April 11, 2011

To: UO Research Community

From: Rich Linton, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

Re: Update on personnel changes in research administration units

This memo provides an overview of the ongoing enhancement of administrative support for the research mission of the University of Oregon. We have made significant personnel changes at the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects and at the Office of Research Services and Administration that we would like to share with you.

**Office for the Protection of Human Subjects**

Christina Booth, a Portland, Oregon native, joins the UO as the Director of the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects. Christina comes to the UO with ten years of research protection directorship experience. Christina spent five years as the Director of Research Compliance at the University of Southern Maine where she was instrumental in setting up a comprehensive research compliance program for human research, animal research, research integrity, biological safety, and research privacy. During that time she also served as the Research Privacy Officer for the University of Maine System helping to develop research policy for seven universities. Following her tenure in Maine, Christina served as the Director for Research Protections at Boston College, where she was responsible for advancing the scope and scale of the human and animal research protection programs. Both the USM and Boston College research protection programs are recognized by the research ethics association, Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIMR), as model research protection programs.

In the past three months a backlog of 130 protocols as well as 264 current and newly received protocols were processed and approvals granted to faculty and student researchers. The operations and business processes of OPHS also were assessed. Administrative risk assessment processes were found to be burdensome to investigators and needing clarification for reviewers. Significantly streamlined application forms have been implemented and are now available on the OPHS website. Procedures also were revised to decrease the number of administrative iterations required for each protocol.

**Office for Research Services and Administration**

For the past eight months, the Office of Research Services and Administration (ORSA) has operated under the leadership of an interim management team consisting of Moira Kiltie, Tim Patterson and Marisa Zuskar. As of this month, we will move from the interim management team to the permanent organizational structure, with some ORSA positions filled by individuals with interim appointments. (See the attached ORSA organizational chart for the detailed structure.) The changes at ORSA reflect an ongoing commitment to providing the administrative infrastructure needed to support the UO’s rapidly growing sponsored research activity, as commensurate with staffing levels for research institutions with similar levels of grants activities nationally.

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An equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
Recent personnel activity at ORSA includes recruiting permanent staff for the multiple vacancies that have accrued over time, executing organizational changes to better support grant administration and a continuing review of existing practices and procedures to identify opportunities to effectively streamline processes. Other ongoing efforts to enhance the research administration infrastructure include reinstating the Departmental Grant Administrator (DGA) meetings on a regular basis to better facilitate communication between central administration and the academic units, formalizing a DGA advisory group (to be named at the April DGA meeting), and enhancing cross-unit relationships to provide more holistic administrative services to the research community.

As we move toward a redefined organizational structure within the ORSA unit, I have asked Moira Kiltie, Assistant Vice President for Research, to formally take on the leadership position at ORSA as the interim Director. I have also further developed the ORSA management team reporting to Moira, which will include the following leadership positions:

- **Pre-award Associate Director:** A tentative offer has been accepted by a candidate for the pre-award Associate Director position, and we plan to make the formal announcement after internal review of the appointment is completed.
- **Interim Post Award Associate Director:** Marisa Zuskar, a temporary employee from Huron Consulting Group, will be the interim post-award unit head while a search continues for a permanent team member.
- **Interim Contract Manager:** John Sites, a temporary employee from the Huron Consulting Group, will remain in his role as the interim Contract Manager while the search is underway for a permanent hire.
- **Financial Manager:** Stuart Mellor will remain in his role as the Grants Financial Manager, overseeing the efforts of the Financial Management unit.
- **Research Information Technology Manager:** Steve Shapiro will remain in his role as the Research IT Manager.

Tim Patterson, the Huron Consulting Group team lead, will continue to provide support and counsel to the ORSA staff in areas such as post-award monitoring, grant management process improvement, and other special projects, as directed by me and Frances Dyke, Vice President for Finance and Administration.

The team members who have been recruited to join the ORSA team since July 2010 include:

**Pre-award Sponsored Projects Administrator (Team A):** Rebecca Roby joined ORSA in July of 2010. Rebecca joined the UO after working in the not-for-profit and public arena, most recently with the American Red Cross, Oregon Pacific Chapter. Rebecca is a “Duck” with a B.S. from AAA’s Planning, Public Policy and Management program and holds an M.S.W. from PSU.

**Pre-award Sponsored Projects Administrator (Team B):** Kari Vandergust became a Sponsored Projects Administrator in July 2010 after several successful years as the Research Services Coordinator. Kari is a “Duck” having graduated Magna Cum Laude from the UO with a B.S. in Psychology and Anthropology.

**Contract Specialist:** Orca Merwin joined ORSA in January. Orca was born and raised in the Eugene area, graduating from Sheldon High School in 2002. He moved away from Oregon for college, attending Claremont McKenna College in California where he received his degree in Government in 2006. He returned to Oregon to attend the UO School of Law, receiving his J.D. and passing the Oregon State Bar in 2009.

**Post-award Sponsored Projects Administrator (Team C):** Robert Lawson re-joined ORSA in August of 2010 after ten years working as the Business Manager and Grants Administrator at the Child and Family Center. Bob is a
proud veteran of the US Navy with seventeen years of operational and managerial experience. He holds a B.A. in Economics and Business Administration from OSU.

**Post-award Sponsored Projects Administrator (Team A):** Richard Ray joined ORSA from Columbia University where he spent the last twelve years working in various facets of post-award administration. He has earned a reputation as one of the leading experts on Federal Stimulus (ARRA) reporting regulations.

**Post-award Sponsored Projects Administrator (Team B):** Celia Walker joined ORSA in January. Celia comes to ORSA with a wide background in federal program management and grant administration. Most recently, she worked at St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County where she was project manager for a recycling business development grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A graduate of the UO School of Journalism, Celia is looking forward to deciphering the challenges in research administration.

**Fiscal Coordinator:** Joshua Kerber joined the UO in April as part of the Financial Management Team. Josh is a “Double Duck” graduating from the University of Oregon in 2003 with a degree in Computer Science, and again in 2007 with a Masters of Accounting. He has worked in public accounting firms and at a not-for-profit in Cleveland, Ohio and is looking forward to working for his alma mater in support of the research enterprise.

In addition, Antoinette Bronesky and Rachel Gordon have joined the ORSA team as temporary employees from Huron Consulting Group. Rachel and Antoinette are supporting a variety of ORSA efforts including the Award Set-Up unit and Post-Award activities.

ORSA continues to have pre-award and post-award units; however, we have formalized cross-unit teams to better support research activities “cradle to grave.” For more information on the teams and to find out which team supports your academic unit, please see the “About ORSA” tab at [http://orsa.uoregon.edu/](http://orsa.uoregon.edu/). We welcome your comments and suggestions about your work with ORSA, and we have established a third party assessment mechanism that you can access through the ORSA homepage.

I appreciate the continuing assistance from the UO community as we continue to evaluate and enhance the services to researchers and their support personnel across the institution. We look forward to the sustained development of expertise and collaborative teams in support of UO’s growing research enterprise. Thank you for your ongoing contributions in achieving that critical objective.