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News and Opportunities

Office of Research & Engagement

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Fenwick leaves Office of Research with legacy of improvement

Brad Fenwick, vice chancellor for research and engagement at UT since 2007, has resigned his position and will assume a full professorship in the College of Veterinary Medicine. Fenwick, whose research area is microbiology and infectious diseases of animals, is already tenured in the college.



Fenwick

Chancellor Jimmy Cheek made the announcement Wednesday to an all-hands meeting at the UT Office of Research on White Avenue. Cheek praised Fenwick's efforts to improve research at UT and said that the university will continue to emphasize the importance of research.

"Since he arrived in 2007, Brad has led a comprehensive effort to expand our research base and strengthen the support systems that work to make the university more competitive for large-scale awards," Cheek said. "I hope you will join me in thanking Brad for his leadership and service as vice chancellor."

UT will use an Atlanta-based executive search firm to do a national search for Fenwick's replacement. Cheek said the interim appointed will not be allowed to apply for the permanent position.

Associate Vice Chancellor of Research Greg Reed noted the changes and new programs that have come to the Office of Research under Fenwick's leadership:

- A renewed emphasis on faculty engagement with sponsored research, backed by staff resources in sponsored programs to handle proposals and awards, and aggressive mining for funding opportunities.

- The creation of a proposal development team that systematically supports faculty who are seeking research funding.

- Increased emphasis on training of staff and faculty in all areas of sponsored programs, including a funding boot camp for young faculty.

- Improved and aggressive communications, both externally and internally, including the Quest communications initiative and a completely revamped web presence for the office.

- Increased collaboration with other UT units, like UT Libraries, on projects as varied as Trace digital archive, recognition of faculty authors, and open publishing support.

- Expanded emphasis on undergraduate involvement in research and other scholarly and creative activities, including creation of an undergraduate research journal and a Research Week spotlighting undergraduate achievements.

- A philosophy of open reporting of research data and decision-making, notable in the budget-hearing process for Organized Research Units.

- Increased support for faculty seeking competitive fellowships, with particular success in the humanities.

"The result of Dr. Fenwick's initiatives has been an increase in faculty involvement in sponsored programs, dramatic growth in proposal submissions and awards, and creation of a staffing structure that enables the increased workload success has brought," Reed said.

The office will continue to build on the current programs as a new permanent vice chancellor is sought.

Wes Hines named as interim vice chancellor

Wes Hines, professor of nuclear engineering, will serve as interim vice chancellor. Wes served as interim associate dean for research and technology for the College of Engineering from 2008-09. A UT faculty member since 1995, he has received numerous awards for research and creative achievement and teaching from the university as well as from his external peers.

Hines holds a doctorate and a master's degree in nuclear engineering, as well as a master's in business administration, from Ohio State University. He earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Ohio University. He is also a former naval officer and a graduate of the Naval Nuclear Power School.



Hines

Evaluations, survey point way to upgrading proposal development



From L to R: Charlie Senn and Carmen Trammell, project managers; Bill Stanley, Sharon Pound and Alan Rutenberg, editors; Cathy Parks, Linnea Minnema and David Smelser, sponsored program administrators; Miriam Campo, sponsored program director (Not pictured: Kelly Steele and Kay Cogley)

Evaluations of the Office of Research proposal development activities have resulted in improvements to the services the office provides and also reveal a high level of satisfaction among faculty clients.

The office used two methods to study its performance in preparing proposals: ongoing "lessons learned" exercises and a recently completed survey of faculty who have made use of the service.

"During the proposal development team's first 18 months, we've engaged in a lessons-learned session after each proposal has been wrapped up," said Charles Senn, director of proposal management. "We've also had overall sessions that look at our team's performance in aggregate."

The systematic self-study has resulted in three major changes, Senn said. First, meetings of everyone involved in a specific proposal have been scrapped in favor of one or two meetings with the principal investigator alone. "We started with large planning meetings, but the information we gave was just too overwhelming," he said.

Now the PI is presented with information about the services available to him or her, and the research office staff works with the faculty member to create a plan that will guide proposal preparation.

Consulting with faculty led to a second change when the team moved from a Gantt chart approach to a simple calendar with milestones that allows the individual PI to interact in appropriate ways on scheduling issues. "We end with an agreed-to plan with buy-in from both sides," Senn said.

