Satisfaction Survey of the Office of Research Administration
Wichita State University Faculty Senate
April 26, 2010

On March 31, 2010 an e-survey was sent to faculty, research staff and departmental chairs regarding their satisfaction with the services of the Wichita State University Office of Research Administration (ORA). Prior to distribution, Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Dean David MacDonald reviewed and approved the survey. A “print” version of the form can be found in appendix A.

**Demographics**

By April 13, a total of 118 individuals responded to the survey of which 80 had funding managed by ORA in the last three years or were department chairs (14 of the 16 chairs also had funded research). A summary by college/division follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College/Division</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Professions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below is a table showing faculty and staff classification of those who responded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified Professional</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ORA Information Dissemination

Of those responding, 68 (57.6%) receive the ORA newsletter and a majority of those (n= 49; 72%) report being regular readers of the newsletter.

Over a third (n=44; 37.3%) report attending an ORA workshop. A list of the workshops they report attending follow:

- grantsmanship, academic honesty, and others that I can't recall
- Procuring grants- contrasting private and federal monies
- proposal writing
- The last one that I have attended was at least three years ago. Since I do not receive any newsletters and the ORA website is not up to date, I have not attended in few years
- on preparing research proposals
- Overview of ORA
- Grant funding related to aging (Radebaugh) Others over the years
- "Grant Proposal writing in a Google World" 12/02/09
- "Around the World of Research Administration in 60 minutes" 11/02/2009
- "Proposal writing workshop" 11/13/2008
- I've attended several over the years sponsored with the CTRE in publishing and research.
- budget compliancy
- Grant writing, teaching evaluations, Responsible Conduct of Research series, Intellectual Property, probably some others over the years.
- Grant writing workshop on the process of effective grant writing that I presented!
- I do not remember the exact title of the workshop. It was related to proposal development. This was back in 2008.
- Grant development and management
- A workshop on grant proposals several years ago
- EPAF
- Planned to attend Budget preparation, but it was cancelled.
- Beginning grant writing. I haven't attended recently due to time conflicts with my teaching schedule. I used to go to quite a few in the past.
- Sponsored Project Administration - Level II
- NCURA grant writing
- "Ethics" "Grant Writing" These are very general I do not remember the specific titles.
- grant writing
- Around the world in ORA, Budget Management
- NCURA Conference last year at ORA
- grant development - it was some time ago.
- NIH Grants
- Grants for business and engineering projects
- NCURA
- Writing a grant
- Proposal Writing
- Several workshops on grant writing, workshops related to export compliance, and related to ITAR regulations. I do not remember the title of each workshop
- Grant Writing IRB Submission
- Grant writing
• Grant writing
• ITAR, Contracts, Streamlining efforts
• it was 4 yrs ago the topic was research grants info is outdated by now
• Procedures for grant submission
• Research ethics

Satisfaction with the Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Of the 118 who completed the survey, 59 respondents (51.8%) reported that the IRB wasn’t applicable to them, while 4 did not respond to the item. Of those who felt the IRB did apply to them, 41 (74.6%) were either satisfied (56.4%) or very satisfied (18.2%).

ORA Support of Unfunded Research
A summary of respondents’ beliefs regarding ORA’s support of unfunded research is found in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Supportive of Unfunded Research?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Supportive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimally Supportive</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Supportive at all</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Comments about ORA
All respondents were asked if they had “Any further comments about ORA.” All comments follow:

• The process really needs to be flushed out somehow. While there is increasing expectation for getting external funding, I have found ORA unmoving in altering their percentage for indirects (which made it impossible to apply for certain grants) & I have had difficulties getting them to agree to any sort of "in-kind" contributions that may be required by a grant. Finally, getting a well recognized grant is an accomplishment, but the process of enacting the grant often feels like a punishment.
• When Dr. Loper left many experienced people were replaced by individuals with apparently no experience in grantsmanship. Some have already been let go. Others are apparently so busy as to be totally unresponsive. The budgets on Banner are useless to researchers. Only accountants understand object codes. Budgets should be shown in the categories that were funded. Proposal budgets should be examined when submitted to ORA, not sit around for weeks until the day the proposal is due. Someone should learn the requirements for different agencies. Now it is a shot in the dark. Finally, ORA personnel should realize that they are being paid in large part by sponsored programs run by researchers that are supposedly on the same WSU team as they are. We shouldn't have to go with our hat in our hand for their help and experience their condescension for not understanding the details of
the accounting systems or some other rule. I enjoyed working with ORA before the personnel changes, now it is a real hindrance.

