EAB | University Research Forum

How to Streamline Administrative Processes in the Research Office

Minimizing the Administrative Burden on Faculty: Part 1

April 3rd, 2018

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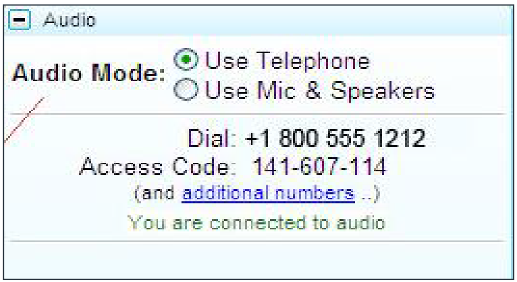

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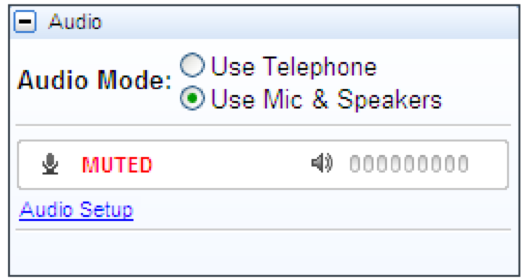

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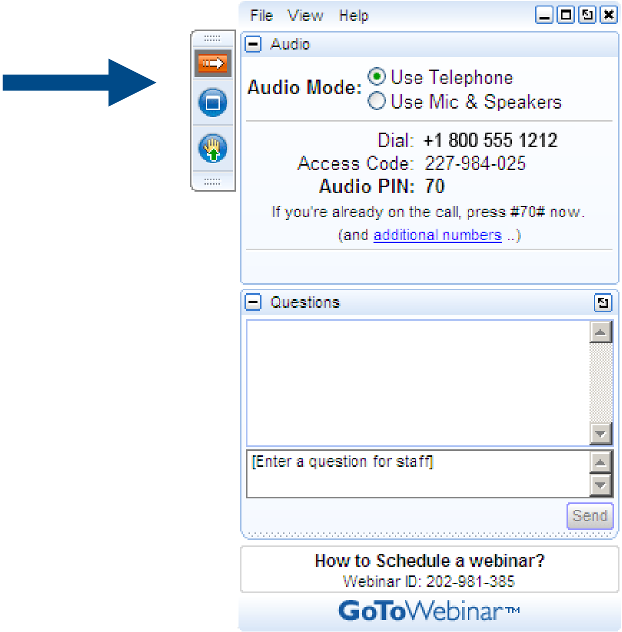

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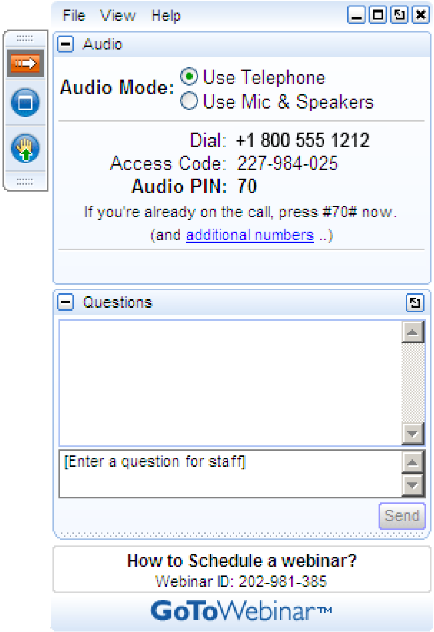


How to Streamline Administrative Processes in the Research Office

Minimizing the Administrative Burden on Faculty: Part 1

April 3rd, 2018

Today's Presenter

Jon Barnhart

Consultant

University Research Forum

Jbarnhart@eab.com

(202) 568-7475

Our Full Webconference Series

Minimizing the Administrative Burden on Faculty

How to Streamline Administrative Processes in the Research Office
Learn ways to improve processes by understanding the PI experience and pain points, maximizing existing organizational structure, clearly assigning responsibility and ownership over steps, and using data to understand and improve performance.

→ **TODAY**

Tuesday, April 3

3:00 – 4:00pm ET

Four Strategies to Develop (and Retain) Top Research Administrative Talent
Learn best practices for ensuring consistent administrative services and support across campus, designing a system that provides career growth opportunities to retain top talent, and developing a strong relationship between administrators and researchers.

→ **Thursday, April 12**

1:00 – 2:00pm ET

REGISTER NOW

Help Investigators Win More Awards While Spending Less Time on Regulatory Compliance
Learn strategies to help researchers find the best-fit funding opportunities and develop strong proposals to win those awards, identify areas of over-compliance, and create templates and pilot programs to reduce the compliance burden on researchers.

→ **Thursday, April 19**

1:00 – 2:00pm ET

REGISTER NOW

1 **The Proliferation of Administrative Burden**

2 Streamlining Administrative Processes in the Research Office

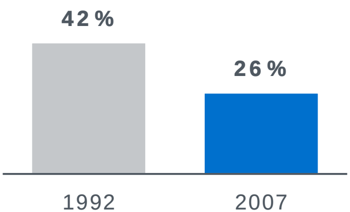
3 Questions?

Faculty Have Never Had It Easier

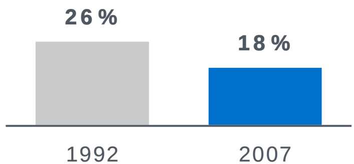
More Time for Research, Better Tools to Work With

Lighter Teaching and Service Requirements…

Teaching

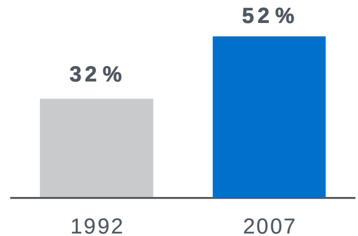


Service



…More Time for Research

Research



From Having to Sign Up to Use THE Computer…

…To Having Access to One That Thinks for Itself

IBM Watson

Source: Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) *Faculty Workload Survey, published in* 2007 and 2012; NEA Almanac of Higher Education, *Faculty Workload and Productivity in the 1990s, published in* 1996. “Computer room with DECSYSTEM-2020 mainframe computers, University of York 1980s”; IBM Watson Health.