Third, PIs and the proposal development team sign off on a memo of understanding that spells out in writing the deliverables generated during the process and the responsibilities that attach to them. The PI is allowed to pick and choose the services he or she expects to use during the process.

After 18 months of operation, the office also conducted a satisfaction survey among faculty who have actually used the proposal development team's services.

The survey, which received responses from 24 PIs, showed that three-fourths of the respondents would be highly likely to work with the PDT again. More than eight in 10 said that the document they received help on was more competitive than it would have been otherwise. The PDT received high marks for responsiveness and editorial support, and nine out of 10 PIs judged themselves better prepared to develop their next proposal because of their experience with the PDT.

Details: <http://research.utk.edu/pd/survey.shtml>

Engaging the proposal development team

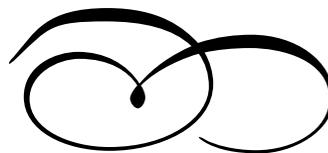
Faculty who wish to engage the proposal development team on their own projects must contact Associate Vice Chancellor Greg Reed (greed@utk.edu, 865-974-3466) with (a) the name and any identifying number of the solicitation, (b) the size of the monetary support being sought, and (c) a brief synopsis of the proposed project.

Reed will consider the size of the monetary support being sought, the strategic place in the university's research agenda, and the workload of the PDT in making an assignment.

Deadline for spring Pursuit nears

The deadline for submission to the Spring 2011 issue of *Pursuit - The Journal of Undergraduate Research at the University of Tennessee*, is September 20, 2010. Faculty members with undergraduate research assistants or other undergraduates should encourage them to submit research or scholarly papers to *Pursuit*.

Details: <http://trace.tennessee.edu/pursuit/>



NSF will require that proposals include data management plan

Proposals to the National Science Foundation will soon be required to include a data management plan that will allow general access to all research data collected as part of NSF-funded projects.

Ed Seidel, an official with the agency's Mathematical and Physical Sciences directorate, said that changes in the NSF policy will take place around October 2010, when all proposals will be required to include a two-page supplementary document describing a data management plan for results of the project. The proposed policy change is a reflection of the NSF's mission and indicates federal interest in making sure that any data obtained with federal funds is accessible to the general public, Seidel said.

Details: http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=116928

Libraries present programs on measuring scholarly impact

Two programs on measuring the impact of a scholar on his or her discipline have been scheduled by UT Libraries and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory Research Library.

On August 31 at 2:30 p.m., James Pringle will speak on "Citation Impact and Research Evaluation" in the auditorium of the Hodges Library. In a presentation cosponsored by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory Research Library, Pringle will discuss citation metrics used to demonstrate research impact and scholarly achievement, evaluate funding applications, build research teams, and manage journal collections. Pringle is vice president for product development at Thomson Reuters Healthcare & Science.

On September 15 at 3:30 p.m., the library will present a workshop titled "Measuring Research: Understanding Citation Counts and Impact Factors." Donna Braquet, associate professor and life sciences librarian, and Peter Fernandez, assistant professor of agriculture and natural resources librarian, will present an overview of ways to analyze scholarly output. The program is open to all but requires an RSVP by Sept. 13 to Donna Braquet (dbraquet@utk.edu). Seating is limited to 30.

Details: <http://info.lib.utk.edu/news/blog/2010/08/06/pringle/>

Fall grant-writing workshops announced

Success in sponsored research is a delicate matter of matching scholarly strength with practical skills in writing grant proposals and searching for funds. To assist our faculty in this increasingly important endeavor, the UTK Office of Research offers grant writing workshops each semester.

The workshops are targeted at UTK faculty and graduate students who pursue academic research. The emphasis is on effective writing techniques using examples from successful proposals, starting with the phrasing of a compelling research theme to the actual construction of the proposal itself. Leading the workshops is Robert Porter, Director of Research Development.

