

Committee on Research
Janet Myers, PhD, MPH Chair

Monday, May 16, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
MH-2108
Mission Bay

MINUTES

PRESENT: Janet Myers (Chair), Stuart Gansky (Vice Chair), Jing Cheng, Lea Grinberg, Heather Leutwyler, Dieter Meyerhoff, Susanne Mueller, Suzaynn Schick

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Minutes

The minutes of the April 2016 meeting were approved.

Chair's Report – Janet Myers, PhD, MPH

Chair Janet Myers provided a report from the Coordinating Committee meeting.

The May Question of the Month focuses on sabbaticals. It asks, "While on the UCSF faculty, have you taken a sabbatical? If so, what year was this, how long was your sabbatical and how was it supported? Could you take another one now?"

The Academic Senate is planning a new Senate Web Portal that will provide expanded service.

Senate faculty are participating in planning for an upcoming fund raising campaign via our three senate reps on the Chairs/Directors Group, and via outreach from Department Chairs to faculty. As an early step, the campus will consider themes for the development campaign, which will likely be broadly defined, as an umbrella for a large number of more specific initiatives. Examples include "Precision Care", "Cancer" and "Addressing the Underserved".

Subproject Awards – Winona Ward

Winona Ward, Director of Research Management Service (RMS) presented on the Subaward Business Process Improvement initiative.

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) superseded Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions. The Uniform Guidance increased focus on subproject risk assessment. In addition to increased focus on risk assessment, the Uniform Guidance increased focus on monitoring subproject awards.

In May 2015, in response to the steady increase in the volume of subproject award requests, RMS completed a Business Process Improvement workshop using a Lean Six Sigma approach. Lean Six Sigma is a method of systemically eliminating waste from a business process. The working group identified key areas of improvement: improve process and forms, optimize resources, develop metrics, and implement new technology.

RMS Research Service Coordinators are responsible for the subcontract process at both the proposal stage and the subcontract request stage. This process improvement eliminates the practice of “lobbing” the project back and forth between the PI and RMS.

RMS also focused on the backlog of subproject award transactions. The EVCP provided support for three new, temporary employees to address the backlog. The number of open subproject award transactions went from 400 to approximately 275.

RMS implemented a number of changes to the roles and responsibilities of positions on the Subaward Team. Subcontract Officers now have signature authority for standard subproject awards, as well as amendments. Subcontract Associates are responsible for intake and compliance review. They also manage Multiple Campus Agreements. In addition, Subcontract Associates will be trained to prepare No-Cost-Extensions and standard amendments. Multiple Campus Agreements now have a turnaround of 15 calendar days or less. All RMS Associates are trained to complete a subaward packet at the pre-award stage and how to facilitate this process at the award stage.

DISCUSSION:

Members of the Committee on Research asked how many days it should take to complete a subproject award request. Winona answered that the goal is 30 days.

Members asked how indirect costs are accounted for during the subproject award process. Winona answered that subproject award indirect costs are part of direct costs for the parent project award.

Members also asked why a negotiation would occur between RMS and the institution receiving the subproject award. For instance, if a UCSF PI reaches an agreement with the PI on a subproject, why would there be a subsequent negotiation? Winona answered that those negotiations usually result from terms and conditions of the sponsor that were acceptable to UCSF but not acceptable to the institution of the subproject.

Members remarked that the subproject award process requires a considerable number of tasks from the PI. For instance, members asked why the process requires a step of authorization from the University before the subproject is awarded. Winona said she would look into the steps in the process. She informed the committee that some requirements are mandated from the federal government and other requirements are mandated by the University.

Members asked if international subproject awards are more difficult to process. Winona answered that there are differences in privacy law, as well as insurance and indemnification. However, Winona emphasized that faculty should not be discouraged from pursuing international subproject awards.

A member asked how much advance notice should PIs provide to RMS? Winona answered that one month would be ideal.

Members of the committee discussed the new cost recovery model. Under the new model, any PI who submits an award during the reporting year will incur a flat fee. The committee asked if RMS is providing comparative data (i.e., the departmental cost last year under the old recovery model, compared to department costs this year under the new model). Winona said that RMS could provide that information if the community would find it useful. Chair Janet Myers confirmed that the community would find it useful.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.