But Research Faculty Also Face More Hurdles

Despite Advances, Environmental Pressures Pushing Down on Researchers

Key Drivers of Administrative Burden

Unpredictable Funding

Funding ebbs and flows limit sustainable money for researchers to chart their career paths

Increased External Competition

Lower funding rates can pit smaller schools and less-tenured faculty against more-experienced researchers

Added Regulations

Agency-specific and federal rules have expanded compliance burden on the research enterprise

Increased Internal Competition

Institutions must choose among disciplines to allocate dwindling university-level research funds

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Funding Booms Create a New Generation

Increase in Doctoral Students, Postdocs Puts Pressure on Admin Support

An Increase in Demand for Research Support…

4X

Increase in the number of postdocs from 1990 to 2015

2X

Increase in the number of S&E doctorates earned from 1990 to 2015

…and a Shrinking Supply of Resources…

26%

Administrative indirect cost recovery cap, instituted in 1991

…Leads to Investigators Doing More Work.

42%

The average amount of dedicated research time investigators spend on administrative tasks

Source: AAAS Historical Trends, University S&E R&D (1990-2014), NCES Survey of Earned Doctorates (1990-2014), NCES Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering (1990-2014), HERD (2010-2014), FDP Faculty Workload Survey (2012).

Faculty Caught Up in a Loop

Often Stuck in Early Phases of Find, Write, Submit, Repeat

The Endless Grant Cycle

Find Funding

"I **spent almost all of my time fundraising**, and the time spent on executing research was less than 5%"

Write Proposal

Approximately **16%** of PI's[1] federal research time is spent on proposal prep

Submit Proposal

Win Award

The NIH[2] success rate has dropped **from 31%** in 1998 **to 19%** in 2016

Manage Award

Conduct Research

"If I asked for an administrative assistant, it would **probably double my research time** … and my department would probably have a good laugh"

Compile Reports

Researchers feel burdened by progress reports that feel **too frequent** and of **little added value**

1) PI: Principal Investigator.

2) NIH: National Institutes of Health.

Source: FDP Faculty Workload Survey (2012); NIH Success Rates and Funding Rates; "Young, talented and fed-up: scientists tell their stories".

The Downstream Impact of a Weary Faculty

What Happens When Faculty Want Off the Treadmill

Failing to Attain Tenure

Even the most eager and accomplished doctoral students and postdocs tire of endlessly working for someone else while seeing fewer and fewer open tenure-track positions.

Impact:

- Broken in-house pipeline of potential tenured faculty
- Reputation of turning over high-potential researchers
- Unpredictable staffing for tenured researchers

Leaving Academia Entirely

The "quit lit" generation has made their voices heard: the administrative burden is too much, and non-academic careers are a greener pasture.

Impact:

- Loss of research expenditures and expertise
- Loss of teaching time and departmental knowledge
- Potential reputational damage in the age of viral rants

Shopping for Better Support

Worse than leaving academia is seeing a high-performing researcher poached by another university offering a higher level of research support.

Impact:

- Loss of research expenditures and expertise
- Loss of teaching time and departmental knowledge
- Discipline-level reputational damage of under support, deprioritization

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Reduction Efforts Too Intensive with Low Returns

On-Campus Efforts Poorly Aimed While Advocacy Efforts Take Too Long

Unit-Level Efforts

- May solve one problem, but often create new problems and/or exacerbate existing problems
- Often result in shifting burden, rather than eliminating burden

University-Level Efforts

- Often are a veiled cost-cutting initiative
- Results in short-term burden increases, followed by mid-term task rightsizing

Agency / Legislative Efforts

- Reactive initiatives take too long, recommend too many (infeasible) solutions
- Engagement in responsive initiatives does not guarantee proactive consultation
- Proactive advocacy channels too broad in scope, ill-equipped to influence rule-making process

What's missing from these approaches?

A process-wide, customer-centric viewpoint that puts the PI as the focus of burden reduction efforts.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Instead, Take a Faculty-Centric Approach

Research Offices, PIs Misaligned on Administrative Process Timeline

The Ups and Downs of a PI's Experience Through the Grant Process

Source: University of Michigan Project Lifecycle; MIT FY2016 Faculty and Staff Quality of Life Survey; Federal Demonstration Partnership's (FDP) 2012 Faculty Workload Survey; FASEB Findings of the FASBET Survey on Administrative Burden (2013); EAB interviews and analysis.

Applying a Faculty-Centric Lens to the Solutions

Time and Frustration Become Key Metrics in Reducing Burden

Research Administrative Burden on Faculty

Can we move burden away from faculty?

Can we eliminate any of this burden outright?

Streamlining Administrative Processes

How can we make processes easier to navigate while still maintaining efficiency?

Cultivating Faculty-Focused Support Services

How can we instill a customer-centric mindset in admin staff to reduce frustration for PIs?

Increasing Proposal Success Rates

How can we improve proposal quality so PIs spend less time trying to win grants?

