

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAAC)

1 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2022

via Zoom

Present:

Juandra Burris
Jeremy Alajajian
Vikki Cherwon
Valerie Crickard
Jacob Falkiewicz
Stafford Farmer

Elaine Jacobs
Caroline Kennedy
Rachel Ladenheim
Stacy Leotta
Sherry Loyd
Carl Mahler

Laura Moody
Stephanie Sanchez-Esparragoza
April Schenck
Nikki Simmons
Peter Szanton

Absent:

Darlene Booker
Angelica Martins

Mary Welsh
Shanda Wirt

The meeting started at 1:02 PM with Juandra Burris introducing herself and describing her role at the University working for Associate Provost John Smail.

Meeting Opening:

I. Approval of meeting minutes for 03/07/22 RAAC meeting

Peter Szanton moved to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2022 meeting which had been amended prior to the start of the meeting; the motion was seconded by Vikki Cherwon and passed without objection.

Old Business

II. Update on Niner Research Proposal and Award Reporting and Metrics Dashboard

Stafford Farmer has updated the Google Sheets with all proposals and awards for FY2022; he will continue to do so as he works with OneIT to set up a data warehouse to include information from Niner Research that will enable additional reports to be created by OneIT. This data warehouse will also populate a dashboard that will provide information with near real-time reporting. Mr. Farmer has identified three or four reports that can be built using the reporting capacities of Niner Research; he will provide additional information to the RAAC members about them as they come to completion. Stacy Leotta mentioned that she pulled an Awards Report and was unable to export it to Excel; Mr. Farmer recommended trying to export from Niner Research using FireFox or MS Edge as he has experienced difficulties trying to successfully export to Excel from Google Chrome. Dr. Tankersley is still working with the Associate Deans to identify metrics that will be used within their colleges and asked that anyone who can identify the information that they want to inform him and Mr. Farmer so that this information can be provided on the dashboard.

New Business:

III. Draft policy regarding Delegation of Approval Authority in Niner Research

Mr. Szanton reported that a new policy is being developed for delegation of approval authority within Niner Research. The policy is expected to go into effect on July 1, 2022 but he expects there to be some changes to the text before that date. Delegation of authority within Niner Research is not something to be undertaken lightly because such delegation can give the delegated person the authority to legally

bind the University. Once the new policy is in effect it will not be possible for a person to delegate authority directly; instead, requests for delegation will be made after a review by the appropriate individuals. A separate process will be used to determine when exceptions should be made to the new policy. Jeremy Alajajian asked if it would be possible to establish a “standing” delegate who could handle matters when the normal approvers were absent, and Mr. Szanton noted that this was expected to be the norm. Dr. Tankersley asked how the delegations would be audited on a regular basis and Sherry Loyd said that the University could request lists of delegates at any time from InfoEd. Dr. Tankersley recommended that the policy specify that all delegations be audited annually and that all delegations be reported to appropriate individuals. Ms. Crickard recommended a more frequent audit of delegations and asked if the audits would be made by Chris Krumm’s replacement. Dr. Tankersley responded that assigning this duty to Mr. Krumm’s replacement would be a natural fit. Ms. Leotta asked how the policy would affect delegations that had already been made, and Mr. Szanton said that pre-existing delegations would be audited but were expected to remain in place unless there were good reasons to change them.

Ms. Loyd mentioned that Conflict of Interest disclosures are part of the employee’s personnel file and that CoI authority should only be delegated to people with a true need to know the information. Delegates for CoI should be in the chain of command for the individuals whose disclosures are involved. Ms. Loyd is working with InfoEd to get a report of who currently has access to CoI information. The CoI module does not require approval of financial disclosures, but EPAP requests do require approval by a department chair or someone at a higher level. Ms. Loyd mentioned that some changes might need to be made for existing delegations within the CoI module. She also noted that she has received one report on delegations from InfoEd but that it is a very large report that is difficult to review – she is hopeful that similar future reports from InfoEd will be smaller.

