semester, we plan to add usable security as a third perspective in the current approach of viewing security from an offensive and defensive point of view and testing a new 3P learning method. Thus, we hope students will learn that usability is a big part of security and that they will pay attention to human factors as much as technical aspects.

What has been the most frustrating thing about administering your grant so far? What has been the most rewarding thing?
The most rewarding thing was the acknowledgement by NSF that our project is important at the national level. We thankfully acknowledge the help offered by our colleagues, especially Professor Stephen Straub, for valuable inputs. We are thankful to our Chairs Professor Kathy Neumann and Professor Tej Kaul, and Dean Thomas Erekson for their support.

This may sound ironic, but since we are CS/ISDS departments, one would assume that setting up and administering a computer lab should be easy. However, that is not the case. Sometimes it takes months to install software—we wish we had enough help and support to run our facility.

Would you encourage your colleagues to pursue grant funding through the National Science Foundation?
Absolutely. Although getting NSF funding is difficult, even the experience of submitting an unfunded proposal would enrich one’s efforts and improves the chances of future success significantly. So by all means, apply.

I agree—by all means, apply!

“First Summer” Grant Proposal Writing Opportunity

On May 21, 2009, the Office of Sponsored Projects will offer a one-day grant proposal writing session to all interested first-year, tenure-track faculty members. This “First Summer” opportunity is a program offered to all new tenure-track faculty members—there will be no competitive selection process. All first-year, tenure-track faculty members who can attend the full-day session and who commit to submitting a grant proposal to an external agency over the course of the following year are eligible and encouraged to register as an attendee.

Registration materials will be sent to all first-year faculty members in the Spring semester.

As “First Summer” participants, those who complete the training and fulfill the requirement of the program by submitting an eligible proposal to an external agency before the end of fiscal year 2010 (June 30, 2010) will have access to $1,000 to be used for their research needs. Funds may be used toward the purchase of a laptop computer, travel for research collaboration or presentation, supplies needed in the laboratory, student help, or some other line item to further scholarly pursuits.

During the “First Summer” session, faculty members will learn more about searching for external grant support, responding to requests for proposals, the basics of grant writing, developing a budget, the proposal review process, and about how the grant administration process works at Western. They will also benefit from an interactive session with a panel of WIU colleagues who have been successful in their grant pursuits.

Questions about the program can be directed to the Office of Sponsored Projects at (309) 298-1191 or via e-mail to Beth Seaton at b-seaton@wiu.edu.

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/default.htm and enter the username “WIU” and the password “grants.”
Grants at WIU: How to Get Started
**January 29**  
1:00-3:00 PM  
**Union Capitol Rooms, QC 114**
OSP staff will introduce participants to the steps that should be taken when applying for grant funding at WIU. We will review the WIU policies and procedures to follow to ensure a smooth proposal submission.

Basics of Grant Proposal Budgeting
**February 17**  
3:00-4:00 PM  
**Union Capitol Rooms, QC 265A**
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.

URC Technical Assistance Workshop
**March 5**  
12:00-1:00 PM and 3:00-4:00 PM  
**Horrabin Hall 60, QC 106**  
(identical sessions)
These workshops are designed for those who are planning to submit a proposal to the Spring 2009 University Research Council grant program. OSP staff will answer both application preparation and programmatic questions.

Understanding Indirect Costs
**April 1**  
3:00-4:00 PM  
**Union Capitol Rooms, QC 114**
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.

University Research Council Grant Program Deadline
**April 7**  
12:00 PM  
**Sherman Hall 320**
This internal grants program is designed to promote research or its scholarly equivalent in appropriate fields by providing up to $5,000 in seed money for the initiation of new projects with the potential for external funding.

Independent Contracts vs. Sponsored Projects
**April 14**  
2:00-3:00 PM  
**Union Capitol Rooms, QC 114**
Should you enter into an individual consulting agreement or funnel the project through the University as a sponsored project? OSP staff will explain the options available to faculty involved in outside consulting. We will discuss the pros and cons of each option.

“First Summer” Faculty Grant Writing Workshop
**May 21**  
9:00 AM-4:00 PM  
**Stipes Hall 501**
Please contact the Office of Sponsored Projects at (309) 298-1191 to register for this workshop.
NSF Regional Grants Conference

The second National Science Foundation Regional Grants Conference of FY 2009 will be hosted by Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, on March 30-31, 2009.

Key representatives from the NSF as well as your colleagues—faculty, researchers, and grant administrators—representing colleges and universities from around the United States will participate.

This two-day conference is a must, especially for new faculty, researchers, and administrators who want to gain key insight into a wide range of current issues at NSF, including the state of current funding, new and current policies and procedures, and pertinent administrative issues. NSF program officers representing each NSF directorate will be on hand to provide up-to-date information about specific funding opportunities and to answer your questions.

