

Plan Year: 2009-2010

Department	Mission
ORSP	The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) serves as the University's central administrative unit responsible for securing external resources through grants and contracts and providing financial and contractual stewardship of awards. ORSP provides dynamic and proactive services to cultivate and maximize external resources for relevant research, scholarly and creative pursuits. ORSP provides guidance and support to the university community in an environment that fosters the creative process and the enrichment of students and teaching, while ensuring the fulfillment of the university's financial, contractual, and regulatory obligations as well as accountability to external funding sources.

Achievements, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**Significant Departmental Achievements****Research Management:**

ORSP developed a policy and a set of procedures for supplemental payments on contracts and grants. These policy and procedures sought, within the limits of other university policies and federal regulations, to provide appropriate compensation for faculty and staff who take on additional assignments, beyond their regular appointment, in support of sponsored programs. The policy and procedures were under review at the end of the reporting period.

In addition we:

- Instituted a review process to improve compliance of funded projects with applicable federal and state regulations regarding human subject research.
- Acquired equipment and software for the successful initiation of the digitization of ORSP records. About 90% of the 21xxx series of our records have been digitized.
- Initiated action to develop an electronic proposal routing software. Held meetings with IT with plans to pilot the electronic submission of proposals early in the 2010-2011 academic year.
- Ensured that key members of the staff attended professional development workshops and conferences, within the limitation of available funds.
- Ensured continued dissemination of sponsored program information to the UNF community through the ORSP Listserv.
- Met one-on-one with individual principal investigators, chairs and deans to resolve grant-related problems and to discuss faculty research development initiatives.
- Developed processes to enable us implement recommendations from the ORSP program review.
- Conducted the annual Scholars Transforming Academic Research Symposium to showcase research excellence of faculty, staff, administrators, and graduate students across all disciplines within the university community.

Proposals and Awards:

Funding for research and sponsored projects at the University of North Florida reached an all-time high in 2009-2010. Eighty members of the faculty and staff at the University were active in seeking external support while 54 Principal Investigators received awards for sponsored projects during the reporting period. A total of 128 proposals were submitted in 2009–2010, on behalf of the faculty and staff, by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). Although the number of proposals submitted and the number of awards received from funding agencies were lower than the levels in the previous year, the total dollar value of awards received increased significantly. In 2009-2010, UNF faculty and staff received awards totaling \$17, 2788,525 through ORSP, a 23% increase relative to the previous year. The total direct federal award received at

UNF in 2009-2010 was \$8,825,527, an impressive 61% increase over 2008-2009, and the fifth consecutive yearly increase in direct federal awards received at the University. There were increases in all award categories although awards from local governments and private organizations continued to be relatively weak, consistent with a weakened local economy. Research and sponsored program expenditure for the year was \$11,633,815, about 3% above the previous year, while the total recovered Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs was \$1,573,515. More than half (53%) of the funded projects recovered indirect costs at a rate equal to, or less than, 10%. Forty-one percent (\$652,444) of the recovered F&A costs were distributed to principal investigators, centers, institutes, departments, colleges, and divisions within the institution. While the total recovered F&A costs grew by about 28%, the amount distributed to PIs, centers, institutes, departments, colleges, and divisions within the institution, grew by 42%.

Research Development (RD) Services:

ORSP provided editorial assistance and support for budget preparation and reviews of all proposals submitted through the Office. During the past fiscal year, RD staff met with University faculty and staff to review guidelines for 128 proposal submissions. The RD unit negotiated all contracts and research agreements for all awards received by the Office. Negotiations for some of the new proposals received in this reporting period were quite complex and provided ORSP unique opportunities to exercise advanced negotiation skills in research administration. The Office of the General Counsel provided much appreciated support for the development of grant agreements and contracts.

ORSP led and provided support for the successful development, review, and submission of 6 congressionally-directed project requests (plus-ups), for a total amount of \$15.3M to support research, education and services at UNF. This required close coordination with the faculty, support from the Vice President for Government Relations, and coordination with the State University System representative in Washington, DC.

