
[HHS Staff] Updates from the HHS Office of Research

1 message

Esther Leerkes <emleerke@uncg.edu>
Reply-To: emleerke@uncg.edu
To: hhs-faculty-l@uncg.edu, hhs-staff-l@uncg.edu

Mon, Oct 31, 2022 at 4:29 PM

Dear Colleagues,

The following topics are covered in this update.

1. Research is valued at UNCG and within HHS specifically
2. Updates on OSP staffing including IRB and C & G staffing
3. I will represent your IT-related research needs re Microsoft transition (seeking information via google form)
4. Highlighting our recent efforts to support community engaged researchers (useful links and attachments)
5. Changes in process to reserve Stone meeting spaces: Edwards Lounge and Dean's Conference Room (make reservations via departments)
6. Upcoming research-related events
7. Internal funding opportunities with deadlines in early spring

Wishing you all a Happy Halloween Monday.

Best,

Esther

1. Research is valued at UNCG and within HHS specifically

I have heard that many faculty are discouraged by limited discussion about research right now. This is necessitated by the need for administrators to focus on addressing enrollment declines, related budget reductions, and planning in light of the new budget model. Please know that research is valued and many on this campus are working hard to help ensure you can maintain your vibrant and impactful research programs. My goal is to summarize some examples.

Both the Chancellor and Provost have re-iterated on numerous occasions that we will remain an R2 institution that values teaching and research. This has been stated at open forums and reiterated in a number of smaller meetings I have participated in recently. A tangible demonstration of this valuing is that all of the vacant positions in the Office of Sponsored Programs underwent the dual approval process and each search was approved.

Vice Chancellor Terri Shelton has likewise continued to provide robust internal funding for research endeavors. Please review and apply for [these longstanding opportunities](#). In addition to these university-wide competitions, she has provided all units including HHS with the funds to support the Scholars' Travel program plus \$30,000 discretionary funds that we use to support our HHS Faculty Research Grants Program. The allocated amounts remained consistent with prior years.

Dean Mattacola has provided the same high level of financial resources to support our [research initiatives](#) this year even in this unknown budget context. This is a tremendous, tangible act that demonstrates a high valuing of research. Please, apply for these funds so we can support your research. Also, if you have research needs that don't seem to fit into the available initiatives, please reach out to me.

There are ongoing development efforts to secure funds to support faculty excellence in research. This includes concentrated efforts to secure funds for distinguished/named professorships and for internal research funding. In fact, please see a great example that was featured in Campus Weekly--[The Penny Family Fund which supports a Faculty First Awards for HHS Faculty](#).

As evidenced by the examples above, there is strong support for research throughout the university. The HHS Office of Research is also here to support your research endeavors, so please don't hesitate to reach out any time you have questions.

2. Updates on OSP staffing including IRB and C & G staffing

I want to make sure everyone saw the information shared about this in the OSP Newsletter from Julie Voorhees on Oct 18. The information she shared is noted in quotes, after which I provide some additional information.

"As many of you are aware, we have had several retirements and transitions in both the Office of Sponsored Programs as well as the Office of Research Integrity. Dr. Kim Littlefield is serving as the interim Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and the OSP team, Chris Davis, Tiffany Wright, and Gina Ingraham, are doing the heavy lift to fill the gaps due to open positions of the Director, Assistant Director, and another grant specialist position. In order to continue to provide prompt and thorough customer service, we have engaged a grants management company to provide some much-needed relief until we are able to fill those positions for which we are actively searching."

- Nikki Westerfield, a staff member for Attain Partners, the professional company noted above, will serve as our Grant Specialist assisting with grant submissions. This is the role Angela Boseman held and Kim Littlefield and Tiffany Wright covered in the recent past. Nikki has extensive pre-award experience and she and Verna have already been acquainted. We are in good hands, and I am grateful to have this support as we strive to fill the open positions. Should you need to contact Nikki, her email is available under the name Susan Westerfield: snwesterfie@uncg.edu
- Gina Ingraham is a new staff member in OSP who is being onboarded to become a Grant Specialist. Currently, she is taking a lead role on award notification campus-wide, so you may receive emails from her upon being awarded funding.
- The searches for Director and Associate Director of OSP are ongoing.

"With regard to the Office of Research Integrity, Terri Shelton is filling in as Interim Director of the Office of Research Integrity with significant help from IRB Chair Laurie Wideman, IACUC Chair Keith Erikson, and IBC Chair Yash Patel. Similarly, we have also engaged assistance from a research compliance firm to address the significant workload related to IRB submissions. We are actively interviewing for the Director, the IRB/Assistant Director, IACUC/IBC, and Conflict of Interest/Export Control positions in order to get the office back to full capacity. We appreciate the patience of the campus community as we get our contractors on board and these positions filled."