IV. Completion of Niner Research Development and Implementation

Dr. Tankersley reported that we are on the verge of completing the final Niner Research module to be implemented. Ms. Crickard said that the final module for Banner fund setup was now in place. Dr. Tankersley reported that there are still about 150 “tickets” in place with InfoEd specifying items within Niner Research that have yet to be resolved and that this work will probably require several more weeks. Further changes or enhancements to Niner Research are expected to be implemented in the future.

V. Office of Research Services Reorganization: Schedule and Transition of College Research Office Personnel

The Office of Research Services and Outreach was reconceptualized last Fall as a centralized service unit and renamed the Office of Research Services. Under the resulting plan the various college research offices are being consolidated within the newly reconstituted ORS, with various colleges (CCI, CLAS, CoEd) being added in March and April and CHHS expected to be added in early May. In addition, the CoB, CoA+A, and the Urban Institute will also be affected by this change; Juandra Burris asked where the Undergraduate Education office will be affected and Dr. Tankersley noted that this office will continue to receive services from ORS as it has in the past. Conversations are ongoing with the CoEng but no timetable has been developed for integrating that office into ORS. The goal is to minimize disruptions while providing a more effective and scalable pre- and post-award support that is tailored to the needs of the individual research offices. This process will take several additional months to complete.

A new position will be established for the Associate Director of Awards Management (a counterpart to Stafford Farmer’s position that oversees pre-award work) with the announcement of this new position expected to come out in the next week. Mr. Alajajian asked if these changes would modify the colleges’

organizational charts and Dr. Tankersley responded that yes, the individuals were being “pulled over” into ORS and that this will require that changes be made to the colleges’ organizational charts. Discussions for changes to the Urban Institute should be starting in the near future. An updated organizational chart to the ORS will be available by mid-summer. Ms. Cherwon noted that changes to job descriptions should be made by June 6, and Dr. Tankersley hoped to have most of the changes to job descriptions be made soon with possible additional changes following.

VI. Application of Policy 50.5 During Summer

Dr. Tankersley reported that some questions have arisen about implementation of next year’s academic cycle of graduate student support and where the standard graduate assistant support packages for various programs currently stand. All graduate programs should announce their standard support packages in the near future. Most programs have indicated that their start dates will be July 1 or August 15; these packages need to be considered when requesting support in the coming academic year. The standard compensation packages will apply through the summer, but frequently there is no tuition required for the summer although the stipends might continue. During the academic year the student can only receive a maximum support for working 20 hours per week, but this cap does not apply in the summer and thus the compensation level can be raised for work of up to 40 hours per week. If a student takes classes during the summer then the policy and the uniform guidance allows tuition to be charged to a grant during the summer so long as other types of support are also provide tuition in the summer; GASP support is not currently available during the summer so summer tuition support cannot be charged to a grant for students who would normally receive tuition support from GASP. Any questions about graduate assistant support packages should be raised now so that they can be addressed in the FAQ’s that are currently being developed.

VII. Cost of Education Charges on Grants

In addition to providing tuition support for Masters degree students, Academic Affairs is considering increasing stipends and changing the way that tuition support is provided from grants. The University currently only charges in-state tuition or out-of-state tuition, but some other institutions charge a fixed amount regardless of the student’s residency status. Academic Affairs has asked RED to develop an operational plan to implement a change, to be made by July 1, specifying a fixed amount that does not depend on residency status. This change will only affect proposals submitted after July 1. New proposals would charge \$6,000 per student for tuition in FY2022-2023, increasing to \$8,000 in the following year and finally to \$10,000 in FY2024-2025. There will be a period of time when the older tuition support amounts will be “grandfathered” in while other amounts are charged under the new policy. Standard amounts per student under the new procedure should simplify work done by RAAC members and should have minimal impact on existing awards and awards to be received in the near future. Dr. Tankersley hopes to have more information on this available for the May RAAC meeting. Ms. Ladenheim asked if this change to a standard tuition amount would apply to groups of students who come for programs such as training programs, and Dr. Tankersley said the Uniform Guidance only applies to graduate assistantships. Ms. Cherwon asked how waiver of tuition would be affected under these standard packages and Dr. Tankersley said that this was still under consideration by the Graduate School.

The meeting ended at 2:03.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl P. B. Mahler, II