

June 12, 2008
RAC Meeting

Given Vanessa's lofty position and incredible intra-campus responsibilities, she was a bit late for the start of the meeting. Karen Sack capably filled the "Chair's chair" with an adlib and dialogue that reminded me of Letterman or Leno when they have a guest host. Karen shared a few announcements:

- For those of you in the SOM, FY09 Working Budgets are due 6/30.
- Effort Reports – the March effort reports are about 80% complete with about 400 still outstanding. Pat Holmes will have another training class on the 19th. Sign up. Send people. Enjoy Pat's warm and fuzzy teaching style!
- The SRA Meeting is scheduled for October 10th. It's being held in Potomac at a new hotel. <http://www.srainternational.org/sra03/template/tntbAM08.cfm?id=744> Meet Karen Sack in the hotel bar at 6:00 on the first day for beers and shooters; she's buying!
- Funding for the Pharmacy School's new building addition has been approved by the legislature. <http://www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/>
- Applications to the UMB/UMCP joint seed grant competition are due the 23rd. They **DO NOT** need to be routed; they're submitted via the College Park website.
Go Terps!

Marc Wasserman was the Guest of Honor

Marc presented a draft policy (attached) on providing payments to Foreign National Independent Contractors (consultants, visiting professors, teachers, researchers, etc...). The actual policy goes into effect October 1st.

It turns out the Campus has never been in compliance with this IRS rule and they figured maybe it was time to do something about it since the tax benefits to foreign nations coming to UMB was comparable to opening an offshore account in the Caymen Islands!

Agreements & purchase orders for consultants and other foreign nationals will still be processed through Procurement but before they're approved, we'll need to provide an extensive list of documentation to ensure full vetting for tax treaties, visa restrictions,

etc.... The charges will still hit your account under the “consultant” subcode/chartstring thing or whatever it’s called.

Please forward your comments, ideas and suggestions to Marc.

Dennis Paffrath was the 2nd Guest of Honor:

As of July 15, the next “big change” will be instituted in ORD. You may have seen the email that came out to the RAC list about two weeks ago. In short, Dennis is now in charge of all operations within ORD with a number of team leaders reporting directly to him. Departments will no longer have a “single point of contact”; instead your applications will be assigned to a team. Each team is staffed with ORD personnel with varying degrees of expertise. Depending on the complexity of your issue and/or application, it will be assigned to, and addressed by a member of the team. When you route an application, you’ll receive an email from ORD informing you as to whom you’ll be working with.

A brief summary of the remainder of Dennis’ presentation:

- Problems you might encounter within any one team should be addressed with the Team Manager first and then with Dennis if you’re not able to reach a resolution, don’t agree with the resolution, or if you just like to complain (you know who you are).
- Marjorie and Janet are no longer involved in the day-to-day application/award processing. You’ll see from the aforementioned email that was released earlier this month that both of them will be charged with developing research administration policy, training and seeing that Coeus is implemented.
- ORD staff will not answer phones between the hours of 10:00 a.m and noon (plus lunch?) in order to concentrate strictly on award processing and forwarding award information to Financial Services (I bet they’re real happy).
- ORD will be getting called ID installed on their phones (seriously). So don’t try calling Barbara, then Jeanne, then Dawn or anyone else to get a question answered because they’ll be able to say, “look out, so-and-so is trying to reach us”. If your issue is an emergency and absolutely, positively can’t wait call Dennis or send an email. (Note: Dennis is still allowed to have lunch)
- It’s also been reported that they’ll be moving to an undisclosed location somewhere on the eastern seaboard. (Ok, I made that one up).
- A separate Team will be established just to process subcontracts. Jeanne will be in charge of this group. ORD is also evaluating the possibility of ‘farming out’ some

of the subcontract paperwork and processes to departments such as the process of setting up and approving requisitions. Call Jeanne to volunteer.

COEUS

Version 4.3 will be released to the UMB campus in October. It will include 'dramatic changes' (all for the good) and may well require extensive training.

Research Administrators Only

At this point in the meeting all the "central office" staff was asked to leave the room so we could talk about them, make fun of what they wore and laugh at what they said. Once the commotion died down, a lively and spirited discussion ensued about the future of RAC. It quickly dissolved into a good ol' fashion gripe session that involved a food fight similar to the one in *Animal House*.

For those of you who don't normally attend RAC, this closed session could actually lead to some good things and to some change that benefits the group. I'd advise you to attend and to hang around next time.

That's it.

Go O's!