



Message from VPRA: Dr. Robert Nobles

As we settle into the fall semester and enter into the holidays, the Emory community continues to define our new normal during the pandemic. It is becoming more apparent that we will be working and living through this climate for another few semesters. With the exception of Environmental Health & Safety, who remain in their offices to ensure the safety of those on campus, most ORA employees continue to work remotely to support a low-density campus population. Despite the distance, we are “doubling down” on our commitment and activities related to strategic improvement in research administration. A number of initiatives are currently underway including finalizing the process with school partners for increasing our density within laboratory spaces; expanding our IRB’s capacity to serve as the single IRB of record for multi-site multi-investigator studies; and improving our process streams and communication from our IACUC office.

Additionally, we are streamlining our contract matrix to enhance review and project initiation times; improving the transparency of the RAS units; and working across the university to enhance our processes for accounts receivable (AR) and awards close out. Our ongoing work is building improvements to support our profound research enterprise, including our cautious balance of pandemic management and research flexibility.

While we are in the beginning stages of engaging our offices in external reviews, most of our ongoing efforts arise from external consultants who have recently supported our offices. Between McKinsey and Huron, we received more than 160 recommendations for operational efficiencies across the ORA and our cross-functional partners within the university. Over the past year, more than 20% of these recommendations have been accomplished – which is truly an accomplishment while dealing with the acute and chronic impact of COVID-19 on our campus and in our community. A highlight of some of these accomplishments include: unifying the control and command of ORA; standing up a “Tiger Team” (a.k.a. Dragon Team) to lead Lean Six Sigma quality improvement initiatives; improving efficiency, training, and transparency of the nine RAS units; adjusting workflows and teams to improve contracting efficiency; streamlining and enhancing our IT infrastructure; and committing resources to resolve backlogs related to closing out awards. The Dragon Team and our individual offices are working to assess and prioritize implementation of the remaining recommendations within our areas of focus: people, quality, and timeliness. You can read more about these efforts below.

In addition to the advice of expert consultants, we value feedback from our own research community. After receiving such feedback on pain points for our faculty, we have committed additional resources towards the Office of Technology Transfer’s process of negotiating non-monetary contracts, such as material transfer agreements (MTAs) and data use agreements (DUAs). You will learn more about the improved workstreams below. Moving forward, the ORA is launching our first annual satisfaction survey. We will use the results to identify areas that we can target for improvement. A link to the survey can be found [here](#).

I look forward to this semester and to remaining amazed by the tenacity and profound work of you and your research teams. Be well, stay safe, and remain optimistic. Emory is well positioned to reach our collective research goals, especially during this unprecedented time we find ourselves living through.

Thank you all for being part of this amazing Emory family!

Robert

Robert Nobles, DrPH, MPH, CIP
Vice President for Research Administration



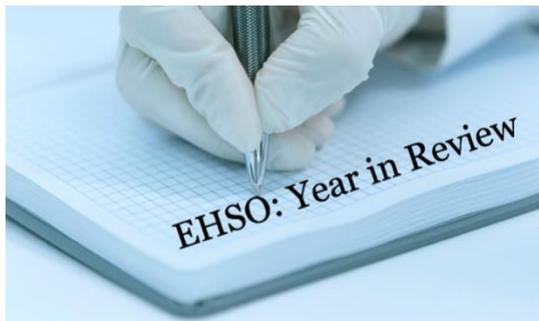
Consultant Research Recommendations Drive ORA Process Improvements

As part of the ORA's ongoing efforts in continuous improvement, all offices are actively implementing cross-functional initiatives suggested by external consulting firms. Recent work with McKinsey and Huron produced more than 160 operational recommendations. The scope of these recommendations extends from simple changes to cross-office policy overhauls. Accordingly, the suggestions have been vetted and assigned priority levels for implementation. The ORA is proud to announce that more than 30 of the recommendations have been fulfilled.

[Continue reading here....](#)



Environmental Health and Safety: Year In Review



The Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) has the mission of providing comprehensive environmental and occupational health and safety support services to our research community and other Emory stakeholders with an aim of protecting people, environment and reputation by ensuring compliance with applicable regulations. This past year's activities contributed to the mission of ORA and the overall mission of the University through planned process improvements and by EHSO's contributions to safe work and studies during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Continue Reading here....](#)

Increase in Personnel Density for Research Laboratories

On November 30, personnel density for research laboratories will **be increased** from one person per 250 square feet per one person to **one person per 150 square feet**. This increase in occupancy density continues to require the use of face coverings and maintaining a minimum distance of 6-feet between people. This physical distancing requirement is not always feasible when conducting research. Should work require that personnel work closer than 6-feet, additional personal protective equipment (PPE), such as a face shield, is required. Please see [Environmental Health and Safety Office \(EHSO\) Guidance](#) or contact EHSO for additional information. [Additional information can be found here....](#)



MTA/DUA Processing Enhancements Continue



In the past six months as part of the ORA's commitment to process improvement, the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) took significant steps to address higher than average turnaround time in reviewing and executing unfunded research contracts like Material Transfer and Data Use agreements. In working with the ORA Dragon Team, OTT implemented a number of new



or improved strategies for these contracts including: [Continue reading here....](#)

Significant Information

Environmental Health and Safety Office

- [Fire Safety](#)
- [Managing Your Laboratory Satellite Accumulation Area](#)
- [Update to the Principal Investigator's Guide to Environmental Health and Safety Policies](#)
- [Prepare for the Holidays- Submit Your BioRAFT Registrations Early](#)

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

- [Emory DAR- FY2021 Animal Charge Rates](#)

Institutional Review Board

- [IRB November Updates](#)

Office for Clinical Research

- [Georgia CTSA Rapid Response Team: 48-Hour Approval for COVID-19 Study](#)

Office of Research Administration

- [October 30, 2020 Update: Research Laboratory Density Guidelines](#)

Office of Sponsored Programs

- [Update to Fringe Rates for FY21](#)
- [Final NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing \(NOT-OD-21-013\)](#)
- [Supplemental Information to the NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing: Elements of an NIH Data Management and Sharing Plan \(NOT-OD-21-014\)](#)
- [Supplemental Information to the NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing: Allowable Costs for Data Management and Sharing \(NOT-OD-21-015\)](#)
- [Supplemental Information to the NIH Policy for Data Mgmt and Sharing: Selecting a Repository for Data Resulting from NIH-Supported Research \(NOT-OD-21-016\)](#)

Research Administration Services

- [RAS Strategic Outreach Initiative \[STORI\]](#)

Research Grants and Contracts

- [AHA Transitioning Proposal/Award Management from Grants@Heart to Proposal Central](#)
- [Uniform Guidance Changes Effective November 12, 2020](#)

We welcome your questions, comments or concerns.
Please email Dr. Robert Nobles at robert.e.nobles@emory.edu.
Share your ORA experience with us using the [Faculty Feedback Form](#)

Partnering with Researchers to Change the World