- There have been some radical shifts and it depends on turnover of personnel. It has been difficult to adjust from the efficient operations that were in place to some of the current practices.
- Like many units on campus, it is trying to do a lot with little resources in the form of support staff
- I understand the transitions ORA have gone through and the regulatory nightmares. They have asked that we be patient; but for how much longer? It would help to have ONE ORA contact person per award. This would alleviate some of my problems post award in tracking down budgets.
- Not returning phone call.
- I received an [***] grant in the Summer of 2008. All aspects of the process were handled very well by the ORA. The office was very accommodating to special needs and very prompt in service. Thank you for a job well done!
- Several people in the ORA need to be replaced if the University is considering moving up to the next level of research excellence.
- A comment about this survey: one bad experience and the results will be tanked by the respondent. I suggest personal follow-up interviews with a handful of faculty. Overall I think the people in ORA do a fine job, but they are overworked and understaffed like the rest of the university.
- We hope the reorganization will not take few more years -ORA should understand what "research means." ORA is a service providing entity and the customers are faculty. they should do everything to make the customer as happy as possible
- Working with ORA on internal grants is difficult and aggravating. In my case, I received no [****] funds until end of summer due to constant delays. And while [****] budgets include salary withholdings, it is not apparent until after the award has been given that further withholdings will also be taken. This process is not transparent. No person in Humanities has ever won the Faculty Excellence in Research Award (given by the Faculty Support Committee, with Director of ORA ex officio). Does this award just recognize earning large external grants or similar? If so, then Humanities need not apply. There is a general perception that ORA and [Person 0] do not take research seriously unless it is externally funded. This is bad for WSU, as the most mobile faculty begin to consider employment in institutions they perceive as taking their research more seriously. I am therefore extremely disappointed in the ORA.
- ORA should be supporting investigators in identifying appropriate grant opportunities, supporting grant preparation, especially budget preparation within a timely manner.
- I made an effort to meet the individuals personally and go over to see them if I have a concern. I have not had any difficulties working with them on my internal grant. One comment about the WSU IRB. I received a series of emails regarding a submitted proposal involving a clinical study with [****]. The study was eventually approved, but I did not receive a formal 'final approval' letter or email. I had to piece together emails to provide documentation of approval for my FAR. I would recommend that IRB should send a final written document clearly stating approval of the project and the date approved. [If this were to happen again, I would request a letter; in this instance, I just used the emails, but it was not very satisfactory documentation for a clinical trial.]
- I would like to have more faculty development for grant development and opportunities here on campus.
- If resources are inadequate, please hire more people. If budget is limited, please communicate to us so we could do more ourselves. If ORA could just provide me with a sample budget, I am willing to prepare my own budget and am also willing to submit/upload documents to websites. Please help.
• We've been told that they are short-staffed. I hope this changes.
• I wish ORA could provide actual "grant writers" for unfunded research areas - these are areas that tend to have extremely heavy teaching loads and we might be willing to do grant funded research or teaching projects if we just had someone to actually write the grant. I have been interested in three large government grants but didn't have the time to do the paperwork and probably wouldn't know the type of jargon/lingo to have a good shot at getting the funding
• Thanks for all the help you've been providing over the years!
• When we had less number of persons working in ORA things were going pretty smooth. Now we have more persons but the overall performance is rather slow.
• On a couple of occasions I have requested help finding grant opportunities in my areas of research, and although I received responses they were unable/unwilling to devote any time to help me find anything. They seem to do well on hard science and engineering support, but less well for other areas.
• I have found them to be easy to work with, and very facilitating of our grant work.
• I am disturbed by a questionable practice in the context of the submission of a grant proposal in 2008. I conceived and wrote the whole proposal. I was the proposed principal investigator. I did not see the last version of the proposal when it was submitted to [***]. Later on, I realized that this proposal was submitted with the name of an ORA employee as PI instead of mine. Subsequent correspondence from [***] was sent to that person and not to me. I have received this correspondence after it was received/opened by that ORA employee. When I called [***], I was told that I had never submitted a proposal there!!! The proposal was approved technically but was not funded. Surprisingly, some comments made by reviewers - particularly on the qualifications of the PI for the proposed program - were indicative or suggestive of the adverse outcome of this "illegal" substitution. I felt cheated, but I have not pursued any remedial action. ORA staff should refrain from such a questionable practice.
• ORA has changed policies on processing of paperwork and on deductions from grants during the past five years and the changes seem both arbitrary and inadequately publicized. Calculation of funds to be received by the grantee has proven to depend on who is doing the calculating. Deadlines and procedures are inadequately published. And it appears ORA has eliminated some categories of internal grants at a time when the university is increasing its research demands--unfairly, since it does not provide appropriate levels of support for these demands.
• Needs to look beyond the current narrow focus of its attention.
• A tenured faculty retired early because of the conflicts with [Person A]! How come this happened! The ORA should serve, not rule the faculty!
• In my experience, prioritization happens at ORA. Senior people seem to have an easier time getting things done, while junior people await their turn to get attention. There are many examples where some people can get through the whole budgeting and approval process for a proposal in one day, while some need at least a week. Internal proposals like URCA are good opportunities for faculty. However, it would help if reviewer comments and feedback are provided as to why a proposal was declined and what reviewers felt. Currently it is a black box from which you are not sure what will come out and why.
• For someone who doesn't often do funded research, it very much concerns me that the graduate school and ORA are essentially under the same roof. By its very implication we are then saying that funded (therefore, mostly quantitative) research is more important than qualitative research. As a result, unfunded qualitative research is virtually ignored.
• I just want to remark first that I didn't know how to answer whether the staff there are supportive of UNFUNDED research. I don't know what they're supposed to do to support unfunded research; I
thought that the purpose of the office was to help us get and administer grants. In that capacity - helping me to apply for grants, and on the one occasion that I was successful, to deal with the paperwork - I have found them to be VERY helpful. I would not know where to begin to put together the budget if it weren't for their help. Applying for NSF can be very time-consuming, and our chances are low (since here in the US grants are mostly used as a reward for a few major superstars), yet it is a job expectation that we do this. It would be an onerous burden indeed to have to go through this practically every year without their help. The people I have mainly dealt with are: [Person B], [Person C], and [Person D]. They have all been great.