Wrangling Compliance

How can we reduce self-imposed regulatory burden while remaining compliant and reducing process frustration?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Minimizing the Administrative Burden on Faculty

Strategies to Ensure Researchers Spend More Time in the Lab

Shifting Burden

1. Streamlining Administrative Processes

1) PI Journey Map
2) Org Model Depolarization
3) Functional Responsibility Matrix
4) Software Vendor Evaluation Checklist
5) Shared Accountability Dashboards

2. Cultivating Faculty-Focused Support Services

6) Customer-Centric Hiring Requirements
7) Multidimensional Performance Evaluation
8) Professional Development Curriculum
9) Career Ladders and Progression Paths
10) Structured Administrator-PI Engagements

Reducing Burden

3. Increasing Proposal Success Rates

11) Tailored Funding Broker
12) Full-Service Proposal Development
13) Systematized Feedback Capture

4. Wrangling Compliance

14) Compliance Procedure Complexity Audit
15) Pre-Scripted Compliance Language
16) Compliance Demonstration Pilot

Minimizing the Administrative Burden on Faculty

Strategies to Ensure Researchers Spend More Time in the Lab

Shifting Burden		Reducing Burden	
1. Streamlining Administrative Processes	**2. Cultivating Faculty-Focused Support Services**	**3. Increasing Proposal Success Rates**	**4. Wrangling Compliance**
1) PI Journey Map 2) Org Model Depolarization 3) Functional Responsibility Matrix 4) Software Vendor Evaluation Checklist 5) Shared Accountability Dashboards	6) Customer-Centric Hiring Requirements 7) Multidimensional Performance Evaluation 8) Professional Development Curriculum 9) Career Ladders and Progression Paths 10) Structured Administrator-PI Engagements	11) Tailored Funding Broker 12) Full-Service Proposal Development 13) Systematized Feedback Capture	14) Compliance Procedure Complexity Audit 15) Pre-Scripted Compliance Language 16) Compliance Demonstration Pilot

1. **The Proliferation of Administrative Burden**
2. Streamlining Administrative Processes in the Research Office
3. Questions?

Balancing Aspirations with Reality

CROs[1], PIs Have Different Experiences with Research Office

CROs Envision an Office That…	In Reality, PIs Often Feel They Are…
Provides high-quality customer service that effectively matches PI needs	Working with the office of "no", who tells them things they can't do without providing solutions
Utilizes comprehensive electronic systems to improve efficiency from idea to award closeout	Completing endless, redundant paperwork and forms
Establishes policies and processes that create a seamless experience through the grant lifecycle	Dealing with a series of bottlenecks and hoops to jump through

1) CRO: Chief Research Officer.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Removing Roadblocks and Redundancies

Tactics to Overcome Hurdles and Streamline Administrative Processes

Research offices hears PI complaints about problems only when they become a big enough frustration

Tactic #1: PI Journey Map

Build a process map of the full grant lifecycle to identify service gaps and pain points

CROs have limited say in the organizational structures and varying degrees of control over administrative staff

Tactic #2: Org Model Depolarization

Create an organizational structure that best aligns with your research enterprise

Redundant and confusing steps in the grant lifecycle frustrate PIs and administrators, unclear delegation of ownership at certain points

Tactic #3: Functional Responsibility Matrix

Assign ownership and responsibility for each step in the grant lifecycle

Software solutions are a huge investment of time and money and rarely provide the outcomes users need and want

Tactic #4: Software Vendor Evaluation Checklist

Understand the key ingredients your electronic system should have to best match your needs

Research offices not leveraging and analyzing existing data on a consistent basis

Tactic #5: Shared Accountability Dashboards

Use performance data to identify pain points, measure progress, and improve processes

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Walking a Mile in a PI’s Shoes

Understanding the Journey from Idea to Award Closeout

PIs Often Follow More of a Ramble Through the Grant Lifecycle

?

“Besides Google, where do I go to find funding?”

?

“Wait, wasn’t I just here? I don’t know who to talk to.”

?

“Why can’t I access my award yet? It’s my money!”

?

“When do I need to submit my progress reports?”

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Mapping the Customer Journey

Experiencing the Process from the User’s Point of View

How Companies Use a Customer Journey Map

Defining a Customer Journey Map

- Illustrates the steps a customer takes in interacting with an organization
- Examines customer experience in engaging with products, services, online experience, etc.
- Details each actual touchpoint between customer and product or service, but not necessarily the ideal

Four Steps in Utilizing a Customer Journey Map

1. **Illustrate from the customer’s point of view**, allowing for a complete understanding of the experience
2. **Engage stakeholders from each point on map**, drawing from the knowledge of those who interact with the customer at each stage
3. **Map how the processes actually occur**, not how it should ideally function
4. **Identify issues and implement changes** to improve customer experience

Putting the Map to Work

“The journey mapping process and results helped us **clearly see the pain points and gaps in the customer’s experience**, including channel, content, and device gaps. It also **helped to build empathy** and increase understanding with our employees.”

-USA.gov journey mapping team

Source: “Using Customer Journey Maps to Improve Customer Experience,” *Harvard Business Review;* “When and How to Create Customer Journey Maps,” Nielsen Norman Group; “Journey Mapping the Customer Experience: A USA.gov Case Study.”

Creating a Customer Journey Map for Research

Identifying Roadblocks and Service Gaps

Process for Developing a Customer Journey Map

Convened Customer Journey Task Force

- Group included a representative from sponsored programs, tech transfer, research development, core facilities, and research integrity
- Tasked group with mapping interactions between research office units and researchers

Mapped Research Processes

- Mapped each interaction between the researcher and research office from hiring to award closeout
- Reviewed all touchpoints and communication between the research office and researcher

