

New model for distribution of indirect funds generated from external grants

April 5th, 2012

Background

At the start of the 2011-2012 academic year, Chancellor Belcher committed to change Western's practices on the distribution of indirect funds generated from external grants. Scott Higgins and Mark Lord, supported by Beth Lofquist, worked with the Chancellor's Office to develop a new model of indirect distribution. This model, described below, has now been approved by Chancellor Belcher. The model was based on the suggestions of internal and external reviews of our practices as well as comparison to other research offices in the UNC system and across the country.

Purpose & Overview

This is a trial model of indirect fund distribution for a period of 3 years. The primary purpose is to increase the amount of external funding in support of our mission of Western. Broadly, the use of the indirect funds will be to **reward** success in obtaining external funds and **stimulate** more external grant proposal submissions and awards. The indirect funds are to be used to directly or indirectly lead to further external grant activity. Given this primary goal, the actual use of the funds will be diverse for things such as research infrastructure support, research seed money, travel support (ex. agencies visits, research site visits, and conferences), student wages, etc.

Indirect Distribution General Model

Our current indirect distribution model is 90% to the Chancellor's Office and 10% to the Department; the new model is below.

Academic Affairs*: Chancellor's Office: 50%, Provost's Office: 15 %, College: 10%, Department: 15%, Principal Investigator (PI): 10%.

Student Affairs*: Chancellor's Office: 50%, Division: 15 %, Department: 25%, Principal Investigator: 10%.

*In cases of multiple PIs, where grants may cross organizational boundaries, the distribution percentages will be agreed upon at time of receipt of the grant in keeping with the general model.

Reporting and Assessment

All recipients of indirect funds will be required to produce an annual report that provides a summary of funds use, objectives, and outcomes related to external grant activity. A task force appointed by the Chancellor, to be chaired by interim Associate Provost Mark Lord, will oversee the implementation, reporting, and assessment of the new process as well as provide models for how to use the funds. Among other things, the task force will summarize the individual reports to produce a university level report, which will summarize activities, assess the effectiveness of the new model, and make any suggestions for improvement of the model. The report will be submitted to Chancellor and shared with the University.

Task Force Membership

The initial appointments to the Task Force were made to include a broad cross section of campus faculty, staff, and administration

Mark Lord, Interim Associate Provost
Jane Adams-Dunford, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Indrani Bose, Assistant Professor of Biology
Steve Ha, Associate Professor of Economics
Jane Nichols, Associate Professor, School of Art and Design

Billy Ogletree, Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders; Department Head
Lynda Parlett, Director of Sponsored Research
Heidi Buchannan, Associate Professor, Acting Department Head of Research and Instruction Services
David Westling, Distinguished Professor, School of Teaching and Learning
Nancy Wike, Controller-- Director, Grants and Contracts
James Zhang, Interim Dean & Professor of Engineering, Kimmel School

Implementation Time Frame

In effect, the new policy will begin Jan. 1, 2012. The funds associated with the new model will first be distributed on July 1st, 2012. The processing and distribution of indirect funds occurs quarterly, 3 months after the close of the quarter. Indirect funds are not dispersed in one lump sum upon receipt of an external grant, but rather are distributed through time proportional with grant account expenditures. In effect, this means all grants active as of Jan. 1st, 2012 and new grants will now operate under this new practice.