- It feels like ORA is not as oriented to fostering faculty research through individual mentoring and support services as it was in the past. It also appears that there is some lack of coordination among individual staff members and much less of an overlap in the knowledge base of employees. In the past almost any staff member could answer questions or assist faculty in finding information. At this time it feels like there is less cohesiveness within the office.

- Lost a small grant in early 2009 from a local company because ORA would not meet with their contact and discuss his concerns on intellectual property rights.

- In ORA's defense, I sense overwhelming workload and stress. My department has gotten wonderful support from ORA in a number of areas. Much of the organization is friendly, responsive and helpful. However, as the stress increases, the abrasive personalities come to life and relationships quickly spiral downhill. Additional staff may be required in order to alleviate the stress in the environment. I also have great hopes that the recent organizational changes will help certain situations. I'm not sure that [Person A] has a good sense of how serious the morale issues are in her organization. I have heard personally from a number of her staff re: the depth of their discontent with her and with the organization. Real change has to start at the top and be consistent every day.

- The staff who have helped me with grant applications have been super.

- I feel that as a social sciences professor that I may have a lower priority for help with searches for funding. This may just be my perception; however I know that the amounts of funding I would be applying for would be a fraction of what someone in the hard sciences would request.

- I'm generally satisfied with their services but it is cumbersome when requests for information are ignored by a particular staff member.

- Overall I think that the relationship with them is improving in regards to communication and working together.

- My dealings with ORA occurred about 25 years ago and I found ORA exceptionally helpful in securing a grant from the [***] Foundation. In recent years, my research has focused more on teaching innovations that enhance learning and want to get more involved in [***] Education. I should have - but did not - inquire about funding in these areas. Will start following the newsletters carefully and would be most appreciative if ORA becomes aware of grant in these areas. If so, would appreciate it if newsletters include this type of information. Since I have not dealt with ORA in recent years, I cannot offer any meaningful evaluation of current operations. I do want to emphasize, however, that my prior experiences in past decades were extremely helpful and the application was funded. Failure to apply and receive grants in recent years is due entirely to my own shortcomings, not any that can be attributed to ORA.

- What performance metrics are they using to assess their own performance? Do they have any?

- They appear to know not what they do. They either are not able to provide data on research expenditures, overhead generated, or the research facilities available on campus or the information is incorrect.
• There needs to be major changes in attitude and support. The office does not make one want to apply for money.
• My sense is that the organizational structure and working environment at ORA has changed for the worse over the last 5 years and this is due to the director of ORA
• [Person A] ignores faculty and disrespects them. She hinders research and is totally inept for her position. To improve ORA, the bureaucratic arrogance of their upper administrators has to disappear.
• The help is not for those in the humanities or fine arts--unfortunately. Humanities and fine arts research and creative projects are of no concern to the university.
• I have not been PI on a grant but have been a consultant on many grants across multiple departments. In each case, it has been impossible for the PI to keep a balance that matches ORA's balance.
• I am tired of having to pay 46% in overhead with nothing in return. In every step of the way it feels that I am conducting my funded research despite ORA. We do not have a healthy relationship.
• Not all experiences have been bad - I realize they have had a huge change in staff, but several of the issues are not with new staff.
• ORA appears to be working hard to be responsive to requests of the Program Director. Have missed some of their workshops due to conflicts with schedule. In appreciation of [Person A] leadership within ORA.
• Great people difficult job
• [Person 0] needs to take a more hands on approach. Most of the time he does not know what is going on.
• Broadly, I am disappointed with the functioning of ORA, particularly relative to peer institutions. Processes are not well streamlined, and I often spend more time attending to paperwork and red tape than my funded research project.
• ORA needs to become current, and approximate other universities of its size. Decentralization only works at other institutions to the extent that they all have liaisons within their departments who handle the majority of commerce.
• I'm not really sure what help this survey will be. None of the questions have dealt with possible problems in dealing with ORA. I have an internal URCA grant with the university. When I tried to get some help recently with budget and other information, I found it extremely difficult to get any response from the people in the office. I am sure everyone was busy, but I just needed a few minutes on the phone with someone. After several e-mails, I finally got someone to take my call and all my questions were answered in less than five minutes.
• I had to go through 4 people to find the answer of a simple question. I received a summer grant from ORA in 2009 and it took more effort in finding how to do it rather than do the research.
• I wished they had more workshops more transparency about their policies better communication will help and encourage more faculty to seek external grants
• Improvements are clearly needed.
Grant Experience of Survey Respondents
The rest of the survey was answered only by those with external funds or were department chairs. 80 of these had external funds while two department chairs did not for a total of 82 respondents. A summary of the fund levels in the last 3 years is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $50,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,001 to $100,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,001 to $500,000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,001 to $1,000,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000,001 to $5,000,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than $5,000,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The familiarity these individuals have with federal regulations for grants and contracts follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How well do you understand the federal regulatory process for grants and contracts?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Little</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretty Well</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Well</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Satisfaction with ORA Services**
WSU funded researchers were asked to evaluate ORA’s assistance with various aspects of grants and contracts. Only those with external funds are included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you with ORA’s assistance with:</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding new grant opportunities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing grant proposals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal budgets</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting/uploading grant proposals</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting after the grant has been awarded</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost sharing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract negotiations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property Issues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export compliance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: Percent excludes Not Applicable & No Answer
Satisfaction with Timeliness of ORA Services