Case in Brief: University of New Hampshire

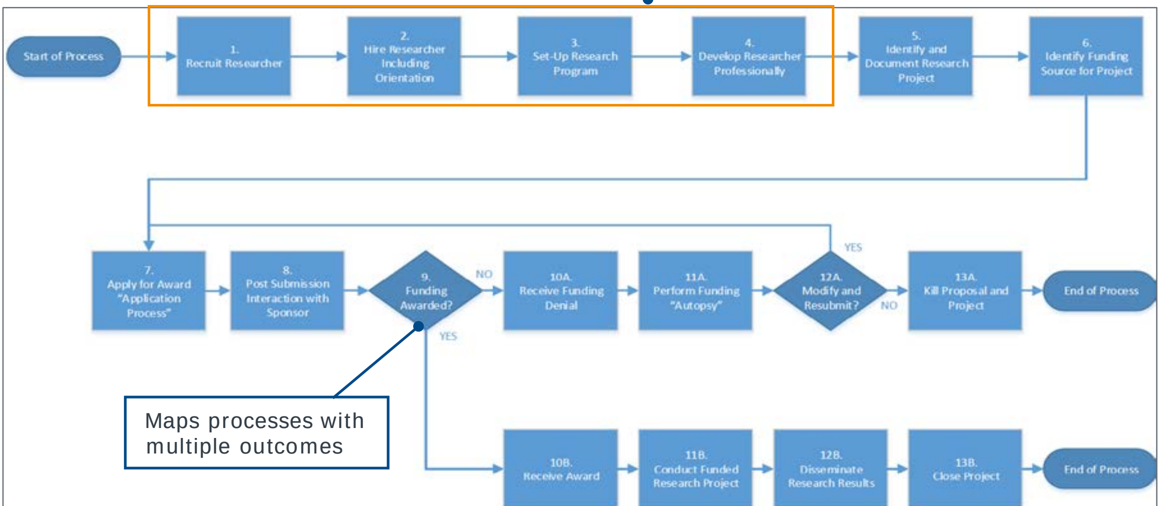
- Public, Doctoral University: Higher Research Activity located in Durham, New Hampshire
- $140M+ in research expenditures in FY2015
- Research office sought to improve consistency of service to PIs
- Created a customer journey map to understand the interactions of units in the research office with PIs and to identify areas for process and service improvement

A PI’s Journey from Recruitment to Closeout

Tool for Guiding Conversations with Researchers

UNH Customer Journey Process Map

Journey begins before researcher even seeks funding



Maps processes with multiple outcomes

Maps through grant lifecycle to closeout

Source: UNH OSVPR Customer Journey Process Map; EAB interviews and analysis.

Using the Map to Identify Service Gaps

Aligning Task Force Findings with PI Experience

Collaborating with Faculty to Understand Process Roadblocks

- Hosted 3 meetings, with about 90 participants total, that included faculty of all types and levels (new, tenured, research faculty, etc.)
- Task force presented processes they thought could be improved to see how those aligned with steps researchers identified for improvement
- Walked through process map and asked researchers where they saw room for improvement, grouped responses together by theme to highlight major issue areas
- Faculty identified the on-boarding and orientation processes as overwhelming and ripe for improvement

Implementing PI Suggestions to Improve Service

Faculty pinpointed front-end processes like new faculty on-boarding as area for improvement

Research office **redesigned on-boarding process** including streamlining communications, creating an orientation program, and increasing early in-person interaction with office

New faculty have **increased awareness of services of research office** and build relationships before they need support

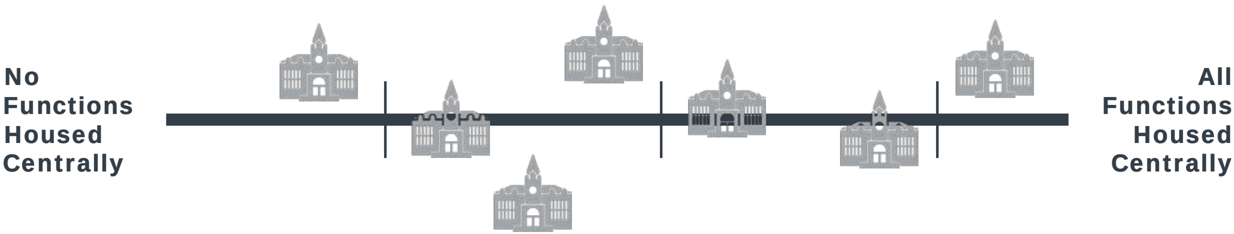
On-going improvements will focus on pre-award and include unit-based administrative staff in the process

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

The Grass Is Always Greener

Research Admin Org Models Always Leave Something to Be Desired

An Imperfect Spectrum Makes for Challenging Comparisons



Focus Instead on Span of Control

Within Control

The biggest PI complaint for centrally managed functions is a **lack of personalized customer support.**

Outside of Control

The biggest PI complaints for unit-managed functions are a **lack of staff specialization** and **duplicative processes.**

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Central Processes Can Feel Personal, Too

Named and Known Research Administrators Improve PI Engagement

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Centrally Managed, Locally Deployed

Research administrators are part of a three person team that are:

- Hired and managed centrally
- Physically located in one of the colleges
- Covering pre-award, post-award and grant accounting processes
- Maintaining the same portfolio of faculty they support

Key Benefits

1. **Faculty Appreciate Access**
   Centrally managed, locally deployed model mimics benefits of “named and known” decentral models while enhancing the service provided

2. **Continuity is Key**
   Investigators know exactly who will be managing their proposal and grant at each stage of the process

3. **Frontline Expertise Breeds Service Excellence**
   The research administrative teams meet in functional cohorts (e.g., pre-award, post-award and grant accounting) to share challenges and solutions from their respective colleges

!

Rightsizing Facetime

The Research Office at the **University of Pennsylvania** employs a similar model but limits staff time in colleges to 2-3 days a week. This limit reinforces that research administrators are central staff, and should not take on additional unit responsibilities.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Improving Unit-Level Service from the Center

How to Leverage Team Identity, Training, and Workflow Improvements

Leverage Points	Sample Solutions
Creating a Sense of Identity	Central research administrators at **Miami University (Ohio)** include **central business and finance staff** involved in research administration in their professional development trainings to **foster a "team" environment** across different offices.
Training Unit Staff from the Center	The central research office at the **University of New Hampshire** offers **new hire and refresher training for all unit-based business processes staff** to integrate them as best as possible with the centralized pre- and post-award staff.
Appropriating Unit Workflow	Unit-based research administrators at **Caltech** employ a **portfolio ranking and tracking system** that allows for **fluid workflow adjustments based on PI needs and staff capabilities**.
Eliminating Redundancy	Central research administrators at **Northwestern University** asked unit-level administrators to send the central office a list of specific areas to review, rather than the central office conducting another full review of the proposal to reduce redundancy and turnaround time.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