- There is a backlog of IRB submissions given this personnel shortage since Melissa Beck left for a new position.
- VC Shelton has contracted two professionals to work on the IRB via an external company. She recently increased the number of hours they are working to better address the backlog. Our colleague, Laurie Gold (KIN), who serves as the IRB chair has increased her time/role on the IRB to help with the backlog, to create a smooth transition for the external consultants and to help with the searches for both the Director (formerly Lisa Goble's position) and Associate Director (formerly Melissa Beck's position) of the Office of Research Integrity. This is a heavy lift. I am grateful to Laurie for all she is doing. If you see her--please say thank you!
- In addition, our colleague Danielle Swick (SWK), has been added to the IRB to help given her clinical background. This is an additional service load for her. Thank you, Danielle.
- It will take some time to get through the backlog, but strong plans are in place, and many are helping. Student research is being prioritized to ensure there are no graduation delays.

In the last week, we also learned that one of our assigned Contracts and Grants specialists, Rhonda Florence, is leaving for other employment. Rhonda assists faculty in HDFS and KIN. Fortunately, she is willing to work part-time to provide some assistance after she leaves. I will update you when I learn more about plans from C & G.

These transitions are reflective of a nation-wide trend. There is a shortage of research professionals and many are leaving universities to work for private companies.

I know there have been many personnel changes in the past few months. If you are unsure of who to turn to for assistance, contact us first. Verna, Lisa, April and I can point you in the right direction and are happy to assist you as best we can.

3. I will represent your IT-related research needs re Microsoft transition

I have been asked to represent the IT needs and concerns of researchers in meetings with the Microsoft Transition Teams for HHS and the University. For now, this means participating in focus groups with the Microsoft Team. I want to do the very best I can to represent your needs effectively. Several faculty shared concerns with me about a month ago. If you have new concerns or did not respond to that initial request for information and have specific research-related concerns about (a) how Microsoft products can meet your research needs or (b) the migration from one product to another, please take a moment to [share with me via this form](#).

4. Highlighting our recent efforts to support community engaged researchers

Based on feedback we received from the HHS OOR Equity Audit, we have been working hard to better meet the needs of community-engaged researchers. I'd like to highlight a few recent activities.

- First, HHS OOR co-sponsored the terrific events hosted by the Center for Women's Health and Wellness last week. Of particular relevance, the speaker, Dr. Sonyia Richardson, [shared a number of articles and her powerpoint slides](#) and gave us permission to share these as well as [the video of her talk](#). For your convenience, I have included the slides which have direct links to a number of useful sources--see for example, links to potential funding opportunities to support community engaged research (slide 27), [training materials about research for community partners developed by PCORI](#), tips on building effective multi-stakeholder teams (slide 28). These materials will be available via the Center for Women's Health and Wellness Website under the Events Tab/Fall Lectures and Workshop in the event you need to find them in the future. Many thanks to Dr. Sandy Schultz and her team for organizing!
- Second, we appointed Dr. Sharon Morrison as the inaugural Faculty Fellow for Community Engaged Research (CER). She and I meet regularly, and she has regular meetings with Emily Janke (PCS), who directs UNCG's Institute for Community and Economic Engagement. Sharon has drafted a CER Mission and Vision Statement to guide our collective work.

Mission: Deepen a culture of CER in the School of HHS

Vision: Embrace and value CER as a powerful scientific and equitable approach to advancing health and human well-being

Additionally, Sharon worked with Emily to plan a Be Here Club event in hopes of bringing together HHS faculty with an interest in CER. I will be there to listen and learn. The event is this Friday from 3 to 5 in the Atrium of the Weatherspoon Art Museum. Please see attached flyer.

In addition, Dr. Morrison will disseminate information about events and resources of interest to those engaged in community engaged scholarship via **The Community Engaged Research Dispatch**. **The first edition is attached.**

Finally, Sharon became a strong partner in planning the schedule for the above mentioned event hosted by the Center for Women's Health and Wellness. Notably, Sharon, Emily, and I met with Dr. Richardson to specifically discuss how universities can support CER faculty. Ongoing discussions and a field trip to UNC Charlotte are in the works.

We will continue to make progress in this area by working collectively!

5. Changes in process to reserve Stone meeting spaces: Edwards Lounge and Dean's Conference Room

Moving forward, all reservations for Stone 218 (Dean's Conference Room) and Stone 219 (Edwards Lounge) should be made via department support staff and not through staff in the HHS Office of Research.

The Stone Building departmental administrative assistants have been given access to the reservation calendars for these rooms, so they may make event/meeting reservations for their respective departments; departments no longer need to contact the Office of Research staff to make reservations. Faculty, staff, department chairs, project team leaders, etc. should contact their departmental administrative assistants to make the needed reservations for these rooms.

Departments located in the Stone Building already possess keys to access Stone 218 & 219. It is the responsibility of the persons using the room to secure the appropriate room key from their departmental office to access the room for their event/meeting. Departments should track to whom the keys are loaned in order to monitor the return of keys in a timely manner.

Reservations will be on a first come, first serve basis. Please remember that these are shared spaces, so please do not monopolize the rooms; please use departmental conference rooms as much as possible. **Recurring classes are not to be scheduled in these two rooms.**

Complete room reservation information and guidelines for reserving and using Stone 218 and 219 are available at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tTGdyBslyO2TaZq-bUYVsVAKvHrtuOL/edit?usp=sharing&oid=108283931083898018472&rtpof=true&sd=true>.