WSU faculty who are externally funded researchers were asked to evaluate ORA’s timeliness with various aspects of grants and contracts. Only those with external funds are included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you with the TIMELINESS ORA with:</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>obtaining a grant/account # for a new grant</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processing travel paperwork</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processing personnel paperwork</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processing purchasing paperwork</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>36%</td>
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*Note: Percents exclude Not Applicable & No Answer

What ORA Does Well

The survey asked WSU funded researchers, “What does ORA do particularly well?” The complete responses follow:

- They are good at submitting proposal to funding agencies.
- Submitting grants through grants.gov
- Grant administration after receiving the grant is reasonable.
- Making me realize how important they are in the process of proposal submission.
- Responds to budget inquiries in a timely and helpful fashion.
- Respond to e-mails and phone calls promptly, ignoring gives overall bad feelings.
- Letting me know about new grant opportunities is wonderful, facilitating the post-award budget establishment, and paying grant expenditures. The only difficulty we have had is timeliness in hiring a secretary. The problem seemed to be delays in communication, who was responsible for what, etc. It took about a year of the grant to eventually conduct the search, but part of the problem was the OHR and their communication with ORA. I am not sure what all of the problems were, but it seemed to take much longer than it should of to hire a secretary out of grant funds to carry out duties that were specified in the grants.
- Works well to upload grant applications.
- Takes care of researchers with federal funds
• [Person E]’s response is very fast. (2) [Person F] is very helpful. (3) [Person G] is very good.
• Some people are fast in responding to emails. Do help out with the proposal submission/uploading process.
• Very good at returning email and quickly processing IRB/human subjects forms. [Person E] is always helpful and friendly.
• [Person A], [Person H], [Person I], [Person J], [Person K], [Person F] and other members of the ORA staff provide exceptional assistance. I trust their knowledge and expertise. They make every effort to provide key information, foresee issues that might arise, make suggestions, notice and alert me to relevant details, and provide appropriate support in the grant process.
• Sending out grant announcements. Training (when offered) about research and regulatory issues. IRB functions for faculty and student research. Publicizing grants and novel research endeavors.
• The day to day processing of payroll and accounts payable documents. The rank and file employees are responsive and personable
• Setting up grants in a timely manner and keeping the budgets up to date in Banner. Most of the individuals in ORA are friendly and easy to work with.
• Helping me with questions that I have regarding Grants and allowability. Processing paperwork that is sent through them on our Grants
• ORA has been helpful to me in developing budgets. They have also been very responsive in terms of intellectual property issues. They made themselves available on short notice and were very helpful in providing a sounding board for discussing different approaches to the issue of intellectual property rights.
• Make excuses why they are unable to provide service in a timely manner. They are getting better at answering the phone and providing budget support
• ORA adapts to many different requirements from many different agencies and industries - I think many faculty overlook how hard that job becomes when dealing with all these different requirements - I feel most of the dissatisfaction that I hear rumored around campus simply exists from faculty not realizing these different requirements as well as the harsh reality that the old funding model of NSF and NIH funding is virtually gone - most federal agencies have "deliverables" that must be met, even in the grant world - ORA is not responsible for the award or non-award, but the faculty member - sorry for the rant
• Certain staff at ORA are very helpful with the topics previously mentioned
• Write a newsletter and obtain the information to upload to get the grant.
• [Person L], [Person A], and [Person C] have been friendly, organized, and helpful!
• [Person J] is a great asset to ORA. He personally bends over backwards to assist in any way he can. If I need anything completed, I go directly to him and it is taken care of in a timely fashion even if it is not his responsibility.
• I have worked with most of the staff for at least 5 years (except for newcomers) and have found each staff to be open and approachable. Whenever I have had a question or concern, they have tried to give me a timely response. I feel that I have a good working relationship with ORA staff.
• Keeps me in the loop when receiving Purchase Orders/grants in order to begin working on research projects.
• Pre Proposal Budgets and proposal submitting.
• appointments
• Nothing.
• With better management, such as that provided by Skip Loper, ORA can be tremendously helpful to the faculty. As it stands, ORA functions only as an arm of NIAR and the faculty members carry out their funded research despite this organization, and not because of it.
• Some staff members are legitimately over worked ([Person C], [Person I], ...). However, the overall management of this office leaves much to be desired.
• Setting up new grant funds/codes each year.
• Great customer service
• My experience with ORA since arriving at WSU has been limited to (a) the distribution of my start-up funding and (2) the IRB process. I have been very pleased with the contact that I have had with ORA.
• Policing the grants.
• Response to questions and solving problems on: grant process, grant budget, accounts payable, payroll, administrative questions.
• Respond to questions.
• MANAGE BUDGETS
• The pre-award side functions much better than the post-award side.
• Very friendly and knowledgeable.
• Pleasantness of [Person C] and the office.
• [Person F] is particularly good at taking care of payments and budgeting issues. She is thorough and willing to help when needed.