The Hype vs. the Reality of Shared Services

Common Failure Paths of Integrating Research Admin into Shared Services

Ideal Process and Where It Falls Short

Establish a Goal of Shared Service Units

✖ Goal is either too broad to be realistic or politically written to serve another purpose

✔ Goal is based on desired outcomes and grounded in measurable milestones

Create Staffing Plan

✖ Staffing rates based on unit-level FTE[1] audit

✔ Staffing rates based on current unit FTEs and expertise, as well as central resource availability

Integrate Shared Services Center into Workflow

✖ New shared services center does what they are asked, duplicating efforts with central

✔ New workflow plans are developed with each shared services unit to determine which functions will remain central and which will live in the unit

Maintain Continuous Unit Funding

✖ Deans control unit funding, allowing them to cut staff lines without workflow considerations

✔ Unit funding is at least partially controlled by central research office, and adding or removing lines is negotiated

1) FTE: Full-Time Equivalent

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Assigning Responsibility Through Grant Process

Providing Guidance Through Clarity, Documentation

University of Colorado Boulder

Lack of Clarity Around Steps in Process Leads to Frustration, Inefficiencies

- Opportunities to shirk responsibilities that should fall in domain
- Duplicative processes and work cause frustration from researchers and administrators
- Administrative steps throughout grant lifecycle are unknown to researchers, cause confusion

Responsibility Matrix Designates Ownership, Documents Process

- Assigns clear ownership of each step to one person or office
- Highlights duplication of processes and overlapping responsibilities
- Provides clear guidance to researchers and administrators through the entire grant lifecycle

Case in Brief: University of Colorado Boulder

- Public, Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity located in Boulder, Colorado
- $420M+ in research expenditures in FY2015
- Office of Contracts and Grants and the Campus Controller's Office conducted a review of procedures in the research office
- Determined a document was needed to align roles and responsibilities across the entire lifecycle of a project

Source: HERD Survey Fiscal Year 2015; Office of Contracts and Grants Roles and Responsibilities Matrix Background; EAB interviews and analysis.

Ensuring Coverage, Removing Unnecessary Steps

Developing a Comprehensive Responsibility Matrix

Laying the Groundwork
- Researched peer matrices
- Created draft matrix
- Established working groups

Focusing on Specific Areas
- Built working groups around each functional area of the grant lifecycle
- Drafted function matrices

Reviewing and Refining
- Research leadership reviewed functional matrices
- Created a full draft matrix

Gaining Approval
- Presented matrix for review by various groups across campus including final approval from Research Advisory Council

Training and Communicating
- Trained department administrators
- Published finalized matrix

Finding Inefficiencies, Reducing Redundancy and Paperwork

- Responsibility matrix highlighted inefficiencies in award closeout process which involved Office of Contracts and Grants (OCG) and Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA)
- Researchers were being bombarded with redundant forms and requests for information from OCG, SPA, and at times tech transfer, that was needed to close out an award
- OCG created the Award Closeout Tool, a clear and simple two-page form that details each step a department/unit administrator needs to complete to close out an award

Source: CU Boulder Roles and Responsibility Matrix Background; EAB interviews and analysis.

Zeroing in on the Right Level of Detail

Designating Ownership for Each Step

CU Boulder Roles and Responsibility Matrix

Research Administration: Roles and Responsibilities Matrix
Adopted April 2015

ROLE DESIGNATIONS LEGEND

Primary Responsibility for action/implementation of tasks:
P = PRIMARY currently
PF = PRIMARY in FUTURE

Support/Consult, as necessary
S = SUPPORT currently
SF = SUPPORT in FUTURE

RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION PROCESS	Principal Investigator (PI)	Office of Contracts and Grants (OCG)	Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA)	Department Administrator	Technology Transfer Office (TTO)	Office of Industry Collaboration (OIC) (For industry research only)	Research Compliance Offices: Export, COI, IRB, IACUC	Property Accounting Office (PAO)
Pre Award								
Preparing to Submit a Proposal								
Locate funding opportunity	P	S				S		
Read and interpret proposal guidelines	P	S				S	S	
Prepare Non-Disclosure Agreements, as needed	S				P	S		
Prepare Teaming Agreements, as needed	S	P				S		
File Annual DEPA	P						S	
Proposal Development								
Obtain and understand sponsor instructions for proposal preparation	P	S		S				
Identify Cost Sharing in proposal and obtain cost share approval from Department	P	S						
Identify and indicate approvals needed for proposal	S	P						
Completion of Proposal PI Checklist/Intake Form	P			S				
Provide guidance to PI on proposal preparation		P		S	S	S		
Develop and revise technical narrative, Bio sketches, Current and Pending	P			S				
Develop administrative pages of proposal		P		S				
Ensure required Effort available, if awarded	P		S					
Identify subcontractors/collaborators	P							
Request and collect necessary Subcontractor Budget, Statement of Work (SOW), Commitment Form and Sole Source Justification	P	S		S				
Notify Office of Industry Collaboration of proposal with Industry (non federal/non federal flowthrough)	S	P						
Draft Budget [Proposal Development module in Boulder eRA will empower PIs to create budgets]	S/ PF with eRA	P		S				

Source: CU Boulder Office of Contracts and Grants, Roles And Responsibility Matrix 2015.

