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MEMORANDUM

DATE May 8, 2014
TO Rosemary Madnick, Director
Office of Grants & Contracts Administration/Office of Sponsored Programs
FROM Pat Pitney, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services 
RE GPS Post-Award Setup Process Improvement: Phase 1 Closeout & Transition Plan

I want to take this opportunity to formally thank the Grant Process Solutions (GPS) team and communicate the Phase 1 project closure and transition plan. On behalf of Chancellor Rogers, Administrative Services, the GPS Steering Committee and the UAF Office of Grants and Contracts Administration (OGCA) our thanks to the team for their dedicated efforts to improve the grant and contract award setup process. Your work is appreciated and is important to UAF.

As part of this project transition, it is important to note the “early releases” or “wins” we have seen as a result of this team. More results are expected; however, the following items have already been put in place with positive initial results:

- 1) Developing and submitting proposals and managing external research agreements are significant research administration functions at UAF, and increasing efficiency in these areas is critical to our research enterprise. Through GPS efforts, it became clear improved integration with pre-award processes is an important and fundamental component for broad success. Therefore, to assist faculty, staff and students in these areas, we committed to a major reorganization effort and, in mid-January, integrated the functions of the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) into OGCA.
 - The integrated OGCA/OSP approach will include significant cross-training and functioning as teams to ensure system efficiencies, professional growth and continued customer service improvements under your leadership.
- 2) A single point of data entry and repository for grant management (from proposal to award) was also identified as critical to improving transparency, timeliness of approval and set-up, and accuracy of information.
 - Investment in UAF’s InfoEd pre-award software module was committed early on; the GPS team reinvigorated attention on the need to push full implementation of a software tool - this system is expected to be in place with training available for PIs and research administrators by July 2014. Post-award management will be reviewed next as a result of GPS recommendations.

- 3) Data indicated restricted award set-up at the beginning of this initiative was between 7-42 days. One major complicating factor was the number of forms required for the timely set-up of a grant budget.
- Budget forms (BRFs) were eliminated as a result of this process, allowing departments to take responsibility for budgetary grant review and data-entry directly into Banner (FRABUDP) saving a paper submission process and several process steps for departments and for OGCA to review and key.

In addition to these early releases, many of the recommendations in the Business Case were accepted by the project Steering Committee. From this point forward, I will work with you to explore each opportunity for these recommendations to become implemented solutions.

Some of the team members may be called on from time-to-time to assist with the implementations as will the process improvement facilitators; however the process mapping work associated with this team will now be moved to the functional service owner.

The summary of recommendations from the GPS Business Case and subsequent action plan are listed below.

CC: Brian Rogers, Chancellor
GPS Team Members
GPS Steering Committee
UAF PIT Crew

Recommendation	Responsible Lead	Target Completion	Outcomes	Status
Electronic Grant Management System				
<p>Implement a post-award grant management system - InfoEd has been selected contingent on pre-award implementation.</p> <p>Evaluation of the software tool for post-award set-up and management will be required after full implementation of pre-award modules.</p> <p>Reduce the number of paper forms to be completed.</p> <p>Expand access to the system and increase department authority to make changes/add information.</p> <p>Utilize appropriate UA electronic document management/retention systems (Banner/OnBase).</p>	<p>Rosemary Madnick/ Andrew Grey</p>	<p>September 2014 (Pre-Award)</p> <p>February 2015 (Post-Award)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminate duplication of effort from unit and central offices for proposal submission and award set-up - A single electronic repository for all award related documentation from proposal through award - Standardization so that requirements are clear and it is easy to see what is present and what is missing - A single point of data entry with clear parameters - A system of validation so information is entered correctly and is complete - An electronic workflow that pushes data and documentation from one stage to the next for approval and populates information from the initial point of entry to the next stage - Electronic signatures - Electronic reminders - Reduction in the number of forms - Standardization of relevant award procedures at all levels (department, OSP, and OGCA) - Improved reporting for award burn rates, waivers, ICR accrual, effort projections/certification, and document destruction on approved scheduled. 	<p>In Progress</p>
Formalized Training and Certification for Restricted Fund Administrators				
<p>Include a restricted fund administrator component in the VCAS Training Initiative; expand existing training program to be more comprehensive.</p> <p>Create career development opportunities for trained/certified administrative staff.</p> <p>Improve consistency in material/training.</p>	<p>Rosemary Madnick</p>	<p>January 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in errors and subsequent corrections resulting in more efficient and accurate financial management and reporting - Improved service to PI's - Improved job satisfaction leads to retention leads to development of expertise 	<p>In Progress</p>
Expand Capability of Units to Setup Grants and Funds				
<p>Currently the GI Business Office is the only UAF unit with permissions for establishing grants and funds in Banner.</p> <p>Permissions should be granted to other units that have the appropriate training, capability and/or volume of restricted activity to realize efficiency gains.</p> <p>Improve communication/follow-through between OGCA/OSP, related offices and units.</p>	<p>Rosemary Madnick</p>	<p>January 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elimination of budget forms (BRF) allows for direct data entry into Banner at the unit level with checks at the OGCA/OSP central offices - "Harmonization" meetings between OGCA/OSP/unit fiscal staff and/or PIs at the start of each award, may allow for reduced OGCA/OSP approvals at each step during award management - Enable the units to more efficiently process award setup and management - Establish appropriate checks/balances in the central office to allow for greater access to the systems at the unit level 	<p>In Progress</p>
Reduce Award Set-Up Time Average to Within Five Business Days				
<p>Current restricted award set-up processing takes from 7-42 days. The GPS target for set-up is within 5 days of a request to spend restricted funds.</p>	<p>Rosemary Madnick</p>	<p>January 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elimination of budget forms (BRF) allows for direct data entry into Banner at the unit level with checks at the OGCA/OSP central offices - "Harmonization" meetings between OGCA/OSP/unit fiscal staff and/or PIs at the start of each award, may allow for reduced OGCA/OSP approvals at each step during award management - Enable the units to more efficiently process award setup and management - Establish appropriate checks/balances in the central office to allow for greater access to the systems at the unit level 	<p>In Progress</p>
Increase State of Alaska OMB Approval Ceiling for State Reimbursable Service Agreements (RSAs)				
<p>State of Alaska RSAs at or above \$100k must be approved by the State Office of Management & Budget (OMB) prior to award set-up. This additional level of</p>	<p>Dave Read</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>The approval limit is established via Alaska Statute; this may be difficult to change and increasing the approval level may not eliminate this extended review time for all RSAs.</p>	<p>Closed/Not Complete</p>

<p>approval increases award set-up time by 30-60 days on average.</p> <p>Increasing the threshold for review/approval would result in fewer RSAs being delayed during this approval process.</p>			<p>Set-up of assumption budgets in this case, may allow PIs access to expend funds prior to RSA final approval, if needed.</p>	
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