Food for Thought

“What we are going to do from here forward, if it will make people leave me the hell alone, is we’re going to do them like college papers...We’re going to try to put out footnotes.”


Source: www.nytimes.com

What’s new at the ORP?

Please join us...

...in welcoming Courtney Whetzel, a new IRB coordinator with the HRPP team; Cristi Crestani, a new administrative support assistant; Taylor Ivy, an intern from ITS working with the CATS program; and Shelly Mannino, who will be starting with the Quality Management Program on November 25

...in congratulating Sara Horn on her promotion to Assistant Director for the HRPP program.

...in welcoming Melissa Conrad to her new role as administrative assistant to the Animal Care and Use program.

...in wishing Meg Potter well as she takes a new position with PSU’s Animal Resource Program.

Our office is dynamic and growing!
To see our organizational structure, and put a face to the name you see in your email, check out http://www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp

Human Research Protection Program Update

This fall has proven to be a busy time, with an extremely high volume of submissions for review, while two members of the HRPP team are on leaves of absence. Researchers can help ensure the shortest review time by submitting early, and making sure that human participants research training (IRB training through the CITI Program) is up-to-date. If you need to meet a deadline, please do not hesitate to alert us at ORPProtections@psu.edu. Thank you for your patience!

LARC

New certificate program! The Penn State Animal Care and Use program is offering LARC (Laboratory & Agricultural Animal Researcher Certification), a training and certification program for those working with animals in research and teaching. One goal of the program is to train animal laboratory technicians in regulations and policies governing animal use, and to serve as that laboratory’s liaison to the Office for Research Protections and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

Individuals who complete the LARC program will receive certification as a Penn State Certified Laboratory & Agricultural Animal Researcher. Those achieving certification may be designated by the principal investigator or laboratory director to serve as coordinator for all animal-related activities and provide guidance and training on animal care and use to others in the laboratory (e.g. staff members and students). In addition, he or she will be able to assist with protocol development and processing through the IACUC. The IACUC and the ORP will identify certified individuals as “subject matter experts,” who will facilitate successful and efficient use of animals in research and teaching activities at Penn State.

Please visit the LARC website at www.research.psu.edu/training/larc-laboratory-agricultural-animal-researcher-certification

For more information, and to apply for next semester’s inaugural class (starting in January), contact Sara Dries (sad33@psu.edu)

To report concerns about research or scholarship at Penn State: Contact the Office for Research Protections (814) 865-1775; fax (814) 863-8699; email: ORPProtections@psu.edu; or call the Penn State Ethics and Compliance Hotline at 1-800-560-1637.
November’s Scoundrel
Scoundrel... or crusader? A recent Science magazine article by journalist John Bohannon describes a “sting” operation in which Bohannon created a fake scientific paper, with egregious and obvious flaws, and submitted versions of it to 304 open-access journals. The fake paper was accepted by 157 journals (in many cases following peer review). Only one journal questioned the paper on an ethical basis. Bohannon’s work -or stunt- has been both lauded as an exposé of a flawed system, and criticized as an unfair attack on open-access publishers. Either way, it’s creating a lot discussion, which is a good thing.
Source: www.sciencemag.org/content/342/6154/60.full

IRB submissions will change from PRAMS to CATS (Centralized Application Tracking System) on December 9 for the College of Health and Human Development and the College of Medicine. All other colleges and campuses will change to CATS-IRB in March 2014.

CATS-IRB is the first phase of the CATS project, which is transforming processes and systems for human subject (IRB), animal subject (IACUC), biohazardous material (IBC), and radioactive isotope (UIIC) research submissions. CATS-IRB simplifies the process and replaces the PRAMS system for IRB submissions while maintaining the quality of reviews and protecting research subjects.

Hands-on workshops to help researchers learn the new IRB submission process using CATS have been scheduled for University Park and Hershey researchers. To view an informational video about the CATS program, and for dates and registration information for CATS training opportunities, see http://sites.psu.edu/catsirb/

Predatory Publishing?
A recent publication in Science magazine describing a “sting” operation targeting open-access publishers (see the “November’s Scoundrel” box) has reignited discussion about the relative benefits and risks of open-access versus traditional print publication. The Directory of Open Access Journals, an independent online registry (www.doaj.org), lists nearly 10,000 journals. This is an increase of more than 1600 over the last year. Rather than relying on library subscriptions for financial support, open-access journals charge publication fees directly to authors.

Many argue that there are important benefits to open-access publishing: scholarship and results can be made widely available on the internet at no charge; papers can be published more quickly; there is no barrier to publishing negative results; and many problems inherent in the anonymous peer-review mode of traditional publishing can be avoided. However, as open-access journals proliferate, there is a down side. “Authors, rather than libraries, are the customers of open-access publishers, so a powerful incentive to maintain quality has been removed,” says Jeffrey Beall, a University of Colorado librarian who blogs about open-access publishing issues.¹ Many of the new online “journals” have been found to use fictional editors, publish papers with little or no review, and publish poor quality or plagiarized articles. “Apparently, the publish-or-perish pressure creates a market, and enterprising publishers are keen to meet the demand.”² Authors should be cautious to avoid unscrupulous publishers.

Read more
¹ Beall, J (2012) Predatory publishers are corrupting open access Nature 489:179

Contact the Office for Research Protections
814-865-1775 www.research.psu.edu/orp
Candy Yekel, Director Sharon Shriver, aegis editor
cay3@psu.edu sps10@psu.edu
This publication is available in alternative media on request. Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its workforce.
U.Ed. RES 14-13. *Aegis definition from Thesaurus.com

Upcoming workshops
“Eat your veggies: Studies of eating behavior in preschool children” Barbara Rolls, Professor, Nutrition and Biobehavioral Health December 4, 102 Kern Graduate Building 12 PM – 1 PM
“Roots of the second green revolution” Jonathan Lynch, Professor, Plant Science December 5, 110 Henderson 12 PM – 1 PM