

SRAS Steering Committee Minutes

12/21/2017

Present: Alan Daugherty, Jim Geddes, Beth Garvy, Anne Wray, Beverly Baesler, Teri Walters, Susan Stark.

1. Alan Daugherty addressed several concerns related to staffing for pre-award, with the GPSs, in particular.
 - No promotion opportunities based on COM HR guidance, despite it appearing to occur elsewhere on campus with similar positions.
 - Recent challenges as the Dept. of Behavioral Sciences has requested more assistance during a time their dedicated grant staff person has been away from the office. They rec'd "opt out" permission at the time the Sponsored Research IBU was established in 2014, so the current SRAS isn't staffed to support their large workload as they do for the rest of the college.
 - Potential consideration to add additional position(s), given the lead time needed for training, and increasing volume for proposals as well as other activities such as JIT requests and faculty transfers.

Beverly mentioned looking into getting positions reclassified as a possible option. Susan will make arrangements to meet with the HR Business Partners as soon as possible after the holiday break.

2. Susan reported to the group on her findings related to SRM reconciliation and follow up she completed with Amy Longeway and Kevin Downs in the UKHC AP/Accounting Office, Judy Duncan in the VPR's office, and Craig Locke in UK Purchasing.
 - Judy Duncan recommended a possible report of shopping carts. This had been explored previously. It is only accessible to SRM Shoppers and Approvers, which the reconcilers (and analysts) are neither. Judy also suggested Susan make a topic/training request for the Controller-sponsored Hand-in-Hand We Learn sessions. Susan made that request, and it ended up referred to Craig Locke in Purchasing, who contacted Susan directly regarding the suggestion. He suggested the same report of after the fact activity that he'd offered at the time the COM went live with SRM, which still doesn't provide any way to check against the front end activity.
 - Susan and Julie Combs, Post-Award manager, met with Amy and Kevin. While they obtain information on purchase requests and approvals pre-SRM entry, the current process doesn't include the saving of shopping carts or invoices in a standardized way for any sort of after the fact reconciliation.
 - Susan shared with the group the email guidance provided by Ronda Beck, Controller, from a Sept. 2015 email about this process – that included stating individuals placing orders should be maintaining a log of orders they place, including vendor, date, amount, accounting distribution, and shopping cart number. She further suggested the UK PO number included on the log. The after-the-fact shopping cart report could be used to verify against the log information and/or source documents (shopping carts and invoices).

Jim Geddes asked that Susan follow up with Amy to check on the status of the purchasing pilots currently taking place with Biochemistry and Sanders-Brown. He also asked that Susan reach out to Craig Locke and see about the status of Purchasing acquiring an SRM tool, Ariba, that might not only make the purchasing process more Amazon-like for the purchasers, but also provide some reconciliation tools in a more straight-forward way at the time of order placement.

3. Susan presented three SOPs for approval, as follows:
 - a. Initiation and Monitoring of Subcontracts/Subawards on Sponsored Project Agreements, posted for comment in the 11/7/2017 Weekly Research Update,
 - b. Review and Action Related to Project Account Data Records (PADRs) as created/distributed by the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration (OSPA), posted for comment in the 10/17/2017 Weekly Research Update, and
 - c. Administration of NIH Fellowship Awards, posted for comment in the 10/10/2017 Weekly Research Update.

Susan noted that no comments were received in response to the postings as noted.

Beth Gavy asked that PIs be advised that when including subcontract in proposals, a longer lead-time is needed to gather information from the sub institution(s) that needs to be included as part of the UK proposal submission. Susan indicated that she would check to make sure this information is in the Budget Development and/or Proposal Development SOPs. (Note: It's included in the SOP entitled, Sponsored Project Budget Development, Section 6, page 4.)

Jim Geddes wanted to ensure that as part of the PADR review, the PI is made aware of any budget adjustments made from the original proposal. Susan stated that this discussion should occur prior to the account set up. Any budget cut or adjustment of any type should always be approved by the PI, and in coordination with the DA, GPS, and RA in OSPA. She'll pass along a reminder of this to the GPSs. (Note: SOP entitled, Sponsored Project Proposal Preparation, includes a section on Award Receipt on pages 4-5. It stated that any budget changes are to be addressed in consultation with the PI and DA.)

Beverly Baesler had a recent issue occur related to the institutional allowances on an NIH fellowship. Specifically, how UK AP was willing to reimburse the student for supply-type expenses they'd incurred out of pocket. Susan will work with Beverly and see if a suitable resolution can be found with Tony Day, Director of AP. Susan did mention they have asked the GPSs to note any student travel in fellowship budgets at the proposal stage, in the hope that when awarded, the RAs in OSPA will set up the account with this sponsored class included appropriately, rather than it having to occur as a formal budget revision after the account is established.

4. Susan provided a brief BEST update. She reminded the committee of the SharePoint site where slides and updates are provided.

She reviewed the comments from Huron in response to the overtime meeting. Huron staff met on Dec. 8 with Susan Krauss, UK Treasurer, Ronda Beck, UK Controller, Jennifer Miles, Assistant Controller, were in attendance, as well as Craig Collins. Huron indicated the UK team was open to understanding the downstream impact the current policy is creating. They would like to

explore options for changing how time is treated in the timekeeping solution before considering policy changes. Huron is going to follow up with Jennifer Miles to work on this.

Susan expressed continuing concerns, as timekeeping solutions have been explored previously with no success.

The Post-Award Implementation Team continues to look at more detailed roles and responsibilities of what a post-award support role would look like, considering the overall proposed model of six groupings of departments that each have its own administrative support team.

Jim Geddes told the group that work to establish a CTO and fully implement a CTMS are moving along, with more stakeholders being involved in the discussions and what appears to be positive support from senior leadership to support these initiatives.

5. Susan provided several staffing updates.

Julie Combs, Post-Award Manager, recently passed the Certified Research Administrator exam. There are now a total of seven SRAS staff with this designation.

The vacant GPS position has been filled. Holly Hammond will start on January 22.

As a follow up to Alan's comments at the beginning of the meeting, Susan will make plans to contact Jeff Sullivan for HR Business Partner assistance related to retention concerns around the GPS staff.

6. Other business:

Susan reporting that a separate meeting for the Non-OSPA CGOs has been continuing monthly, with success. It allows all of the COM GPSs and Analysts to attend and participate fully in the information shared and discussions on topics presented. Other participants include CGOs and research staff from the Colleges of A&S, Pharmacy, Nursing, Public Health, and Engineering. These meetings will continue monthly for now and are scheduled through June 2018.

If the group would like to continue on a quarterly meeting schedule, the next meeting would be in March. Susan will work with April Bridenbecker to do a Doodle poll in January to find a suitable time.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Susan Stark