Fall grant-writing workshops (2-3 hours each):

- ❖ Writing Successful Grants, Part I
- ❖ Writing Successful Grants, Part II
- ❖ Finding Funding
- ❖ Building the NSF Grant Proposal
- ❖ Building the NIH Grant Proposal
- ❖ Building an Interdisciplinary Research Team
- ❖ Career Development Grants for Pre- and Postdocs
- ❖ Strategies for Success in Sponsored Research

Each course is offered multiple times on different days of the week. For course descriptions and to register, go to: <http://research.utk.edu/training/cal-gw.shtml>. For additional information, contact the Office of Research training coordinator at ortraining@utk.edu or (865) 974-9310.

Office of Research begins move to all-electronic proposal process

The Sponsored Programs unit of the Office of Research has begun phasing in a new online proposal-building program for originating and tracking research proposals and awards with the start of Fiscal Year 2011 on July 1, 2010. TERA (Tennessee Electronic Research Administration) will allow UT faculty, staff, and administrators to create, electronically route, and process research proposals and track the resulting awards electronically. TERA will replace Coeus, which was put into use in 2001.

The first module -- PAMS, or the Proposal and Awards Management System -- will allow proposal preparation and approval to be done online. The proposal routing form known as the "yellow sheet" will be replaced with an electronic version, and all proposal documents will be uploaded into PAMS.

Selected departments and colleges were part of the pilot program to transition from using the "yellow sheet" to using TERA-PAMS. In mid-July, the office began transitioning other departments and colleges to use the new system to process and electronically route proposals for signatures. A TERA-PAMS phase-in schedule is available on our website. The goal is to have all proposal and award activities moved to TERA by the end of calendar year 2010. Modules to be brought online later will allow management of compliance documents and processes, training, and other activities related to the Office of Research.

Training in TERA-PAMS use is currently being offered.

Details and online registration: <http://research.utk.edu/tera>

Opportunities

Proposals solicited for Faculty Development Leave

The Office of the Provost is accepting Faculty Development Leave proposals for the 2011-2012 school year.

Faculty Development Leave allows faculty to enhance their teaching effectiveness and scholarship and provides opportunity for continued professional growth.

Faculty are awarded leave on the merits of a specific proposal. The proposal should benefit the work of the faculty member, department, college, and the university.

The application procedure includes a proposal that details the purpose and nature of the project, a description of the importance of the work to the university, statements of methodology and anticipated results, and an indication about why the project requires leave outside the normal scope of scholarly work, as well as other related documents.

Key dates: October 1, 2010, submission of application to the appropriate dean; November 1, 2010, applications to Office of the Provost.

Details: <http://provost.utk.edu/development/>

M-CERV Seed Grants for Knox microbiologists

One of the recently created UT organized research units is seeking proposals for seed grants that will facilitate intercampus and interdisciplinary research projects related to microbiology. M-CERV, the Microbiology across Campuses Educational and Research Ventures ORU, is seeking to promote research associations among the numerous microbiologists on the UT campuses in Knoxville in a way that engenders large-project planning and grant applications.

Support will be available for items such as graduate research assistantships, postdoctoral fellowships, supplies, and/or equipment. First-year grants will be for \$20,000 and second-year grants for completion of funded projects of \$10,000 will be considered.

Key date: September 17, 2010, email application to co-directors Jeff Becker (jbecker@utk.edu) and Stephen Oliver (soliver@utk.edu).

Details: <http://research.utk.edu/funding/m-cerv.shtml>

Advanced English Prose for Grant-Writing

The English Language Institute is offering a hands-on course in proposal-writing for researchers whose first language is not English. The class will run from August 31 to October 19, 2010 on Tuesdays from 4 to 6 p.m. in Room 401 of the Walters Life Science Building.

The UT Office of Research sponsors the course in collaboration with UT's English Language Institute.

Contact: English Language Institute (974-3404, eli@utk.edu)

Details and registration:

http://www.outreach.utk.edu/eli/grant_writing.html

NIMBioS solicits proposals linking math, biological science

The National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis, a National Science Foundation research facility located at UT Knoxville, is seeking proposals for research that crosses disciplinary boundaries between the mathematical and biological sciences. NIMBioS supports a range of scientific activities from working groups, investigative workshops, postdoctoral fellows, sabbatical fellows, and short-term visitors.

Key date: September 1, 2010, for activities beginning in 2011.

Details: <http://nimbios.org/research/background>