Adding Flexibility Where Needed

Beyond "Owners" and "Supporters"

Responsibilities	
R	Responsible for the correct and thorough completion of the work to achieve the task
A	Accountable for the correct and thorough completion of the task, typically delegating the work to those
S	Support for those who are responsible or accountable
C	Consulted as needed in order to complete the task (two-way communication)
I	Informed that task is underway/completed (one-way communication)

R- Responsible for the work, but not necessarily the task itself → Can be faculty or staff

A- Accountable for completing/delegating the completion of the task → Can be faculty or staff

S- Support for all involved → Mostly staff

C- Consulted insight for all involved → Mostly staff

I- Informed/aware that task is progressing → Mostly staff

Source: University of Michigan, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, http://orsp.umich.edu/sites/default/files/all-highlighted.png

More than Just a Piece of Paper

Building a Matrix that Improves Processes Through Clarity

Characteristics of a Successful Matrix Creation Process

Well-Researched Process

Dedicated ample time early in the process to **reviewing matrices of other research institutions** to understand key components to include

Broad Stakeholder Engagement

Involved **over 40 volunteers from across campus** to participate in **11 working groups**; 1 pre-award group and 10 post-award

Clearly Defined Areas of Focus

Working groups defined all tasks associated with **15 specific functional areas** in the grant process

Ongoing Review and Adjustment

Understand that the matrix is a "living document" and over time **review to ensure matrix accurately reflects processes**

Empowering Experts, Gathering Input from Across Campus

PIs who serve on a Faculty Advisory Board

Department administrators active in campus-wide meeting group

Long-tenured administrators with specific process and subject expertise

Administrators from units of all types and sizes (including centers/institutes)

Source: "Roles and Responsibility Matrix Background"; EAB interviews and analysis.

Your Search for the Holy Grail Continues

Key Deficits Holding Back the Perfect ERA System

Cost-Effectiveness

- Current vendors require significant upfront licensing cost or large investments in developers
- Long-term maintenance and staffing costs required across vendors; update and downtime losses occur often as well

Cradle-to-Grave Capabilities

- No single vendor offers a (good) full package of research administration services
- No vendor fully incorporates the peripheral administrative services (e.g., faculty expertise databases, funding sources, commercialization management)

Plug-and-Play Implementation

- Most vendors require significant implementation timelines
- Maintenance, updates, and new modules also require additional installation time that limit usability

Seamless Integration

- Most sophisticated vendors are standalone ERA tools that do not ladder well to university financial reporting systems
- Building crosswalks between systems requires significant cost and time
- Timely report generation lacking even in integrated products

1) ERA: Electronic Research Administration

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

A New Evaluation Framework for ERAs

The Five Questions to Answer Before Vetting a Vendor

Software Philosophy:

Are you a "best-in-breed" or a "one-size-fits-all" institution?

Must-Have Features:

What's the biggest service gap on campus?

Resources and Time:

What's the budget and how long until we *need* it?

Implementation Plan:

What modules first, and where to begin?

Currently Active Vendors:

Do we *have* to buy from our CRM/financial system vendor?

How the Five Questions Ease Vendor Evaluation

- ✓ Reduces the number of vendors to consider
- ✓ Reduces time spent on vendor evaluations
- ✓ Speeds up time to implementation

Source: EAB's IT Forum "Supporting Frontline IT Purchasing in the Cloud Era"; EAB interviews and analysis.

Going Beyond the Canned Presentation

Ask Vendors to Address Specific Gaps with Capabilities Tests

Three Common Evaluation Pitfalls and How to Improve Them

✖ "What all can your platform do?"

✔ "Show me how your platform does *X, Y, and Z.*"

With the **Must-Have Features** list in-hand, evaluation teams get more from watching each vendor demonstrate how their tool solves certain problems.

Key Metrics:

- Time to complete task
- Effort to complete task
- Accessibility of task information

✖ "How much does your platform cost?"

✔ "My budget is $*XX*. What can you offer me within this price range?"

By understanding the institution's **Software Philosophy** and having already determined **Resources and Time**, discussing budget with a vendor becomes a distinction of service for price, rather than price for service.

Key Metrics:

- Maintenance and renewal costs
- *Estimated* cost of support staff and/or customer support

✖ "Who can I talk to that already uses your platform?"

✔ "I've talked to *X* number of your clients, how do you respond to their feedback?"

With an **Implementation Plan** in place, institutions can leverage current-user feedback from peers to vet vendor's execution time and customer service.

Key Metrics:

- Peer satisfaction with product
- Successes and/or failures
- Installation timeline
- Cost (if willing to share)

Source: EAB's IT Forum "Supporting Frontline IT Purchasing in the Cloud Era"; EAB interviews and analysis.

A Better Approach to Performance Assessment

Improving Performance Requires Baseline Measurements

From Limited, Piecemeal Collection…	**…To Useful, Timely Analysis**
Tracking some metrics but not reviewing at regular intervals	Continuously reviewing metrics to identify pain points and areas for improvement
Soliciting feedback too often or not often enough	Collecting quantitative and qualitative feedback at appropriate intervals
Keeping metrics locked up and only using data internally	Publishing data for all to see
Failing to utilize information that is already being collected	Using existing systems and data to build metrics reports

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Providing Transparency Around Performance

Publicizing Data Highlights Successes and Areas for Improvement

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Building a System to Monitor and Measure Metrics

Data stored and accessed through existing SharePoint system

Development process (designing and building reports) began Fall 2015, first report published in April 2016

Dedicated a portion of one FTE's time to managing data and reports

Case in Brief: Boston University

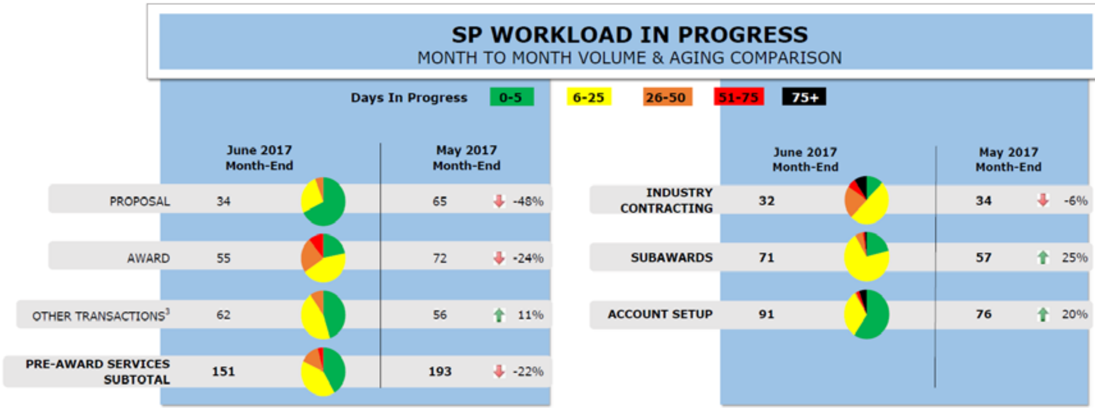
- Private, Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity located in Boston, Massachusetts
- $380M+ in research expenditures in FY2015
- New leadership in research office sought to make changes to improve performance, service, and reputation
- Created monthly report of office performance metrics showing funding performance, workloads and productivity, processing times and submission timeliness and quality
- Publicized reports and internally analyzed data to identify and target areas for improvement
- Frequent PI satisfaction surveys provide qualitative feedback and context to the metrics

