

PRE & POST AWARD TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT

MATTHEW B. WHEELER
UNIVERSITY SENATES CONFERENCE

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN

Regulatory burdens from several sources:

- Differences in agency requirements
- Audit fears (funding agencies)
- Federal regulations
- Procurement challenges

Regulatory Concerns:

- Safety – Biological, Chemical, Radiation, General Lab Safety, etc.

What is under University control?

- Institutional requirements – Pre/Post Award, OTM, Hiring
- Technology (or lack thereof)
- Expectations (of time and effort)

BACKGROUND

On an annual basis the University of Illinois faculty submit over **6,000 research proposals** requesting in excess of **\$2 Billion dollars** in sponsored funding.

Impetus for Review

- Increasing Federal Regulations
- Escalating Federal Audit and Enforcement
- State of Illinois Procurement Barriers

Charge to the Task Force

- Evaluate Research Administration Support Infrastructure
- Identify Opportunities of Standardization of Best Practices Across Campuses
- Examine Utilization of Technology and Process Improvements

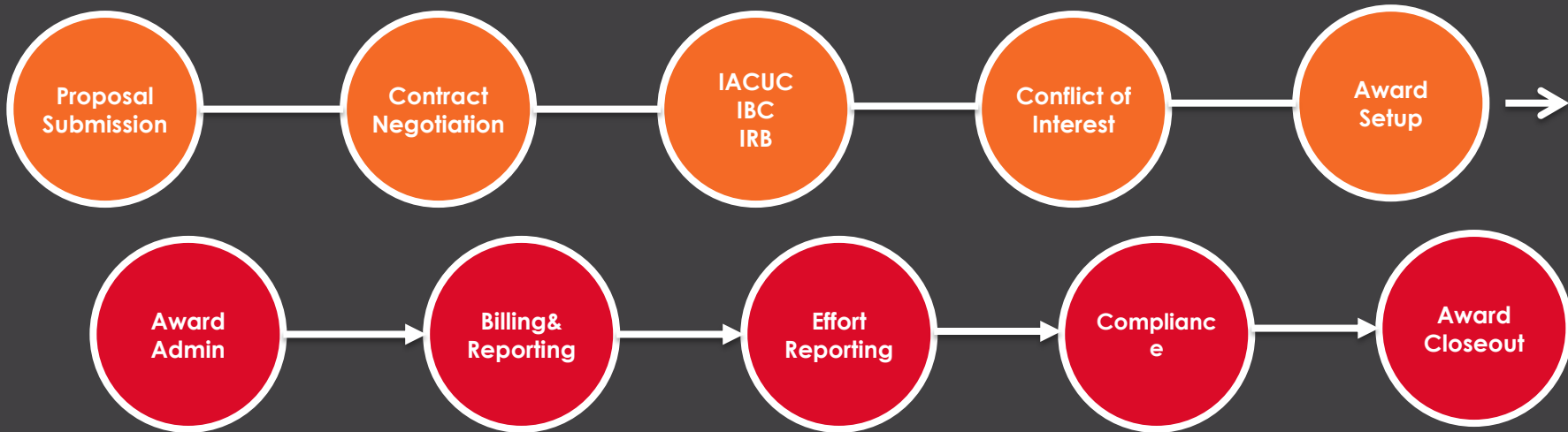
BACKGROUND

- Task Forces on Chicago & Urbana campuses assessed the research administrative units responsible for pre/post-award processes.
- Goals
 1. Identify ways to streamline processes
 2. Increase standardization across campuses (as appropriate)
 3. Reduce administrative burden on researchers
 4. Enhance level of service provided to research community

TIMELINE



PROCESS



- Task force committees conducted interviews on each campus (Chicago and Urbana)
 - Research administration staff (pre & post-award)
 - Faculty
 - Business managers
- Prepared final report of findings

KEY FINDINGS

Information Technology

- Implementation of integrated electronic research administration system is critical
- Supports streamlined business processes
- Link pre- & post-award functions
- Establish institutional best practices prior to implementation

Staffing

- Evaluate level of research administrative support across campuses (varies significantly)
- Provide additional resources to enhance departmental/unit research support as needed
- Address excessive regulations & inefficiencies in hiring process

KEY FINDINGS

Communications

- Improve alignment of pre/post-award processes
- Develop key performance metrics
- Clearly defined roles & responsibilities to optimize the level of service

Training

- Implement formal training & certification programs
- Develop “PI School” starting with New PIs
- Provide resources for enterprise-wide sponsored projects training program
- Establish dedicated positions to oversee training efforts

The campus Offices of the Vice Chancellor for Research are addressing the key findings through ongoing initiatives.

INITIATIVES ALREADY UNDERWAY

- System-wide Tools for the Administration of Research and Training (START)
Institutional initiative sponsored by the campuses and implemented by the Vice Chancellors for Research and AITS to modernize and streamline the electronic research enterprise.
- Development of a myResearch portal that will integrate and display information from a number of different University systems providing faculty timely access to information needed to manage their research projects (VCRs and AITS)
- The University is evaluating system-wide electronic training platforms for faculty and staff, analogous to Learning Management Systems for Students, to improve consistency, simplify delivery and improve compliance.
- The Urbana campus has implemented a formal working group to exclusively support all research administrative support staff by providing for policy updates, the exchange of best practices, and a formal certification of research administration training program to begin in September 2014.

TASK FORCE

UIC

Ahlam Al-Kodmany

Institute for Health Research & Policy

Michael Anderson, Office of Research Services

Brian Kay, Professor of Biological Sciences

Amneh Kiswani, Office of Research Services

Julie Kong, Public Health Administration

Mee Mee Lee-Choi, OBFS Grants & Contracts

Robin Mermelstein, Professor of Psychology
Director, Institute for Health Research & Policy

Kenneth Moore, Office of Research Services

UIUC

Penny Broga, School of Integrative Biology

Roy Campbell, Professor of Computer Science
University Senates Conference

Lyndon Goodly, Division of Animal Resources

Linda Gregory, OBFS Grants & Contracts

Patricia Jones, Beckman Institute

Linda Learned, Sponsored Programs & Research Admin

Matt Wheeler, Professor of Animal Science & Bioengineering
University Senates Conference

OVPR

Richard Meisinger (Chair), AVP Strategic Initiatives

Kristy Kuzmuk, Senior Director of Research

NEXT STEPS

Board Action Items

- Promote Professionalization of the Research Administrative Staff
- Support Campus Research Administrative Initiatives
- Advocate Procurement Reform
- Hiring Restrictions
- Empower the steering committee to develop an **implementation committee** that can begin to address problems that we **CAN** fix.

Campus Action Items

- Optimize Operational Initiatives
 - Create roles and responsibilities matrix for both pre-and post-award staffs
 - Implement START myResearch to enhance communications
 - Initiate Sponsored Research Staff Working Groups
 - Create Formal Training (PI school) and Certification Programs (Business Managers)
- **Provide Annual Updates to the Board on Progress**

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- These initiatives are for the **FACULTY** to make their work **more efficient** and **reduce** their administrative research burden.
- This will make us more competitive for research funding by allowing us to spend **more time on our research** activities and less on research administration!