ONBOARDING CHECKLIST FOR NEW WCAS RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR

In the first week

- Setup meetings with WCAS Research Administration to go over onboarding checklist
- Sign up for NU training courses
  - University Business Processes (HRD700)
  - Excel class (if applicable)
  - Office of Research Integrity Training
  - Effort Reporting 101 (contact Tina Mete c-mete@northwestern.edu)
  - Effective Business Operations: A Guide to Internal Controls (HRD705)
  - FASIS training (if applicable)

Project Café Training Classes (http://cafe.northwestern.edu/training/matrix.html)

- FMS505 Managing Sponsored Projects (will learn reporting options available to you)
- FMS502 InfoEd Proposal Development
- FMS503 InfoEd Routing and Workflow
- Discuss with your supervisor and WCAS Research Administration additional classes applicable to your role

- Join listservs
  - WCAS Research Administration listserv
  - Office for Sponsored Research (OSR) listserv (email David Hull, d-hull2@northwestern.edu)
  - Northwestern University Research Administration Professionals (NURAP)
  - Sponsor specific listservs:
    - National Institute of Health (NIH)
    - National Science Foundation (NSF)
    - And others as applicable (DoD, NEH, etc.)

- Familiarize yourself with materials provided below including WCAS Research Administration website
- Determine department/unit awards (run Cognos GM044 report)
- Verify you have received relevant system access
  - NU Financials
  - InfoEd
  - Cognos Reporting
  - FASIS
  - Effort Reporting System (ERS)
  - eProposal
  - Vista

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In the first month

- Meet or write to your OSR Grants Officer to introduce yourself
- Create a calendar for proposal submissions (or utilize existing one); find out what’s in the pipeline and communicate with your OSR Grants Officer (GO)
- Discuss signing up for School of Continuing Studies course Grantsmanship for the Research Professional with your supervisor
- Familiarize yourself with the proposal development process
  - Read recommended process on WCAS Research Administration website under Proposal Development
  - Learn salary and effort calculations process with WCAS Research Administration assistance
  - Review WCAS Dean’s Office Proposal Review checklists
    - InfoEd
    - eProposal
  - Review prior proposal submissions in your unit as examples
    - InfoEd PD
      - What is InfoEd PD? Learn about it on Project Café’s website
      - Read tips/tricks on Project Café website
      - Utilize training materials on Project Café’s website
- Identify helpful contacts in relevant areas (i.e. WCAS Research Administration, Department business office, OSR, Accounting Services for Research and Sponsored Programs (ASRSP), Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Foundation Relations, etc.)
- Contact Mike Green in OSR to obtain appropriate sponsor system access and login information
- Familiarize yourself with the post award processes
  - Review ASRSP’s website
  - Become familiar with OSR forms to support requests
  - Review WCAS Dean’s Office OSR-2 Process Checklist
  - Effort Reporting:
    - Effort Reporting and Sponsored Projects Quick Guide
    - Effort Reporting References available on ASRSP’s website
  - Familiarize yourself with terms and conditions and which ones apply to your unit’s awarded grants
    - FDP Research Terms and Conditions
      - Read about on OSR’s website
      - FTP/RTC Matrix for prior approval
    - Utilize department files or the Project Account Summary to determine which terms and conditions apply to your unit’s awards
- Set up filing system for department sponsored research files (or utilize current)
- Establish who is responsible for monthly reconciliations. If it is you then follow the next two steps. If it is not you set up regular meetings with that individual to review what he/she has prepared
  - Establish monthly checks on rate of spending on sponsored accounts (Are funds being spent to fast? Too slowly?)
- Establish monthly checks on deficit spending (How much is being overspent? What is the reason and how will it be resolved? How certain is new funding?)
- Familiarize yourself with the Office of Research Development (ORD) and the funding databases they have available (Scival)

**Read and know like the back of your hand (and create bookmark for handy reference!)**

- **OMB Circulars:**
  - A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions
  - A-110 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations
  - A-133 Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non Profit Organizations
- **NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG)**
- **NIH SF424 (R&R) Application Guide**
- Everything available to read on OSR’s website! Particularly pay attention to Proposals and Budgets section

**Policies you need to be aware of**

Available on WCAS Research Administration website
- Principal Investigator Eligibility
- Cost Sharing/Matching Funds
- Direct Charging
- Summer Salary
- Over the Cap
- Purchase of Personal Computers and Electronic Devices on Sponsored Projects
- Bridge Funding
- Effort Reporting

Review policies on OSR’s website, particularly
- Export Controls/Foreign Nationals
- Charging Sponsored Projects
- Internal Proposal Deadlines
  (http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/p_deadlines.html)

Other policies
- Travel Policies

**When you have time**

- NURAP has a great collection of past presentations on their website, take advantage of these!

**Once you love Research Administration**

- Discuss joining the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) with your supervisor (http://www.ncura.edu)

*Updated 2/7/12*