



TOOLS OF THE TRADE: IMPROVING DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION AT UCLA



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Abstract

Among the many challenges involved in departmental research administration, access to training and tools remains a significant one. Identifying strong candidates for this emerging profession is only the first step. Often, a department research administrator succeeds in spite of the limited resources available. While the central campus offices offer valuable resources and tools, these are aimed at larger-scale needs, looking outward. The needs at the department level remain under-addressed. At UCLA, we have identified critical needs and are seeking to build the necessary resources to facilitate development of successful fund managers. The goal of developing these new tools and programs is to improve and quality of services provided to the David Geffen School of Medicine faculty.

Overview

At the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA (DGSOM), the growth of the enterprise requires a constant refreshing of talent, especially in as competitive an environment as Los Angeles. Attraction and retention of research administration staff is a challenge that ranks in the top three challenges cited by all department administrators. In approaching this problem from a "bottom up" method, we reviewed the shortcomings of our current infrastructure, noting that improvement was needed in the training, mentoring, and resources available to these individuals. We sought to fill in the gaps by developing several in-person and online resources that have improved the functionality and quality of research administration in departments.

Methods

The Dept of Medicine has developed the only UCLA campus-focused fund manager training program, a series of 15 classes to teach individuals the fundamentals of research administration. Tools needed to perform tasks are on individual websites; the Departmental Research Administration Center (DRAC) (www.drac.ucla.edu) has been developed as a comprehensive "one stop shot" to centralize critical resources. The UCLA Research Administration Mentoring Program (RAMP) is a pilot program that seeks to provide mentorship to existing junior fund managers, to help build the gap in knowledge needed for senior positions. The DGSOM has initiated a Committee on Research Administration (CoRA) to allow a forum for lead research administrators to share issues, concerns, expertise, and knowledge.



RAMP

Research Administrator
Mentoring Program

Fund Management Training

- [Fund Manager Training Schedule and Registration - Winter/Spring 2019](#)
- [CHR Courses Recommended for Fund Managers](#)
- [FM Tools Quiz](#)
- [FM Tools Quiz Answers](#)
- [FM Basics 2.12.19](#)
- [NIH Grants Management Policies 2.13.19](#)
- [Monthly Financial Statements Using SOM's FPM/QDB 2.19.19](#)
(No PowerPoint - All live demo)
- [FM Post-Award Tools & Ledger Reconciliation 2.26.19](#)
- [Payroll Topics 3.12.19](#)
- [Various Post-Award Topics 3.13.19](#)
- [Effort Reporting 3.19.19](#)
- [Gifts & Endowments / Sales & Service 3.26.19](#)
- [FSA Examples 4.2.19](#)
- [Facilities and Administrative Costs, Revenue Accounts & FAU Clean Up 4.2.19](#)
- [Pre-Award Basics 4.3.19](#)
- [Cayuse 525 Basics \(No PowerPoint - All live demo\) 4.9.19](#)
- [Proposal Budget Preparation 4.23.19](#)
- [NIH JTI, Progress Reports, Public Access Policy 4.24.19](#)
- [Subaward Proposals & Monitoring 4.30.19](#)
- [Subaward Scenario Calculations 4.30.19](#)
- [Clinical Trials 5.7.19](#)

Process

With the roll out of these new initiatives, improvement in departmental administration has been notable. While still early in some of these programs, valuable resources are being developed. The Dept of Medicine training program has trained hundreds of fund managers in the fundamentals of research administration. This series has become the "go to" for training on campus. The RAMP program is working to create mentorships that are needed; in addition, this program is building community among diverse populations. DRAC serves as a repository of needed data. The CoRA is providing a valuable exchange of key organizational information. In all, these are but the first steps in improving the quality of research administration in the School of Medicine and campuswide.

Conclusions

In a period of constant change, fundamentals are necessary to build a foundation for growth. In developing new core programs for research administration, UCLA is building the next generation of research administrators who will have the tools to improve the quality of proposal submission and management for faculty. In doing so, the intent is to provide the faculty the foundation to support the key research being performed. This can only aid the institution and research in healthcare, science, and human knowledge.