Problems with ORA
WSU faculty with funded research programs were also asked in an open ended format, “What are the primary problems you have experienced when working with ORA?” The complete responses follow:

• 1. I get the feeling that "big money" grants are prioritized over other grants
2. It should get easier to go through the process on a multiyear grant, but every year it seems like there are the same difficulties, mostly due to turnover, but also because the paperwork doesn't become more streamlined from year to year.
3. Mixed messages that you get from different people in ORA & with the corresponding campus departments that you need to get approval from outside of ORA (like HR, Payroll, the Provost's office). It is exhausting.
4. The length of time it takes to get everything through. In the past three years, I have never received funding off the grant from the WSU side until at least 5 or 6 months into the grant. This makes it very difficult to find & maintain research assistants.
• staff has little knowledge of grant agencies or processes post-award budgets are written for accountants, not end users little attention to detail on submissions, many get returned or must be fixed at last minute no budget review until all of the proposal is ready for submission (the last day)
• poor contacts with program managers cubby-holed and relatively unhelpful with real questions from end users poor response times to inquiries (getting approvals weeks after the drop dead times) first response is confrontational rather than helpful in many cases
• Unavailable to meet. Not processing draw downs from the grant organizations. Not understanding continued use of funds from one grant year to the next. Not continuing personnel on payroll when the
university closes books on one date and the grant extends to another. Limiting use of funds during GAP period from July 1 until new funds are issued October 1 even when there are carry over funds available. Submission of external contract services and paying invoices for those services.