Grant Accounting and Financial Management (GAFM) Services:

ORSP made progress in providing more efficient means for monitoring expenditures on contracts and grant awards. During this fiscal year, improvements in project accounting services were evident by the timely submission of financial reports, accurate invoicing, a low rate of accounts receivables greater than 120 days old, zero audit findings for the annual A-133 report, and expeditious closing of awards within thirty days after project end-dates. The GAFM staff managed 297 awards, conducted 45 orientation meetings and 72 close-out meetings, and processed 364 invoices. Administrative assistance was provided to PIs by processing 510 PAFs, 344 TARs, and 392 travel reimbursements. Other key initiatives of the GAFM staff in 2009-2010 included the monitoring and submission of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) reports for both C&G and E&G funds, facilitating the Request for Proposal process to hire a consultant to prepare our F&A rate proposal, and the submission of the F&A rate proposal with the Department of Health and Human Services.

Research Integrity (RI) Services:

ORSP provided administrative support for regulatory committees and assisted with the reviews of a significant number of protocols, thereby facilitating the responsible conduct of research by UNF principal investigators. In addition, during the reporting period, 11 educational presentations were given to students in various undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as campus wide, at the request of instructors and students. These presentations focused on ethical and responsible research practices for research involving human subjects, and on UNF IRB policies and procedures. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) received and reviewed 151 new protocol submissions, conducted 39 continuing reviews of previously-approved protocols, and reviewed requests for 32 amendments to previously approved protocols. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) reviewed 5 new protocols and completed 3 semi-annual facilities

inspections. The IACUC also adopted the CITI Laboratory Animal online course as a standard training tool for all faculty, students, and staff who work with laboratory animals. The UNF Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) held preliminary and regular meetings during the reporting period, and reported no outstanding compliance concern.

Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (IPATT) Services:

The Office processed two invention disclosures in 2009-2010, and the University was issued one new patent within this period. In addition to these activities, UNF acquired six patents from POLYFUEL, INC., a Delaware corporation, in support of the U.S. Department of Energy Direct Methanol Fuel Cell research project in the College of Computing, Engineering, and Construction. A final report for the first UNF State University Research Commercialization Assistance Grant (SURCAG) was completed, submitted, and well-received by the Board of Governors of the Florida State Universities.

Strengths

Principal Investigators (PIs) play the pivotal role in sponsored programs. In this respect, UNF is no different from other universities within and outside the State. PIs at UNF are not only consistently, and increasingly, successful in attracting direct federal awards, but for the first time we honored four principal investigators whose total individual research awards exceeded one million dollars in the previous year. This increasing competitiveness of our principal investigators, and our capacity to successfully receive and administer these funds, reflect the strength of sponsored programs at the University of North Florida.

ORSP has well developed processes and procedures that have enabled the staff to maintain an excellent level of services. The units within the ORSP continue to work in cooperation with one another. Joint meetings of the Research Development unit and the Grants Accounting and Financial Management unit continue to contribute to the increased efficiency in the functioning of the Office. Increased staff strength in the Research Integrity Unit and the close collaboration of the staff with the Chair of the Institutional Review Board have resulted in better services for faculty who use our compliances services of ORSP.

Weaknesses:

- While participating PIs have been increasingly successful in attracting federal funds, there has been a steady reduction in the number of faculty receiving awards in the last three years. The historical limitation of institutional emphasis on sponsored projects, as a component of faculty workload, does not encourage full faculty participation in sponsored project activities. Out of a total of about 426 members of the faculty, 53 (about 12%) received funding for sponsored activities in 2009-2010.
- ORSP conducted several training workshops and opportunities to promote research and sponsored activities. Although much time and effort was put into preparing these opportunities, faculty participation was extremely low.
- There has been a significant decline of reassignment of effort from faculty devoting effort on research projects.

Opportunities:

- The University of North Florida Strategic Plan 2009-2014 identifies the support and recognition of research as a component of one of its goals and lays out strategies for achieving this. The implementation of these strategies will represent a significant opportunity to grow the sponsored research function at UNF.
- The evolution of the Chemistry and Physics Department into two separate departments will allow increased focus on research by each of these new departments.
- The new Biology building, under construction, will provide additional space for research programs and attract more research-oriented hires that will support the robust research focus of

the department.

