

Summary of the Work that College Offices Have Done Thus Far to Address Concerns Raised by Pre-tenure STEM Faculty

GRANTS OFFICE (GO)

Since the spring, the Grants Office has undertaken the following initiatives to further support faculty:

- In spring and early summer 2021, the GO completed a comprehensive redesign of its website, to mirror the process of developing and submitting a proposal and to make important and frequently used information more readily accessible.
- The office repositioned the Grants Link form as an intent-to-apply and internal notification form, which was its originally intended purpose. PIs now fill out the form one-to-three weeks before the deadline, once they have a reasonably complete draft but not in tandem with the application deadline. The purpose of the form is to give department chairs, the provost, and the controller advance information about a planned proposal and to flag any potential compliance or resource needs. The idea was to decrease the stress on PIs of having to route the GrantsLink form as they were finalizing proposals.
- The office divided responsibilities with the controller's office, so that pre-award proposal development and reviews happen in the GO, which consults with the controller's office on collaborative grants and sub-awards. Post-award grant administration is managed by the controller's office.
- Following the departure of Mary Strunk at the end of this summer, the GO is currently conducting a search for a new associate director. The role has been reshaped to work primarily with faculty applicants on proposal development and pre-award review. A search committee of staff and faculty will soon conclude this search.
- Amherst has contracted with the National Council on Research Administration (NCURA) for an advisory study of the college's investments in research infrastructure by consultants who are sponsored research directors at other U.S. colleges and universities. The NCURA advisor will make recommendations for enhancements to faculty grant support.
- GO staff have worked to make the pre-submission review process more streamlined, while recognizing and responding to recent federal policy guidance and changes to funder requirements. GO staff have also shared updated guidance from the NSF, NIH, and other federal funders with faculty applying for grants.
- In order to facilitate the review of proposals to ensure they meet college and funder requirements, GO staff are creating shared drives where PIs share draft documents. GO provides a checklist based on the specific funding program's application guidelines and notes instances when a proposal does not appear to meet the guidelines or requirements for that program. The shared drives also help create a history of the proposal to aid in administering the grant once it has been awarded.

CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

- In the area of grants administration, the controller's office has hired Darlene Sliwa to work twenty-five hours per week, with a focus on post-award research administration; Darlene also does other work related to the college's finances.
- The controller's office has hired a consultant to assist Darlene; that individual's contract will likely extend into the new year.
- In early 2022, the controller's office will be able to focus more fully on staffing and will then consider adding another colleague for the grants area.

- A per diem expense reimbursement approach is possible in Workday and is currently under consideration for external grants. In the coming months, the finance team will have more capacity to partner with the Office of the Provost to implement this process in Workday.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

- In the last year, IT has had eleven departures and now has four open searches (for the positions of associate chief information officer, IT specialist, high performance computing [HPC] administrator, and tech service operations manager).
- Four hires have already been made (for the positions of director of the service desk, multimedia services manager, IT specialist, and telecom specialist).
- The new position of chief information security officer has been filled.
- Approval of another new position (research computing specialist) is expected soon.
- The college is working with Harvard Dataverse to secure data curation services. Martin Garnar is currently seeking information on how science and other faculty would make use of data curation services; we want to be sure to secure the appropriate level of service.

STAFF AND STUDENT RESEARCH SUPPORT

- We are working with Biddy to develop a program that will address the lab technician needs of pre-tenure colleagues. It is our hope that this will be budgeted for fiscal year 2023 (starting July 1, 2022).
- In addition, we are working on doubling the academic intern budget in an effort to meet the needs of all faculty for student researchers. It is our hope that this increase will be budgeted for fiscal year 2023 (starting July 1, 2022).
- The Office of the Provost has put deadlines in place for the allocation of Gregory S. Call Academic Interns. The deadline for summer 2022 is February 15, 2022. *(Please note that only students who live in Massachusetts may work remotely during the summer.)* The deadline for applications for 2022–2023 is April 15, 2022. This includes fall 2022, spring 2023, and January 2023.
- All new faculty who were promised Gregory S. Call Academic Interns in their appointment letters have been informed that they will receive the interns promised to them in the coming years. In future, all new faculty will be promised one academic intern per year for three years; we will continue to prioritize allocating additional academic intern monies to pre-tenure colleagues. All faculty who need additional interns may request them, and funding will be allocated as priorities and the budget permit.

WORKDAY IMPROVEMENTS

- In Workday, ADCs are currently able to submit almost all purchasing/procurement tasks (submit invoices, buy items on punchouts, and request purchase orders) on behalf of faculty in their respective departments. The only exception is expense reports. Faculty (and all employees) must submit their own expense reports. The rationale for this is that expense reports represent personal funds spent on behalf of the college and require a reimbursement directly to the faculty member/employee.
- In Workday, ADCs are given access to view and monitor reports related to the departmental cost center, as well as any departmental gift accounts and/or reserve accounts. Faculty chairs have access to the same reporting. Faculty may also request that an ADC be given access to the professor's internal award accounts to help monitor spending against these awards. The only type of account that is not available for ADCs to monitor in Workday is external grants, because

external grant reporting may include confidential salary information for faculty and other staff members. Only the grant manager has access to the external grant reporting.

- ADCs are issued a purchasing card (PCard) and are able to use the card to purchase items and verify items on behalf of the faculty in their department. All PCard holders are responsible for verifying any transactions for their PCard so that the charges can be assigned to the correct accounts in Workday. If faculty were to be assigned PCards, they would also be responsible for the verification process for all transactions in Workday.
- A new role was created in Workday last spring and assigned to ADCs and others on campus who support their department with student hiring. The role is called student worker recruiting assistant, and it allows anyone in the role to do the recruiting and hiring of student workers on behalf of a faculty member or department. This has removed a significant amount of work from faculty (albeit adding it to the ADC). It is important to note that faculty are still responsible for approving the work hours for any students working for them.
- Workday training was offered this summer for [faculty chairs](#) as well as for [new faculty](#). Recordings of these training sessions are available on the [Workday at Amherst](#) website (using the links in the previous sentence).
- External grant reporting (AMH Grant Activity) has been updated to include more details and to be more consistent with the other available reporting (AMH Internal Award, AMH BVA by Cost Center, AMH Gift Activity, and AMH Reserve Activity). However, the external grant reporting in Workday still does not include budget information. This work is under way and should be available early in 2022.