- As a new faculty member, I didn't understand the process until I had made several errors in the system processing. It is not that the process is problematic; I didn't have any training in knowing what to do.
- No real problems, just don't see them as much of an advocacy arm of university research
- Slowness involving paperwork.
- There is very little support for young faculty in terms of start-up funds, grant writing, grant seeking, and service. Support seems to go towards established researchers/labs/facilities while those who are trying to establish research agendas are left to struggle on their own (and often to look for better jobs elsewhere). Little is done to train people on protocols, including submission of IRB applications. We have had a grant not be submitted to a federal agency because of errors in ORA. The faculty member worked the better part of a summer to prepare the grant and submit it to ORA a week early, only to be told that ORA had learned that errors occurred when they submitted it (which were not addressed) and had resulted in rejection. Contracts have taken a long time to be generated. Fault is often placed on someone else and little is done to rectify issues or provide provisions for fault that rests with ORA.
- Not paying bills in a timely manner. Making mistakes that cause the loss of money.
- The majority of my problems have been post award. I appreciate the work they do in filing post award documents to government agencies; however they do not provide any service beyond that. The structure of ORA makes more work for the PI.
- Pre-award process is of my most concern. ORA does not seem to understand how much time, effort and personal resources a faculty need to spend in order to submit a research proposal for external funding. ORA is very reluctant in cost-sharing research proposals even for the case when cost-sharing is required by the funding agency. It seems to me that ORA sees only the money comes into ORA's pocket as the value of externally funded projects but doesn't see the graduate student support, faculty research/development opportunity as value to the University. We are doing research for the University but not for ORA, but ORA seems to view it differently. [Person C] very rarely picks up and answers the phone even though she is in her office. I used to be very active in submitting research proposals but now I feel very reluctant because it has been too unpleasant dealing with the ORA pre-award people. In the past, Dr. Skip Loper and Larry Smith were all very considerate, understanding and helping with warm heart.
- Post grant processing in one case was delayed (actually did not start until I asked for it) and the Director was not polite when we asked to process it in time.
- lack of understanding of the grant rules. Basically I asked for permission on something was told one thing by ORA and then the grant agency said no! no! no! slowness in getting summer salary forms either started or through the process.
- if the problems is something that can be solved using low level personnel, it is usually taken care well. However, when it is something which needs to be dealt by [Person A], it takes time: instead of being helped on solving the problem, there is a significant possibility that you will learn why it cannot be solved after few weeks of headaches
- personnel, at times customer service issues, payment issues, and cost sharing sometimes is to extreme (the research is difficult to carry out because of money left after ORA takes a %) this is especially true of small grants. ORA needs to realize that small grants can lead to bigger grants. There seems to be a disconnect from those that are doing the research and those ORA who are supporting the research function.
• Working with partners and ORA to get budgets fixed for the 6 mo. and 12 mo. periods.
• Getting payments in place once we reach "post award" status. Difficulty communicating with some of the staff and having to work with four different people around budgets.
• don't get response from the staff members when helps are needed for grant preparation, and budgeting.
• I had some trouble getting funds transferred for a subcontract from another university on a federal grant. It took a long time (5 or 6 months) and many reminders from me before it was taken care of. Some of the delay may have been the fault of the other university.
• Getting paperwork through ORA takes a long time. I have had difficulty getting responses to questions and assistance with payroll and hiring issues. There has been improvement in recent months but the previous four years were difficult.
• They do NOT bill agencies for contracts in a timely manner. The "paperwork" process for hiring staff is cumbersome and slow. The budget information (not just from ORA) is not up to date. There are hidden costs charged to grants and contracts without the PI's knowledge (e.g., security checks) that make budget management difficult. The flow of "paperwork" through ORA is slow and often gets stuck without anyone's knowledge of where it is stuck. Administrative judgments are made by ORA about the duration of funding and the flexible use of funding that are inaccurate and that do not include the PI.
• Responding to questions, huge delays in getting answers to questions, dealing with certain staff.
• Speed of response to requests
  1. Difficulty in getting the budget prepared in reasonable amount of time (few weeks). Example - Last time I had to go to ORA and spend a few hours there one day before submission deadline to get it done.
  2. Clarity of communication is poor. Example - It is very difficult to understand what exactly is meant in some of the one liner email I receive from ORA. I have to make my best guess and proceed accordingly.
  3. Responsiveness is poor. Example - It has been 2 weeks since I sent an email to ORA regarding my upcoming proposal budget preparation. And I am yet to receive a draft of the budget.
  4. Ability and competence is questionable. Example - Last time we had prepared and sent our budget to ORA to be submitted on NSF website. The budget that got submitted on NSF website had gross errors, and did not match with the budget we had sent earlier.
  5. Unavailability. Example - I am unable to reach ORA staff by phone most of the time. This would not have been an issue if the responsiveness on email was better.
• Lack of training to help me understand the budget process and regulations.
• Occasional slow response to tasks. Repeat - occasional. The reason usually given at such times is "We deal with many grants and don't have enough staff." If this reason is true, then ORA needs more staff delayed responses.
• No specific problems. ORA staff may not understand the specifics of a grant proposal but that is understandable.
• ORA has a culture (due in no small measure to [Person 0]) of (1) defining research only in terms of grant money brought in, preferably from NIH or DoD; and (2) of downplaying the importance of scholarly research in the humanities and social sciences. WSU has very few gifts in the present economy (cost of living raises, merit pay, etc). Telling people who work hard at non-scientific research that they are of no value, that their work is not research (no big grants) only serves to further lower abysmally low faculty morale. To be fair, the source of the problem lies higher up the food chain in the office of the university's chief academic officer.
• (1) The major problem with ORA is [Person A], who is .... She has been neglecting my important emails/calls. She is extremely slow, and tries to defend herself by twisting the facts in the meetings. It
took almost one year to get her reply email after sending my emails to her many many times. She has been damaging and discouraging my desires and efforts to attract external grants, seriously. I really wonder why WSU keep her in [ORA]. She may think herself as a supervisor of WSU faculty members instead a servant for the faculty. My desire to submit an external proposal is low, and may be zero as long as she is [there]!  (2) A proposal review comment says that my budget is too high. This happens because when an engineering faculty requests one summer month salary, he/she should add one month release in addition to 46% indirect cost. No university requires this kind of mandatory type release hours except WSU.

- There are times when I want to start early on a budget, but based on prioritization (considering my deadline is some time away and there might be other with an earlier deadline) I have to wait a week or two to get started. I have to watch the budget like a hawk to make sure there are no mistakes in it. It ideally should be the other way around. Walking around with all the paperwork to different officers to get their signature can be a pain. It is high time the ORA could do all this electronically, similar to the new personnel hiring process with ePAF.

- Lots and lots of rigid rules with no consideration of times when exceptions might be possible or at least considered

- ORA experienced a tremendous staff turnover during the past few years. The more experienced staff members do an exceptional job. [Person 0] and [Person A] provide solid leadership. However, vacant positions and new staff members underperforming while they learn their responsibilities have taken a toll on ORA. I have experienced long delays and been frustrated trying to work with some of the newer staff members. Hopefully, as the newer staff develop expertise and become more comfortable with their responsibilities, the problems will diminish. In the meantime, I can count on the more seasoned staff members for assistance.

- Communications about procedures were very unclear and confusing.