Source: HERD Survey Fiscal Year 2015; EAB interviews and analysis.

Monitoring Workload and Productivity

Eliminating Backlogs of Aging Transactions

BU Executive Dashboard



SP WORKLOAD IN PROGRESS
MONTH TO MONTH VOLUME & AGING COMPARISON

Days In Progress: 0-5 | 6-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 75+

	June 2017 Month-End	May 2017 Month-End	Change
PROPOSAL	34	65	-48%
AWARD	55	72	-24%
OTHER TRANSACTIONS[3]	62	56	11%
PRE-AWARD SERVICES SUBTOTAL	151	193	-22%

	June 2017 Month-End	May 2017 Month-End	Change
INDUSTRY CONTRACTING	32	34	-6%
SUBAWARDS	71	57	25%
ACCOUNT SETUP	91	76	20%

TRENDS & ANALYSIS

- All SP Teams have been focusing on addressing aged items and **transactions aged 51-75 and 75+ days.** Pre-Award Teams have eliminated all aging actions in the 75+ bucket.

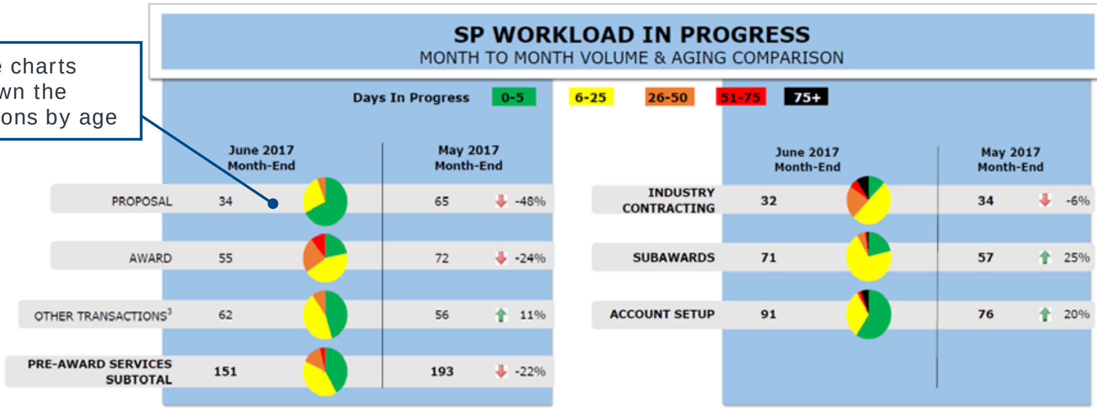
Source: BU May 2017 Executive Dashboard Sponsored Programs,

Monitoring Workload and Productivity

Eliminating Backlogs of Aging Transactions

BU Executive Dashboard

Color pie charts breakdown the transactions by age



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Source: BU May 2017 Executive Dashboard Sponsored Programs.