- UNF's pursuit of a designation as a community engaged institution offers us the opportunity to further develop our community based research focus in the social sciences.

Threats:

Two principal investigators received more than 50% of the awards in 2009-2010. This over-concentration of the award distribution, combined with the reduction in the number of faculty receiving awards, is indicative of a weakness that does not augur well for the health of sponsored programs at this institution. One consequence of a high concentration is that a loss of one PI (through resignation, retirement or inactivity) can result in a significant reduction in the level of awards received by the institution. Furthermore, continued weakness in the local, regional and state economies constitutes a threat to the ability of some of our faculty to access funds in support of their research efforts.

Goal		Action				
1. Secure external resources through the development and submission of well-written proposals that are complete, compliant, and responsive to funding agency requirements and to the research, teaching and service missions of the University.	1.1	Increase number of faculty participating in sponsored programs		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
			1.1.1	Number of faculty and staff involved in sponsored activities dropped from 93 in 08-09 to 90 this year, a 3% decrease.	The number of faculty and staff involved in sponsored projects dropped due to the loss of research faculty and loss of external sources of funding due to economic conditions.	Continue reaching out to faculty and staff, particularly new faculty, to encourage them to become engaged in sponsored projects.
	1.2	Assist the university with its goal to increase revenues from C&G and meeting targets for increasing research expenditures set in BOG accountability		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
			1.2.1	The university community received \$17,109,426 of funds through contracts and grants -- a record amount.	ORSP processed a record amount of awards through contracts and grants in 2009-2010.	Continue reaching out to these active researchers on campus and work with new faculty to increase C&G funding.
	1.3	Improve communication with UNF contingencies external to ORSP		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
			1.3.1	Revised listserv format to make it more user-friendly for	While listserv looks nicer and is easier to use, it continues to be	Determine need for listserv or find better avenues to

			ORSP constituents	underutilized by faculty and staff.	provide information to faculty and staff.	
			1.3.2	Provided reports to Media Relations for use with both internal and external news outlets.	Due to timing of awards and time constraints, reports were submitted only bi-monthly.	Restructure reports to be more informative for ORSP and UNF constituents and provide reports in a more timely manner.
2. Serve as the University's liaison with external funding agencies and to protect the University's interests through the negotiation of grants and contract terms that are compliant with University policies.	Action					
	2.1	Establish relationships and enhance existing one with the Jacksonville community stakeholders to identify and collaborate on research projects relevant to the University's service area.		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
			2.1.1	Collaborated with General Counsel to develop contracts and negotiate agreeable terms with external agencies.	Templates are being developed on a case-by-case basis and contracts negotiated as necessary.	Continue working with the General Counsel to develop standardized contract language for ORSP projects.
			2.1.2	Project awards were successfully negotiated by ORSP staff.	All contracts and awards received by ORSP on behalf of UNF were successfully negotiated to provide the best service both to the contractor and to UNF.	Continue negotiating contracts and grants that comply with UNF policies.
3. Facilitate responsible conduct in research by minimizing incidence of noncompliance with regulations governing responsible conduct of research.	Action					
	3.1	Improve knowledge of regulations and laws governing research activities to committee members (i.e., IACUC, IBC, and IRB), as well as to researchers (i.e., faculty, staff, and		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
3.1.1			UNF's Faculty Associate for Research Integrity (FAFRI) conducted ongoing educational discussions	Outreach and education across campus was successful in 2009-2010. Because of those efforts researchers are	The Research Integrity Unit plans to increase the number of available training and	

	students). Additionally, Research Integrity strives to conduct further outreach and educational opportunities for researchers to insure a comprehensive understanding of what is required when completing a protocol application for review.		during IRB meetings during Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 terms. ORSP sent a research integrity staff member to an IRB, IACUC, & IBC training conference in the Fall 2009 term. ORSP also sent a different research integrity staff member, one current IRB member, and one future IRB member to conferences for IRB training during the Spring 2010 term. Additionally, the FAFRI generated and presented training to faculty, staff, and student researchers on how to properly generate an IRB application.	contacting the Research Integrity Unit in advance of submitting protocol applications seeking assistance. RI continues to build quality working relationships across campus.	relationship building activities. Several presentations are already scheduled for the upcoming academic year. Furthermore, we may consider generating similar training material for IACUC and IBC.
3.2	Develop a comprehensive set of research policies related to activities under Research Integrity purview.		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
		3.2.1	UNF's IBC policies are approved and publicly available. UNF's IRB policies are being edited and expected to be publicly available in the early Fall 2010 term.	Making policies publicly available is paramount to success in providing researchers with valuable information on how the Research Integrity Unit can assist with their research	UNF's IACUC policies have been publicly available since 1998; however, a review of those policies is under consideration. Additionally, continued communication, outreach, and training for the