- Confusion over which tasks will be done by the PI and at the department level and which ones are handled by ORA. Sometimes the department works toward task completion and then is reprimanded for taking initiative. But if the department does not initiate tasks, then those tasks may be delayed significantly, which may cause problems with both funding agencies and community partners. From my past experiences with ORA for approximately 15 years, the demeanor of the relationships with faculty and staff in the departments has changed. The interactions with ORA in the past felt like ORA was a service organization to assist faculty in doing research and obtaining funding. Recently, it sometimes feels that the regulatory functions of ORA have strained the collegial nature that used to exist with faculty and staff.

- Timeliness in processing paperwork of high importance (grant proposals, new hire paperwork, etc.) Ex: A recent non-benefitted, no search required, new hire request sat in ORA from October thru January. Being completely ignored despite repeated emails and phone calls until the last minute when I'm told I did everything wrong and have made a complete mess of whatever it is. Abrasive (and sometimes downright nasty) personalities of some managers and administrators Assumptions of ignorance of non-ORA staff.

- Certain member of the staff does not respond to requests for information in a timely fashion or ignores these requests. Their comments at workshops about customer service communication are unfounded.

- Not working with us in getting some Grants set up to use in Banner that causes lots of hours of work, and paperwork to overcome when the Grant finally gets set up. Sometimes there seems to be a lack of communication on the part of a few.

- I have not been able to understand the accounting categories that ORA uses in their budgeting process. In one of my previous small grants I ended up returning approximately $1,000 to the grantor because I was
unable to follow their accounting of what I had spent and what I had not spent. However, I have had other experiences with them where they managed my grants effectively.

- An attitude that faculty are working for them rather than them working for faculty. Inventing new processes and procedures without informing or communicating expectations (lab policy and billing).
- Apparent differential treatment of faculty. A "who to call" list of 180 names/numbers. A useless web site that should be a primary means of communication. Another example of the "attitude" issue. Banner reports that can't be trusted (even with incorrect headings). There appears to be continual growth in staff and reorganization without ever considering what would allow faculty to be more productive. This is at a time when the rest of the campus is under severe resource reductions.
- the primary problem is that I see is that a single signature authority is usually required to move contracting paperwork forward - I think this will be solved with the restructuring that is currently in place -- in addition, I think post award should monitor grants near the end (say a three month window before the date) to work with the PI on a ending strategy from the perspective of budget and final report and/or whether a no-cost extension should be requested - I have noticed that this has improved in recent months as well
- Personnel/Hiring issues - lack of response. Lack of response time on paperwork. Unreceptive. Makes new rules and slows the process. Certain staff do not have the necessary background to do job well. Entrenched long-term personnel who move slowly. Lack of progressive thinking. Lack of teamwork across campus and within ORA.
- Non responsive to emails, timely support, supportive funding, don't really offer support, attitude of personnel, non friendly personnel, make paperwork completion difficult, and do not work toward a supportive/positive relationship with persons who have grants. Not an overall positive experience.
- The paperwork process for hiring students through grant funds has taken up to 4 weeks before.
- Untimely or no response to email/phone calls  Lengthy turnaround time obtaining signatures on contracts/grants Lack of communication between budgets/contracts/and technical personnel Lack of understanding on the urgency of issues related to obtaining grants/contracts
- I have not had any problems working with ORA. I consider issues as being a part of the learning process. There has never been anger or harsh words exchanged between us. Everyone has been cordial. Some more so than others.
- I haven't had any problems.
- Determining remaining uncommitted funds in an expiring contract and rebudgeting requires contacting 3 to 4 separate people to get estimates of remaining funds in salary and OOE. From my end it appears that these people do not talk to each other as much as I would expect. When the estimates arrive, they don't match my spreadsheet tracking of funds due to multiple errors by ORA and me. Banner does not help in reconciling the information as it does not include salary that has been committed and often lags in showing expenditures that are made AND the information on Banner is never in categories that match the budget categories in the original budget submitted with the awarded grant or contract. I would help if 1 person in ORA were assigned to each grant as the point of contact for post award information and budget planning.
- delays
- ORA should function as a facilitator. Instead it acts as a stop-it-all organization. Change the structure of ORA to a flat one where faculty can talk to and access all members of ORA. [Person A] is impossible to deal with. She has to be removed if ORA has to improve. She is unprofessional, arrogant, inept, clueless. How did they do reorganizing without consulting any faculty? It does not matter reorganization is done, unless the personalities in the office are changed.
• The [Person 0], needs to recognize: 1. that the faculty members do not work for her, but she works for the faculty, 2. that making public statements about faculty members' failures based on erroneous information borders on defamation, and 3. that erroneous data published by ORA is harmful to the tactical and strategic directions of this institution. [Person 0] needs to understand that he was chosen by the faculty members at this institution to run this office, not to delegate all authority to a staff member in pursuit of other opportunities.

