Food for Thought

“We hold that a naturally-occurring DNA segment is a product of nature and not patent eligible merely because it has been isolated.”

—Justice Clarence Thomas, writing the US Supreme Court’s unanimous decision to strike down patents held on genes. www.the-scientist.com

What’s new at the ORP?

The Office of Research Information Systems (ORIS) is now part of the ORP. ORIS designs, develops and manages web-based software systems for the Office of the Vice President for Research, as well as maintains security and network infrastructure. In addition, ORIS provides direct support to over 180 OVPR staff. More information about ORIS can be found at www.research.psu.edu/offices/oris.

The Penn State Science Diving Program is now part of the ORP. The Science Diving Program supervises all compressed gas diving for scientific and educational purposes at the University. The program is administered by a Diving Control Board and the operations of the program are defined by a set of Dive Standards. The Penn State Science Diving Program is an Organizational Member of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS). Additional information about the program can be found at www.ems.psu.edu/sciencediving.

COI by the Numbers

In 2013, the COI program received over 2,400 financial disclosures in COINS. 82% indicated no significant financial interests. Of the disclosures that did indicate an SFI, over 90% were reviewed administratively, without the need for COI committee review.

Message from the ORP Director

Fall is always an exciting time at Penn State, with the opportunities and changes that a new semester brings. I would like the research community to be aware of some important changes to key policies affecting research at Penn State. The university’s research misconduct policy, RA10, Addressing Allegations of Research Misconduct, has undergone significant revisions to make its definitions and procedures more consistent with federal regulations and national best practices. Most notably, the revised policy limits the definition of research misconduct to three types: fabrication, falsification and plagiarism. The revised policy also better outlines the procedure that is followed once a report of alleged misconduct is received. For more information about RA10, please visit guru.psu.edu/policies/ra10.html or contact us at ORProtections@psu.edu.

Updates have also been made to Penn State’s individual and institutional conflict of interest policies, which are described elsewhere in this edition of aegis. Watch for announcements about workshops and educational opportunities concerning these and other policy changes, and have a great semester!

~Candy

Candice Yekel, Director, Office for Research Protections

To report concerns about research or scholarship at Penn State: Contact the Office for Research Protections (814) 865-1775; fax (814) 863-8699; email: ORProtections@psu.edu; or call the Penn State Ethics and Compliance Hotline at 1-800-560-1637.
Fall 2013 Educational Workshops
http://www.research.psu.edu/training

Scholarship and Research Ethics Brownbag Series

“Copyright and higher education: Guidelines for teaching and research”
Matt Jackson - Associate Professor, Telecommunications
Wednesday, October 2, Bennett Pierce Living Center (110 Henderson)

“How you can help reporters tell the truth about your research”
Barbara Kennedy - Director of College Media Relations and Public Information, Eberly College of Science
Thursday, October 10, Bennett Pierce Living Center (110 Henderson)

“Imperfect consent and other journalistic dilemmas”
Russell Frank - Associate Professor, Journalism
Wednesday, November 6, Bennett Pierce Living Center (110 Henderson)

“Roots of the second green revolution”
Jonathan Lynch - Professor, Plant Science
Wednesday, November 20
Please note room: 102 Kern Graduate Building

IRB 101 Brownbag Series

“Community Informatics: Engagement scholarship meets IST”
John Carroll – Professor, Information Sciences
Tuesday, October 1 102 Kern Graduate Building

“Community-based prevention and promotion research with adults and youth”
Emilie Smith – Professor, Human Development and Family Studies
Tuesday, October 29 102 Kern Graduate Building

“Different levels of review: Perspectives from taste tests to genetic testing”
John Hayes - Assistant Professor, Food Science; Director of the Sensory Evaluation Center
Thursday, November 14 102 Kern Graduate Building

“Eat your veggies: Studies of eating behavior in preschool children”
Barbara Rolls – Professor, Nutrition and Biobehavioral Health

Penn State’s Institutional Conflict of Interest Policy (previously RA21) was recently revised and published under the new policy number AD83. The revised policy establishes coordinated reporting of university financial interests from various offices, and includes an annual financial disclosure requirement for university officials (as defined by AD83). COI Staff have started to implement the new policy and will begin to collect annual disclosures from university officials in January 2014.

Revisions to Individual Financial Disclosure Requirements: Penn State policy RA20 was recently revised to include a $5,000 de minimis for disclosing sponsored or reimbursed travel. The new, increased threshold for reporting should mean that fewer travel disclosures are required. In addition, travel sponsored or reimbursed on behalf of an investigator’s spouse, partner or dependent child is now required to be disclosed when the travel relates to the investigator’s work at Penn State. As before, travel reimbursed or sponsored by Penn State, other U.S. institutions of higher education, and U.S. federal, state, and local government entities does not need to be disclosed.

For more information, please contact coistaff@psu.edu. PSU’s COI policies can be found at guru.psu.edu/policies.

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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 14-11. *Aegis definition from Thesaurus.com

ACES trains research administrators in every step of the research support process - from proposal development to project management to compliance. Classes for 2013/2014 began September 13. To apply for future sessions, see www.psu.edu/research/training/aces