

Executive Summary – ACOR FELLOWS 2018

The 2018 ACOR Fellows had the opportunity to visit several research administration areas along with two college units, Earth and Mineral Sciences and Health and Human Development. We found the ACOR Fellows program to be a very positive experience. We gained a greater understanding and empathy for the responsibilities and challenges of each area.

Recommendations for ACOR Fellows Programming

- Field trip to PSU campus on corporate jet (just making sure you're reading this)
- Snow Days/Make up days scheduling (similar to ACES)
- Changing time to mid-day with lunch break to help break up the session and allow time afterwards for Fellows to debrief.
- Provide fellows with a list of previously implemented suggestions prior to the start of the program. Use this list to market the benefits and impact of the program to the rest of Research Administration.
- Encourage other Colleges to participate to prevent repetition of ideas.

Recommendations for the Research Administration Community

- Education, Training and Communication
 - Faculty
 - Educating new faculty on processes, procedures, and resources
 - Propose the creation of a Faculty New Hire Checklist that captures the data and materials they work with (Animals, Chemicals, IP, Controlled Technology, etc.) and the purpose of use, to ensure Compliance with all applicable policies.
 - Staff
 - Opportunity to pursue professional development through advanced degrees, certification programs, access to research administration courses or degrees, that extend beyond the reach of ACES.
 - Training
 - Creation of a task force comprised of faculty, grad students, research administrators, IT, and other staff, to identify key issues related to research administration and enable development of mutually beneficial resources.
 - Offer training opportunities that deliver content in manageable sizes.
 - Provide resources for more context-specific training.
 - Help Buttons
 - Research Concierge (central point of information) to direct to available resources
 - Use story-telling as a method of delivering information on PSU Research Admin processes and policies; Offer Citi Training / LRN or other format.
 - Communication
 - Low risk subawards processed cradle to grave at college level.

- Staffing
 - Add Research Concierge in a central administration office (OSP/SIRO)
 - Redefine the Floater Position at a higher experience level (recommend level 4) to maximize value and provide relief to heavily burdened areas as originally intended.
 - Propose; Learning Factory project to identify impact of unresolved workload backlog due to staffing limitations and provide potential solution(s) to address volume of work.
 - Benchmarking with other similar institutions to further identify where staff increases may be most valuable.
 - Succession Planning to prevent issues caused by turnover.
- Collaboration
 - Research Help Desk in addition to Research Concierge
 - Research Admin Fair or Open House (Participation of colleges)
- Systems
 - IAF tracking system (Red Light / Green Light)
 - View all approval activities status (Example Red Light / Green Light) for all users. More insight for all as to where an item is in the process and what is holding it up (ex. Export Review during pre-award, or IRB at time of award).
 - SIMBA
 - Use of SIMBA as stopgap for sub-closeout final invoice review. Purpose is to ensure review and approval of final invoice prior to payment by PSU to subrecipient.
 - As an observation, it is anticipated by all areas visited, that SIMBA will reduce manual processes and make financial system more efficient and transparent.
 - SIMS
 - Risk Management Tracking – Nothing logged in SIMS
 - Award Management System
 - Consistent desire among colleges. An Award Management System must include invoice closeouts, tracking reports, and other standard federally responsible financial reports.