• Incorrect paperwork Lost paperwork Takes too long to get a budget account assigned so that work can begin. No one answers the phone or calls you back (except [Person F] and [Person K]) Attitude is poor
• New fund codes have dropped off banner 2 years in a row as employee
• I have not experienced any problems with ORA.
• Too many to list but bottom line is: No timely response to emails No timely response to phone calls Budget takes forever to set up and on and on.
• the staff addressed problems in an efficient manner
• Knowing exactly who to contact regarding grant opportunities. Gaining support on writing grants.
• Director Response to questions, emails, phone calls
• I think ORA needs to collect better data on their performance. Keep track to time from grant award to full budget at WSU. Keep track of time to provide other services. Without these data improvement is not likely.
• Timeliness of responding to problems/concerns (returning emails/phone calls), providing travel numbers and grant numbers (post-award). Many times it feels as though ORA creates more roadblocks than facilitates solutions. Keeping track of the budget, post-award, is very difficult. The reports are not intuitive. There is no single individual who can answer questions about all aspects of the budget. And, the staff get very defensive about questions regarding the budget.
• No centralized point person Processes are too bogged down by various gatekeepers to be efficient
• Responses are slow and cumbersome.
• When I came to WSU I was expecting to transfer my large research grant. I submitted the same grant and got three reviews of excellent, excellent and very good. This grant was not funded by DOE or NSF while others that were reviewed less well were. So this means that WSU may have said it was not a priority or the agency did not trust WSU. I complained to [Person 0] asking him to file a complaint through political channels and he refused saying: "he wants to get grants on their merits", but since the merit was there this did not make sense. [Outside agency] was extremely upset with the copy of the e-mail reply of [Person 0] since a lot of their funding comes from University obtained grants. In the end I now submit the equipment grants through [Outside agency] and the [Outside agency] co-spokesman and [Outside agency] gave WSU a summer support subcontract. By the way the same granted submitted through [Outside agency] was funded for 1 million in equipment.
• Lack of experience with program regulations. Continued attempts to overstep their bounds regarding "approvals."
• I cannot speak too much about my satisfaction with the ORA with regards to external grant submission because the only external grant I prepared, submitted and received was completed without the help of the ORA. However, I would like to comment on the problems with moving quickly through an IRB process. This is not [Person E]'s fault, since she is really doing her best to accommodate everybody as fast as possible. Yet, even applications that require none or minor revisions take 2-3 MONTHS before approval is given and data collection can begin. During the summer months, this timeline may be somewhat justified, but for spring and fall semesters, this is just too long! I wish [Person E] had some help so IRB
applications can be processed more quickly by the ORA. It is of great importance for our research productivity. Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this.

**Overall Satisfaction of WSU Funded Researchers with ORA Performance**

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<th>Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ORA?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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Appendix A: Print Version of the Survey

Obtaining external funding is increasingly important to WSU researchers and the university. The efficient submission of grant proposals and the post award management of funded grants by the WSU Office of Research Administration (ORA) is critical to our success. This survey assesses your satisfaction with ORA services. It will only take about 5 minutes. Thanks.

Do you receive the ORA (Office of Research Administration) newsletter?

Yes
No

Are you a regular reader of the ORA newsletter?

Yes
No

Have you attended any ORA workshops?

Yes
No

What were the topics of the workshop(s) you attended?

Do you currently have external funds (grants, contracts, etc.) or have you had such funds in the last three years?

Yes
No

how much total funding have you had in the last three years?

Less than $50,000
$50,001 to $100,000
$100,001 to $500,000
$500,001 to $1,000,000
$1,000,001 to $5,000,000
more than $5,000,000
No Answer

Are you in

Business
Education
Engineering
Fine Arts
Health Professions
Humanities
Natural Sciences
Social Sciences
Other

Your position?

Instructor
Assistant Professor
Associate Professor
Professor
Unclassified Professional
Other
No Answer

Are you a department chair?

Yes
No

How well do you understand the federal regulatory process for grants and contracts?

Not at all
A Little
Somewhat
Pretty Well
Extremely Well
No Answer

How satisfied are you in ORA's assistance with (Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Unsatisfied, Very Unsatisfied, or Not Applicable)

finding new grant opportunities
writing grant proposals
proposal budgets
submitting/uploading grant proposals
budgeting after the grant has been awarded
cost sharing
contract negotiations
intellectual property issues
export compliance
How satisfied are you with the TIMELINESS of ORA with   (Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Unsatisfied, Very Unsatisfied, or Not Applicable)

- obtaining a grant/account number for a new grant
- processing travel paperwork
- processing personnel paperwork
- processing purchasing paperwork
- paying bills
- returning phone calls
- responding to emails

Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ORA?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very Unsatisfied
- Not Applicable
- No Answer

What does ORA do particularly well? (Approximately 200 words max.)

What are the primary problems you have experienced when working with ORA? (Approximately 200 words max.)

How supportive of unfunded research do you find ORA?

- Very Supportive
- Supportive
- Minimally Supportive
- Not Supportive at all
- No Answer

How satisfied have you been with your interactions with the Institutional Review Board (IRB)?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very Unsatisfied
- Not Applicable
- No Answer

Any further comments about ORA?