



Message from VPRA: Dr. Robert Nobles

As we begin the new year, we are enthusiastic about both the progress we have made and our future plans. With December’s release of the McKinsey report, the Office for Research Administration has opened a pathway for transparency and feedback. We will continue this trend by sharing the Huron report later this month. As a result of our commitment to continuous improvement, RAS is in the process of hiring nine new staff members for the RAS Navigator program, which will be oriented towards improving support and services for faculty. I am also excited that the IRB team has finalized a smooth implementation strategy that will keep their planned shutdown for their new software changeover limited to less than a week, down from the originally anticipated three. The strong start to this decade sets the stage to implement more efficient processes as we continue to work on our overarching goals of transparency, collaboration, and improving services for our faculty.

IACUC Making a Difference with Continuous Improvement

As a major component of the transition to the new eIACUC solution, protocols approved in the previous system were manually migrated administratively. The original intent of this process was to ease the burden of the transition away from investigators and their research teams and onto research administration. However, an unintended consequence of this effort has been that subsequent three-year renewal of migrated protocols is (on average) overly burdensome, time consuming and difficult.

In light of this added burden, the IACUC office launched the “Facilitation” program in June of 2019. Under this program the IACUC office facilitation team performs a pre-review of the existing protocol and works with the PI prior to renewal submission in order to facilitate conversion to the new software solution and address any potential concerns. Figure 1 below shows the results from this program to date in average review times. Table 1 shows the percent reduction in time across each step, and in total.

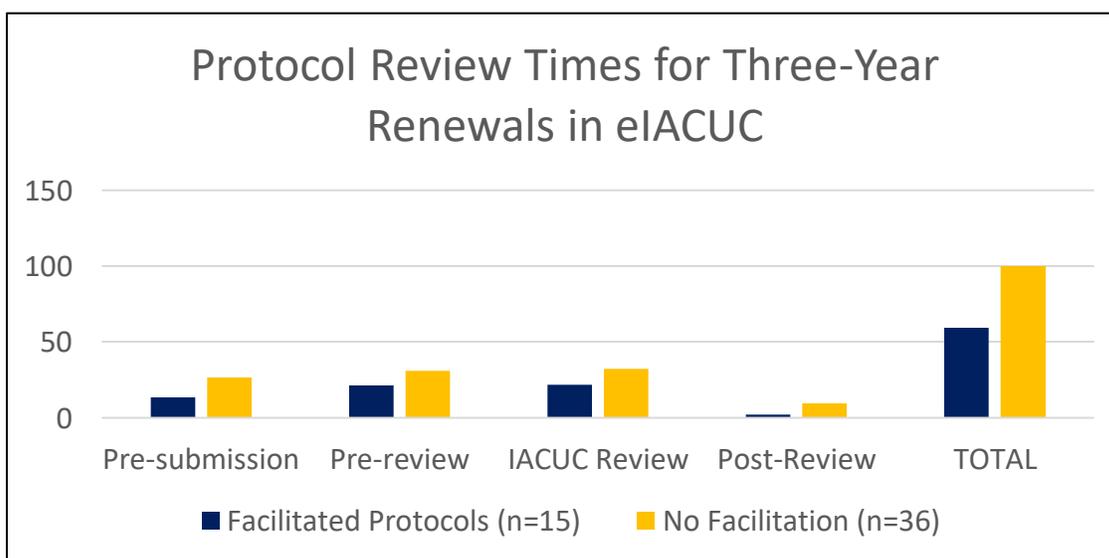


Table 1: Average review time (in calendar days) for three-year renewals of protocols in the eIACUC system from 6/1/19-12/31/19. Note that all protocols were originally approved in the archival system and were migrated into eIACUC administratively. Bars in blue represent those protocols that were submitted under the IACUC office “Facilitation” Program. Bars in orange represent those protocols that were submitted by PI’s not participating in Facilitation.

Stage	Average time (Facilitation)	Average time (No Facilitation)	% Reduction
Pre-submission	13.5	26.8	50
Pre-Review	21.4	31.1	31
IACUC Review	22	32.2	32
Post Review	2.3	9.7	77
TOTAL	59.4	99.8	40

NEXT STEPS:

Investigators interested in participating in the process or wishing more information should contact Tekla Smith (tdsmit2@emory.edu) or Dr. David Martin (dwmarti@emory.edu).



Huron Consulting Report

In Spring 2019, the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research contracted Huron Consulting Group to produce an analysis that examined business processes across the life cycle of a grant including all 9 offices in the Office of Research Administration. ORA will continue to make substantial strides in 2020 to ensure that our services continue to improve for faculty and the environment becomes increasingly positive for our hardworking ORA staff. Today we will release the Huron Consulting report which can be reviewed on the ORA web page under the news section ([here](#)). Keep checking back for additional updates.



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

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