



Strategic Planning Implementation: Contracts and Grants Administration

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Brad Volk reported to the DAC for the committee, which is focused on creating the necessary administrative support and infrastructure to generate more contracts and grants. They have developed a flowchart of our current support for external funding that shows how contracts and grants are processed. The committee is developing a website that will consolidate the following information about grants and contracts in one convenient location: (1) information and documents required for submissions, (2) step-by-step processes for developing and submitting a grant or contract, (3) post-award issues; (4) sample proposals and reports; (5) possible funding sources; (6) the effort required to develop proposals and the average success rate, and (7) responsibilities of the principal investigator. The website also will describe the steps required to navigate successfully through the campus Office of Sponsored Research. Byzantine is the word that comes to mind. The committee will sponsor training on grant writing, identify experienced grant writers to answer ongoing questions, and designate a point person who can prioritize and manage multiple



proposals. The committee will be sending you a survey about your satisfaction with grants administration at the School. Please complete the survey so that we can create a support system that will meet your needs. .

Our total annual revenue for contracts and grants is around \$1 million, and the committee has determined that a unit needs to generate at least \$15 million to support its own comprehensive grant and contract infrastructure. That conclusion is based on conversations with other schools and centers at Carolina. Those campus units that generate lots of contracts and grants typically have a team of full-time professionals who provide pre-award support that includes budget development, a grants editor, a statistician, and a full-time grants manager. The committee is exploring the possibility of partnering with one of those units to support our work—for a fee or a percentage of our overhead. They will develop a proposal for getting the administrative support that we need in the most cost effective way possible.

There were questions raised in the DAC about the broader implications of making contract and grant support a higher priority at the School. How important do we expect these sources of revenue to be, and what are the consequences of going down that road? What might that mean about the role of centers and EPA professionals within the School? In addition, the committee has talked about the issue of faculty incentives for seeking external support. Our current faculty salary policy prohibits consideration of external support in determining merit salary increases. This committee will focus its energy on developing the administrative support and infrastructure, and I will work with the Faculty Salary Committee (which needs to be reconstituted) to explore and address the set of issues around faculty incentives for external funding.

If Brad or any members of the DAC want to clarify or expand on this summary, I encourage you to post a comment. I am interested all of your reactions to the work of this committee so far. Many thanks to all of the members for their hard work.