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CPI Newsletter - April 2010

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Update on Research Administration Shared Services (RASS) Committee

As of February 17, 2010, the due date for receiving proposals, four proposals were received in response to the RFP for a research administration consultant. On March 11, 2010 the Proposal Review Team met to discuss the four proposals. The review team narrowed the field to two consulting firms and recommended that each firm make a visit to College Station to present additional information regarding their experience related to sponsored research programs and the methodology they will follow in conducting their review. Presentations by the two firms are scheduled for April 15, 2010. The review team anticipates making the final selection by April 16th with the expectation that the consultant will be under contract one week later and working on the project by the end of April.

As reported in a previous newsletter the members of the review team are:

- * Greg Anderson, TAMUS
- * Don Bugh, TTI
- * David Carlson, Health Science Center
- * Bill Dugas, AgriLife Research
- * Theresa Maldonado, TAMUS
- * Leo Paterra, Research Foundation
- * Jeff Seemann, TAMU
- * Mark Smock, TEES
- * Andrew Strong, TAMUS
- * Terry Thomas, TAMU

Contact:

Dr. Mary Meagher, m-meagher@tamu.edu

Dr. Terry Thomas, tlthomas@tamu.edu

Update on Biosafety Advisory Committee

The Biosafety Advisory Committee (BAC) met on Monday, March 29, 2010. This meeting was again mostly organizational, although some substantive items were discussed. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Bhanu Chowdhary, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. The BAC consists of 9 members, including CPI representatives Terry Thomas (Science) and Greg Reinhart (COALS). The committee is charged to provide advice and council to the Vice President for research in matters related to biosafety on campus, including the actions of the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and the Office of Research Compliance (ORC), which is directed by Dr. Bruce Whitney. ORC activities are described at <http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu>.

Pls should note that IBC meetings are open to the public. The IBC meets monthly; meeting times and locations are available at <http://biosafety.tamu.edu/institutional-biosafety-committee/ibc-meeting-schedule.html>

Please inform Terry and/or Greg about any issues or concerns you may have regarding implementation of biosafety compliance on campus.

Contact:

Dr. Greg Reinhart, gdr@tamu.edu

Dr. Terry Thomas, tlthomas@tamu.edu

Update on the Responsible Conduct in Research Working Group

The Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) Working Group met on March 30th, 2010 to finalize its recommendations regarding updating University Plan to meet the NSF requirement that all undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF to complete training in the responsible and ethical conduct of research. The recommendations focused on such items as institutional responsibilities, those who will be affected by the training, the method of training delivery, alternatives to training, the institutional training and verification process, and a draft memorandum that will be provided to PI's notifying them of their responsibility to identify students working on NSF grants and their requirement to take the CITI-RCR training course. The Group also reviewed the NSF FAQs regarding RCR. The Group will present their recommendations and a draft update of the University RCR Plan to the Vice President for consideration. Beverly Kuhn, TTI, is the CPI representative to the RCR working group. Contact her if you are interested in additional information or have any questions regarding working group's efforts.

Contact:

Dr. Beverly Kuhn, b-kuhn@tamu.edu, 979-862-3558

Update on Maestro Working Group

The Maestro system is a research management information system that allows integrated financial reports of research projects across the TAMU System (TAMU and Agencies). Maestro is made available to individual PI's now. PI's can log on at <http://epikmaestro.tamu.edu> using their UIN and UIN password. Maestro will be extended in the near future to provide integrated reports for Centers, Departments, Colleges, TAMUS components and for the entire TAMUS. Work to extend Maestro to handle preaward is underway. This new system will allow for online proposal preparation and routing and permit direct system to system submission of proposals to Grants.gov and other proposal portals. Three CPI members (listed below) are serving on the working group to represent the needs of the PI's in this process.

Contact:

Dr. Norman Guinasso, guinasso@tamu.edu

Dr. Mladen Kezunovic, kezunov@mail.ece.tamu.edu

Dr. Beverly Kuhn, b-kuhn@tamu.edu

Update on Task Force on Enrollment Management

The Task Force for Enrollment Management has been charged with making recommendations to the president and provost regarding an overarching Enrollment Management Plan for the University. We have met frequently since December, and have completed the data collection stage of our project. We are currently working to develop our recommendations. Input can be provided to the CPI representatives on this Task Force listed below.

Contact:

Dr. Bhanu Chowdhary, bchowdhary@cvm.tamu.edu

Dr. Lori Taylor, ltaylor@bushschool.tamu.edu

Update on the International Programs Enhancement and Coordination Committee (IPECC)

A draft strategic plan of the International Programs Office has been discussed. Five issues were identified as strategic focus areas that would enhance international programs at TAMU if addressed. The issues are: providing international educational experience to students, maintaining a welcoming environment for international students, developing collaborative international research and academic networks, enhancing TAMU image as a global university, and increasing external support for internationalization activities. The Committee also discussed integrating course offerings related to studying abroad into the curriculum to facilitate and enhance international programs. A subcommittee working on MOAs shared the difficulties with formalizing dual degree programs.

Contact:

Dr. Ramesh Talreja, talreja@tamu.edu

Texas A&M University and The National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) Proposals

Texas A&M University and The National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) have announced the request for proposals for the Texas A&M University-CONACYT: Collaborative Research Grant Program for 2010. This program annually awards one-year grants of up to \$24,000 to faculty members to advance inter-institutional cooperation in science, technology, and scholarly activities through the complementary efforts of scientists and scholars from Texas A&M and Mexican institutions. A letter of intent is required and must be received by 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 29, in order to be eligible to submit a full proposal. Full proposals must be submitted, routed electronically for appropriate signatures, and received by 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 3. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Monica Holder at m-holder@tamu.edu. Texas A&M University and CONACYT have had an agreement of cooperation in higher education and research since 2001. This partnership provides unique opportunities for researchers from Mexico and Texas A&M University to work together in addressing issues of common concern on both sides of the border. To date, 125 joint research teams from Texas A&M and Mexico have received more than \$2.6 million in seed funding under this program.

For more information on the program and submission instructions see:
<http://conacyttamu.edu>.

TTI Celebrates Opening of State Headquarters & Research Building

The Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) formally opened its new state headquarters located at 2935 Research Parkway in the Texas A&M University Research Park on Friday, March 26, 2010. The TTI State Headquarters and Research Building not only provides the first official state headquarters in the agency's 60-year history, but also houses a state-of-the-art Visibility Research Laboratory and offices four other agency research programs. The central feature of the lab is a 125-foot-long corridor designed to test devices and materials used for pavement markings and traffic signs. Real-world visibility conditions can be simulated in the lab, allowing researchers to explore ways of improving nighttime driving safety. TTI researchers and Texas A&M faculty from a variety of disciplines can use the facility for research in traffic engineering, highway safety, vision sciences, geometric designs and human factors affecting transportation safety. "Transportation has never been more important to our state and country and is high on the minds of our public policy-makers," noted TTI Agency Director Dennis Christiansen. "This new building puts TTI in a great position to address a wide range of transportation topics and issues for many years to come."