Please keep in mind that the capacity of Stone 218 is 14 and Stone 219 is 30.

An additional event/meeting space which seats 40 is available in the Nursing and Instructional Building (NIB). Information for reserving NIB 124 can be found at: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qCwGFQU994SN7gxkcPPGZhWK_BstEMGZrGN1HTbP5gg/edit. Please contact Suzanne Ingram at s-ingram3@uncg.edu to request a reservation for NIB 124.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

6. Upcoming research-related events

We have an exciting array of research-related talks in the next 2 weeks!

Nov 3, 12:30-2 PM GROWTH Lunch N Learn, via Zoom, Presenter: Dr. Tyreasa Washington, Social Work, **An Exploration of Self-Care Practices of African American Informal Kinship Caregivers**

Nov 4, 3 to 5 PM Be Here Club, Community Engaged Research Meet n Greet, Weatherspoon Art Museum Atrium (flyer attached)

Nov 7, 12:30 - 1:30 PM RISE Networking Luncheon, 120 NIB. Presentation: **Critical updates to NIH and NSF proposal requirements** - the when, the why, the what, and the how. If you are planning proposals for 2023 and beyond, this is news you will use! Lunch Provided. Register here by noon on November 3rd: <https://forms.gle/3n23hBFNyixR869g9> (flyer attached)

Nov 7, 4 to 6 PM Speaker Event: Dr. Lina Abirafeh, Senior Advisor for Global Women's Rights, Arab Institute for Women, Lebanese American University will present **What's Stopping Us from Achieving Global Women's Rights?** Followed by Q & A in the Curry Building Auditorium

Nov 16, noon Prof. Jennifer Raff, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Kansas University, will be visiting to present a keynote address for the Spartans Advance program, and to discuss **"Communicating Science to Diverse Audiences"** during a *RISE-sponsored lunch*. Registration is required and seating will be limited to 25. Graduate students are welcome. So, sign up early! The event will be located in the Faculty Center.

Here is the registration link:

<https://forms.gle/fBxPKpfaGa4oN3hKA>

7. Internal funding opportunities with deadlines in early spring

These deadlines will be here before we know it. Sharing so you can plan ahead. Please note, I will distribute a survey next month to determine who intends to apply for HHS faculty Grants and Top Off Grants to determine how many reviewers we need and if we need to bring on ad hoc reviewers with specific expertise.

- o [HHS Faculty Research Grant](#) applications due **January 23, 2023 at 5 pm**. Up to \$5,000 for individual investigator awards and up to \$10,000 for collaborative projects from April 2023 through June 2024. All full-time faculty whose workloads include research are eligible.
- o [HHS Top-Off Funding](#) applications due **January 23, 2023 at 5 pm**. For individuals or teams who were recently awarded New, Regular, or HHS Faculty grants to enhance to existing projects in some way. Funds may not exceed the initial award amount. Available funds are limited so requests should be limited to essential costs and must primarily be expended within the fiscal year (i.e., by June 2023).
- o [UNCG Internal Funding/Faculty First](#) applications will be due **February 6, 2023 at 5 PM**. Additional details to be posted in December.
- o [Undergraduate Research and Creativity Award \(URCA\)](#) Funds help faculty and students partner in meaningful projects in their discipline/field of study. Support can be used for material expenses and/or related travel, or can be used to provide a stipend for the students. Students can earn up to \$3,000 (annually) for their work. Faculty can request up to \$500 in support of the project.
Applications due:
For Summer 2023 – **February 12, 2023**
Fall/Spring 2023/2024 – April 16, 2023
- o [HHS Summer Grant Writing Fellows Program](#) supports faculty in their efforts to submit strong grant proposals. Fellows must identify a mentor, attend a series of summer workshops, and agree to submitting a grant within the following year. Fellows may receive a \$4,000 summer stipend. Upon successful grant submission within a year, they

may receive an additional \$1,000 and their mentors may receive \$500. Applications through InfoReady for summer 2023 are due **February 27, 2023 by 5:00 p.m.**

--




Esther M. Leerkes, Ph.D. (she/her/hers: [What's this?](#))
Associate Dean for Research, School of Health and Human Sciences
Jefferson Pilot Excellence Professor, Human Development & Family Studies
UNC Greensboro
PO Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
Phone: (336) 256-0310



NOTICE: Any emails sent to or from this address are subject to Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties.

--
You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "HHS Staff" group.
To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to hhs-staff-l+unsubscribe@uncg.edu.
To view this discussion on the web visit https://groups.google.com/a/uncg.edu/d/msgid/hhs-staff-l/CAFrBOBRxZTdQvUOKMKiiaYyKf7fXHzrPK5_RQHjNTKWEVR5Dvw%40mail.gmail.com.

3 attachments

-  **The Community-Engaged Research Dispatch (103122)-2.pdf**
111K
-  **Richardson_UNCG Presentation.pdf**
6554K
-  **UNCG Be Here Club (BHC) Meet-And-Greet.pdf**
1443K