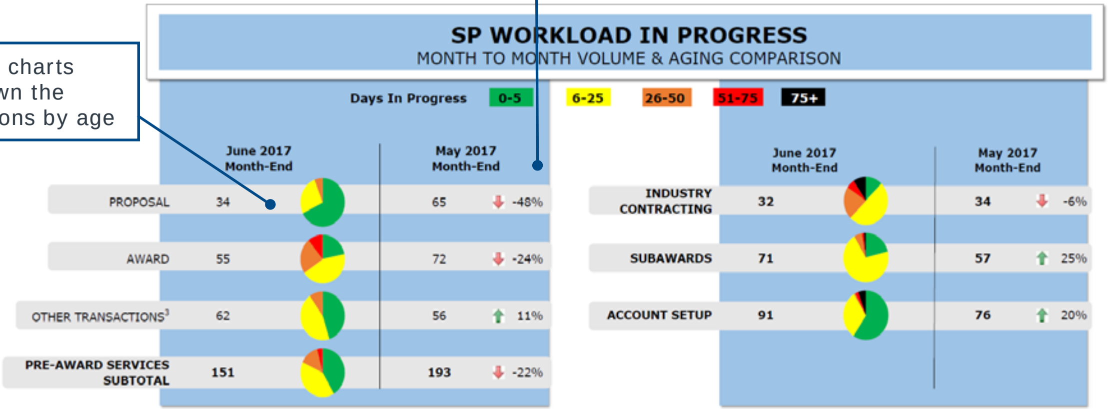
Monitoring Workload and Productivity

Eliminating Backlogs of Aging Transactions

BU Executive Dashboard

The percent change show how workloads have changed from the previous month

Color pie charts breakdown the transactions by age



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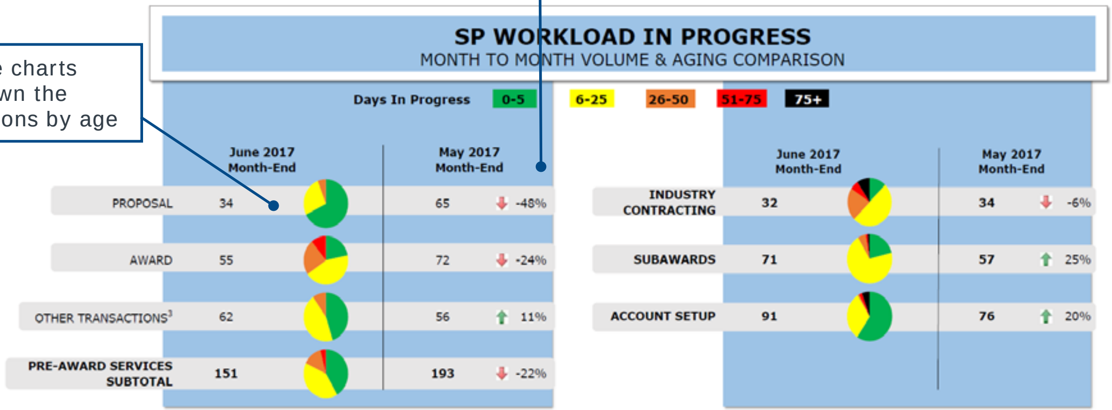

TRENDS & ANALYSIS

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A brief section provides context, progress updates, and analysis of the graphic

Source: BU May 2017 Executive Dashboard Sponsored Programs.

From Data Points to Action Items

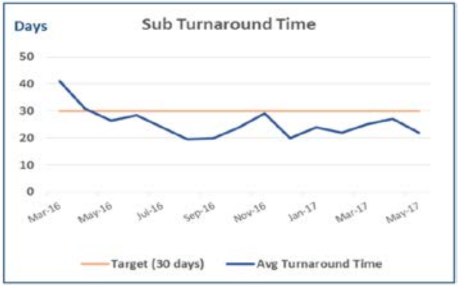
Measuring Metrics, Learning from the Data, Implementing Change

Four Steps to Maximize the Impact of Metrics

1. Publish monthly dashboard on research website for faculty and all to see
2. Share data at Advisory Council for Research Administration monthly meeting
3. Analyze data to identify areas for improvement and action steps
4. Implement targeted process and staffing changes to improve performance

Targeting Subaward Turnaround Time

- Time for BU to issue and execute a sub-agreement under an award was between 80-100 days
- Began to track time and location of subaward in the process to identify roadblocks
- Identified lack of standard operating procedures, created process to streamline and clarify
- Turnaround now has a target of 30 days or less, goal has been achieved since May 2016



Source: BU May 2017 Executive Dashboard Sponsored Programs; EAB interviews and analysis.

Adding Context to the Numbers

Satisfaction Survey Provides More Insight to the Metrics

Components of PI Satisfaction Survey

- Satisfaction Survey Questions
- Comments on Process and Experience
- Suggestions for Improvement

Key Features of Survey Utilization

1 Frequency

After PI submits a proposal, RA[1] sends the satisfaction survey to the PI as part of the confirmation of submission

2 Linking PI Feedback to Staff Evaluation

Individual RA monthly evaluations include relevant PI comments and feedback

3 Responding to PI Suggestions

Staff follow up on each PI suggestion and work to incorporate suggestions whenever feasible

Complaint About Redundant Work Leads to Proposal Summary Form

- PI complains about forms to complete at beginning of proposal, filling out redundant information
- Research office reexamined each form and evaluated the necessity of each piece of information
- Created a new Proposal Summary Form, consolidating the existing proposal summary form with supporting forms (export control, cost sharing, international research)
- Proposal Summary Form is now a 3 page, fillable PDF that supports electronic signatures

1) RA: Research Administrator

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

1 The Proliferation of Administrative Burden

2 Streamlining Administrative Processes in the Research Office

3 Questions?

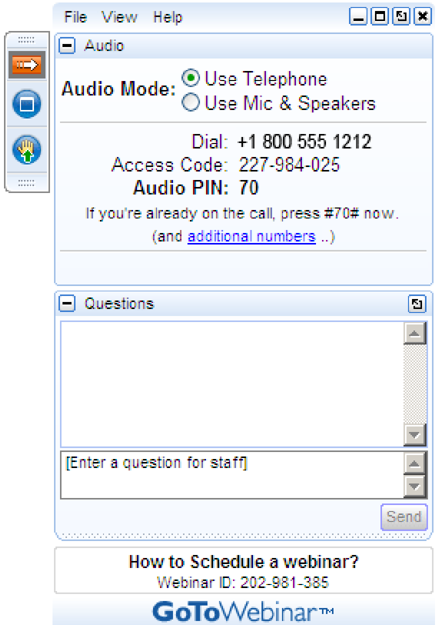
Managing Your Questions

To ask the presenter a question, please type into the question panel and **press send**

Or send feedback and questions directly:

Jon Barnhart

Jbarnhart@eab.com



Next Meeting Series Around the Corner

Our 2018 Agenda

Research Enterprise Strategy in the Trump Era
- Federal policy trends and their implications for research growth strategy
- Assessing and competing for best-bet federal funding opportunities

Confronting the Future of Facilities and Administration (F&A) Funding
- Articulating the value of F&A internally and externally
- Effective policies and procedures to maximize F&A recovery

Helping Faculty Achieve Their Full Research Potential
- Supporting faculty to increase extramural funding
- Best-in-class grant writing boot camps, internal review panels, and mentorship programs
- Holistic career development to retain faculty and keep them engaged in the research enterprise

Small-group breakout workshops
An opportunity to get more customized support to help you:
- Build and maintain partnerships with corporations
- Communicate the value of university research
- Tackle the mounting burden of research administration

Register Now!

2018 National Meeting Series

Executive Sessions:
June 20, 2018
Washington, DC

August 10, 2018
Chicago, IL

October 16, 2018
Dana Point, CA

Team Session:
September 13, 2018
Washington, DC

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Please take a minute to provide your thoughts on today’s presentation at the end of the webinar when you log out.

Thank You!

Please note that the survey does not apply to webconferences viewed on demand.