3.3	Enhance what the Research Integrity Unit within ORSP can do for researchers as related to paperwork, processing, and facility oversight.			projects. Much progress has been made.	UNF research community on applicable policies and how we can support research at UNF is an important goal.
			Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
		3.3.1	We've spent time over the past several years researching and reviewing protocol submission processes. We have come to realize that an electronic protocol submission software package is the best approach for researchers and administrators. Additionally, we enhanced facility and subject oversight to insure compliance of federal, state, and local regulations. Furthermore, we created a mechanism to cross reference research awards and applicable compliance regulations.	During the Spring and Summer 2010 terms we've been in serious negotiations with a software developer. We are pleased with our choice and feel the campus community will appreciate how the tool streamlines submission, review and approval processes. We increased our presence in research facilities. We also cross reference every award to insure compliance is met prior to dispensing funds.	We hope to purchase the electronic software package during the 2010-2011 academic year. Once piloted on campus and training modules generated we will conduct a campus-wide campaign to insure researchers are aware of and familiar with how that tool can be best utilized. We will continue to visit research facilities on a quarterly basis. Continue to inform campus community on our award routing processes.
3.4	Enhance the existing communication channels of the		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement

	ORSP websites, ORSPy News, and ORSP listserv by distributing and marketing timely, accurate, and current information regarding ORSP updates, research regulations, and university deadlines.	3.4.1	ORSPy News was submitted on a monthly basis or when information was available to distribute. Orientation and close-out checklists were implemented to be used as guides by the GAFM staff during meetings with PIs.	Review of GAFM practices, procedures, and processes was provided in orientation meetings which facilitated dialogue and awareness with PIs.	Continue to evaluate effective means of disseminating information.
4. Strengthen the communication between GAFM and our stakeholders to ensure proper financial administration.	Action				
	4.1		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
		4.1.1	Awards and contracts were successfully closed with no audit findings.	All awards and contracts ending in 2009-2010 were successfully closed through the submission of the final project by the PI and financial reports by ORSP.	Continue successful close-out of awards and contracts.
5. Strengthen the financial stability of ORSP to ensure proper financial administration of C&G funds.	Action				
	5.1		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
		5.1.5	F&A recovered and distributed are automated on research projects, expenditures are monitored on a monthly basis by reports, individual GAFM Coordinator project leads were created, and revenue from all awards received in FY 2009 were	The completion of the ORSP F&A rate proposal maintained compliance and provided guidelines for charging F&A on projects and monthly reports to the GAFM staff of pcard default accounts, cash balances on awards, old award issues,	Implement an annual leave pool for C&G employees, updating processes and procedures, providing professional development of staff, and evaluating GAFM and RD processes to prevent

			received except FLDOE which is due to the FLDOE variance.	and fringe chargeback variances maintained efficient monitoring of research projects.	duplicate efforts would enhance the fiscal management of ORSP.
6. Minimize the incidence of non-compliance with regulations governing financial compliance and responsible fiscal management.	Action		Outcome	Evaluation	Continuous Improvement
	6.1 Implement Banner processes that evaluate cash balances regularly and monitor the usage of ORSP expenditures. The proper classification of account codes will be monitored and procedures would be implemented that support decisions.	6.1.6	There were no auditing findings on the A-133 SEFA report. Additionally, the accounting and administrative duties were merged in GAFM creating one point of contact for the PIs during the post award process. The fringe chargeback variance rates were automated creating more accurate account balances.	There is timely posting and review of expenditures on research projects.	Monitor balances regularly to prevent overspending and unallowable purchases on research projects.