



Message from VPRA: Dr. Robert Nobles

Welcome to a new academic year! As we “return” to Emory in a completely unprecedented manner, we’d like to welcome new (and current) students, staff, and faculty back to campus (in person or virtually). The Office of Research Administration (ORA) has remained focused on our support for the research enterprise, while elevating our values and being intentional in our efforts to collaborate, communicate, and showcase transparency. As an office, we have three foundational goals of 1) building a robust and resilient research infrastructure; 2) achieving operational efficiency in each of our units; and 3) recruiting and developing a talented and supported workforce. New academic years are also an opportune time to celebrate successes of the past year. For Emory, these include reaching unprecedented heights in the amount of research awards and activity totaling \$831 million, which is the highest amount of research funding in Emory’s history.

In addition to the unprecedented amount of research funding, ORA has worked to mitigate the negative impacts of COVID by fast-tracking reviews of more than 200 studies, working on the front lines of establishing safety standards within our research spaces, engaging in process improvement activities for our offices that touch research awards (RAS, OSP, RGC, OTT, and OCR), and improving our research compliance coverage and support. We have worked tirelessly to build trust by being accountable, transparent, consistent, and open with our communications.

If you’re new to Emory, we want you to know what we tell all of our researchers: “We look forward to serving you and your research needs.” In this newsletter, we have outlined each of our functional areas within ORA and extend the offer for you to engage with any of the operational leaders for additional information. I also want you to know that we hold ourselves to the highest quality standards. Each office is committed to continuous quality improvement, while producing information/metrics, or key performance indicators (KPIs). Established KPIs are designed to monitor our performance in the areas most indicative of our quality, timeliness, and volume of research administrative work. They allow us to identify areas where we can improve and celebrate successes. A showcase of these efforts and transparency of the data are shared below within this ORA newsletter.

Although this academic year is beginning in a way that would have been difficult to imagine, we remain committed to you and our mission of excellence, continuous improvement, and quality service for Emory researchers. May you all have a great academic year!

Respectfully,

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

ORA Office Overview

The Office for Research Administration encompasses many individual offices, each of which retain expertise in different areas of the research process. Your first point of contact will usually be your local RAS representative. They will help you determine which of the other touchpoints are necessary to submit a grant application, conduct a clinical trial, or anything in between. [Here is a short overview of each office...](#)





Emory University COVID-19 Prevention, Tracing, and COVID+ Response



In response to returning to campus for research, Emory University has put processes and protocols into place to prepare Faculty, Staff, and Researchers to return to campus and how to maintain a healthy environment while on campus. A COVID-19 Dashboard was also recently launched to provide accurate and timely updates of all positive case reports as determined by Emory University's contact tracing team. In the event of a COVID positive (COVID+) case on campus, Emory University and the Environmental Health and Safety Office have implemented processes for notification and response to COVID+ persons.

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ORA Quality Improvement Spotlight- The Dragon Team Continues to Push Improvements for ORA

The Dragon Team has been busy developing, managing and implementing quality improvement initiatives. The ORA Dragon Team consists of Inger Garnett, Director of Strategic Operations, as well as Sharon Jones and Julie Flores (Strategic Operations Associates). This team has been diligently working to identify gaps while assisting with improvements that have lasting impact and can be measured with meaningful metrics (Mission Metrics). The Dragon Team has worked on over 30 projects since August 2019. They have completed 10 projects and have 11 ongoing process initiatives that are considered "High Priority".



ORA Quality Improvement

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ORA Mission Metrics Project Moving Forward



The Office of Research Administration (ORA) has worked diligently to bring metrics to the forefront, as a priority for this office. Over the past fiscal year, we reached out for input and developed a process to identify and report on metrics that matter most to campus. The ORA Mission Metrics Project was tasked with establishing a reporting process for operational metrics that would benefit our faculty and research administrators. The goal was to supply meaningful metrics to measure performance of ORA's departments and units. This data-driven quarterly snapshot will help ORA's goal for transparency, while allowing us to identify areas for continuous quality improvement.

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Significant Information

Conflict of Interest

- [International Collaborations and Requirements for Disclosure](#)

Environmental Health and Safety Office

- [FAQs about Laboratory Disinfection when Returning to Research during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [EHSO COVID-19 Related Guidance for Return to Campus](#)
- [Influenza Season is Here](#)
- [Keeping your Lab Door Closed](#)

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

- [eIACUC Upgrade Completed](#)

Institutional Review Board

- [Changes to the IRB COVID-19 Guidance](#)

Office of Research Administration

- [PI Financial Portal to Provide Overview for Faculty](#)

Office of Sponsored Programs

- [New Negotiated IDC Rates for Emory University and Yerkes](#)

Office of the Senior Vice President of Research

- [Thursdays at Three- Call for Webinar Topics](#)
- [New Childcare App for Emory Faculty, Staff, and Students in the Time of COVID](#)

Research Grants and Contracts

- [Grant Forms and Relinquishment Form Update](#)

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