Highlights include the following:

• New programs and initiatives
• Future directions and strategies for national science policy
• Proposal preparation
• NSF’s merit review process
• Crossdisciplinary and special interest programs
• Conflict of interest policies
• Breakout sessions by discipline

Registration and additional information is now available online.

For additional information regarding program content, contact the Policy Office, Division of Institution and Award Support, at (703) 292-8243 or via e-mail at policy@nsf.gov.

NIH Regional Seminars

April 16-17, 2009 – Hosted by Georgia State University and Georgia Institute of Technology

For more information and registration for this National Institutes of Health seminar, visit the seminar website: www.osp.gatech.edu/NIH_Seminar.html. Please contact either Princeanna Walker (nihseminarsosp@gsu.edu) or Michelle Powell (seminars@osp.gatech.edu) if you have any questions.

June 2009 (dates TBD) – Hosted by Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA), SPA Education

For more information, please e-mail spaedu@ohsu.edu or call (503) 494-1885.

GRC External Funding Workshop

August 23-26, 2009 – Hosted by the Grants Resource Center (GRC)

This conference offers Sponsored Projects staff and faculty access to timely and detailed information on funding opportunities, information on federal agency appropriations and funding priorities, and the opportunity to schedule individual appointments with federal agency program officers. This meeting is held in the Washington, DC area.

Remember to submit your complete electronic grant applications to OSP at least two working days prior to the funding agency’s deadline.
Post-Award FAQs

Listed are some of the questions about post-award issues that are most frequently asked by Project Directors/Principal Investigators.

I received an e-mail from my program officer telling me that my project was being funded. The beginning date for the project is approaching, and I want to get started on it right away, but WIU still hasn’t received “official” documentation of the award. What should I do?
If you feel confident you are going to receive funding but lack official documentation, you may want to request a “guarantee memo” from your Dean. Your Dean will guarantee expenses your project will incur from an account that they specify until the award documents arrive on campus. This allows you to establish an account and get the project going, but it also protects the University in the unfortunate event that award documents are not received.

My project just started, but I understand that WIU hasn’t received the money from the funding agency yet. Do I need to wait until the funding agency sends the check to WIU before I can buy supplies and incur other expenses on my project?
No, you can go ahead and incur expenses once the account has been established by your Grants and Contracts Administrator based on a guarantee memo or a fully signed contract/agreement. Externally funded projects do not work on a cash basis, so you don’t need to worry about whether WIU has received the actual funds or not. Once the account has been established and the budget has been loaded into the system, you can begin spending your grant funds.

I just received a contract from a funding agency. Can I sign it and return it to them?
No, an authorized official is the only person who can sign contracts and grant agreements on behalf of the University. If you receive a contract or a grant agreement from an external funding agency, immediately forward it to our office for processing. The contract or agreement will not be valid if signed by anyone other than the appropriate authorized WIU official.

A check came to me in the mail from my funding agency. What should I do with it?
Please send it directly to the Office of Sponsored Projects, Sherman Hall 320. We will make a copy of it for our files and see that it is deposited into your grant account.

The department secretary is working overtime on my grant project. How will I pay her for her work?
Assuming that this is an allowable expense and there are funds available in your budget, you will need to contact the Payroll Office to set her up in the payroll system so she can record the hours that she works on your project. The overtime wages and applicable benefits will be charged directly to your grant account.

My grant is going to cover the cost of a graduate assistant this year. How do I go about hiring someone?
You need to work directly with the Graduate Studies office to complete a Request for Graduate Assistant form. Make sure that you supply your grant account number on the form.

I have budget funds to hire a student assistant to help me with my project. How do I go about hiring someone?
Contact the Student Employment office and they will work with you to advertise the position and to hire a student who can assist you with your project.

I have a grant, and I’m a faculty member who will be working on grant activities during the academic year in addition to my 100% appointment. When can I be paid?
You may be paid after your work is complete or you may be paid on a monthly basis while you are working on the grant activities. Some funding agencies only allow faculty to receive pay during the summer months, so depending on your agency, rules could vary.

How do I initiate my supplemental payment for working on the grant outside of my primary duties?
When you are ready to receive payment for work completed on the grant, contact OSP to provide them with the information necessary for completion of the Supplemental Payment Request form. The form will be prepared and sent to you for signing and acquisition of the signature of your Chair, Dean, and Vice President. Please be aware that forms must be fully processed by the 10th of the current month for you to receive payment from the grant on the first of the following month.
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.

Kathy Lantz, Post-Award Services – Contact Kathy 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; processing of payroll forms; and administration of URC awards.

John W. Smith, Compliance Specialist – Contact John 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; and performing all those other assignments that keep the office running efficiently.

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