Message from VPRA: Dr. Robert Nobles

Welcome to the Fall Semester at Emory University. I've always used summer months leading into the Fall to reflect and prepare the research enterprise for another great academic year. As a community, we are transitioning back to on-campus engagement following months of unprecedented adjustments to life with a pandemic. The delta variant is resulting in heightened community concern, and once again straining our healthcare and public health practitioners. Yet, we have many reasons to be optimistic, in large part to the hard work of our own scientific community. As many have before me, I ask all of you to encourage family members and friends to protect themselves and others by taking advantage of the available vaccines. With the rate of vaccinations increasing across campus, and the other public health measures put in place, I am thrilled to personally see you on campus at some point this Fall.

As we migrate from Zoom tiles back into classrooms and laboratories amidst a new landscape. One changing dynamic is increasing flexibility for our workforce. Many of our peers are offering fully remote positions, creating national competition and new competitive opportunities for our team members. While we strive for Emory to be a vibrant on-campus community, we are also balancing dynamics of hybrid and virtual work schedules. With this in mind, we are working to make Emory a preferred destination for research administrators. We have also begun looking at our pipeline and recruiting practices to cover transitioning team members. To welcome the many new faces of research administration that we will continue to onboard this year, we are building an environment emphasizing staff training, professional development, and support.

In this newsletter, you'll learn more about plans to strengthen our infrastructure as we strive to identify new leadership and team members across ORA and RAS. We celebrate the upcoming retirements of David Martin (Director of IACUC), and Brenda Seiton (Assistant Vice President and Director of COI), who have worked countless hours to support our research enterprise. We also celebrate the contributions of Denise Ehlen (Associate Vice President for RAS) as she transitions to the University of California, Davis. You'll learn about our collaboration with the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to provide electronic tools to research teams, increasing the availability of REDCap and OpenSpecimen. Finally, we'll share information arising from our quality improvement initiative around award closeouts, including implementing new policies that have a September 1, 2021 activation date.

We are also thinking heavily about what quality improvement initiatives would produce the greatest positive impact for our stakeholders during this upcoming year. This year we are going to be assessing synergies between our various offices and processes to support research activity across Emory, including some RAS specific areas to enhance staff onboarding, the IT systems used for data capture and sharing, and the integration of pre-award submissions and post-award management.

The new academic year represents an exciting time to further our mission of providing exemplary, world-class service to faculty. As we navigate this new season, I am happy to assure you that we are focused on your success as our research community and partners.

With sincere appreciation,

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

Administrative Transitions

As we commence the school year, a number of leadership changes are underway. We have developed a framework for a smooth transition, ensuring continuous service to faculty.

COI

Come December, we will say goodbye to Assistant Vice President for Research Administration and Conflicts of Interest Director, Brenda Seiton, who is retiring after 25 years at Emory. During this time, we are continuing with organizational realignments to optimize our effectiveness in compliance. Brenda's remaining time at Emory will focus on continuity and successive leadership efforts. We are currently hiring a new Assistant Director and a senior specialist for the department. Continue reading here...

Valuable Research IT Tools Become Available to All Labs

When Dr. Bruner, Senior Vice President of Research, commissioned the Research IT Task Force in 2019, one of the group's recommendations was to lower the cost barrier of IT solutions. As a result, we are excited to announce enterprise availability for the REDCap and OpenSpecimen platforms. All research teams will soon be able to utilize these tools at no additional charge.

As of late May, all Emory researchers gained access to REDCap software as part of the standard suite of software available to the community. REDCap is a web-based application designed to support data capture for research projects.

REDCap can be customized to support a variety of data types, including features for importing data and exporting to statistical packages. The research community can log in to the REDCap platform.

Users have the flexibility to design their own projects within the system. Additionally, resources are available from the Office of Information Technology (OIT) Laboratory Solutions team for teams seeking support. You may set up a consultation, training and support for REDCap at no extra cost through OIT services. Continue reading here...

Award Closeout Policy Update

On September 1, 2021, we launched four new/updated policies related to award close outs. These polices were developed in collaboration with RAS leaders, CBOs, and ORA leaders. They were designed to ensure sponsored awards are closed out promptly in COMPASS. This will benefit our research community by streamlining the process of award close out. These policies will provide for a timely close out of awards with sponsors, reduction of time spent on small balance items, elimination of charges being posted to ended awards inadvertently, and efficient funding of deficits and residual balance transfers. Continue reading here...

Significant Information

Environmental Health and Safety Office
- **Welcome Fall Semester**
- **Sharps Safety**
- **Volunteers**

Institutional Review Board
- **Important IRB Updates**

Office for Clinical Trials
- **ClinicalTrials.gov Pre-Notice & Notice of Noncompliance**

Office of Sponsored Programs
- **NIA New Policy and Procedures for reporting enrollment data for clinical research trials/studies**
- **NIAID Notice to Extend Eligibility for Submission of K99/R00 Due to COVID–related Disruptions**

Research Grants and Contracts
- **FY22 Fringe Rates Are Now Available**

Senior Vice President for Research
- **Returning this Month- Catch up on previously aired Thursdays at Three (T@3) webinars**

We welcome your questions, comments or concerns.
Please email Dr. Robert Nobles at robert.e.nobles@emory.edu.

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