Core Facilities Administration

Presentation Courtesy of:
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What are Core Facilities?

- **Core Facilities** are “Recharge Centers” operating under a fee-for-service model, with the mission of enabling research at Northwestern
  - **Department Core Facilities** serve researchers in a single department, earning revenue less than $30K/year
  - **University Core Facilities** serve researchers in multiple departments, earning revenue greater than $30K/year
  - **Clinical Core Facilities** serve the research needs of researchers/clinicians engaged in clinical research studies
What do Core Facilities do?

• Cores are centralized research laboratories with state-of-the-art (expensive) equipment:
  – Electron and confocal microscopes (hard/soft mat.)
  – Mass spectroscopy/NMR facilities (chem, drug discovery)
  – Functional MRI facilities (human, animal)
  – Cleanrooms for micro/nano-fabrication

• Cores provide centralized services to researchers:
  – Genomics/Proteomics/Animal Model services
  – Synthesis and characterization of biomolecules (small molecules, peptides, proteins)

Note: Office for Research maintains a website listing University cores: [http://www.facilities.research.northwestern.edu/](http://www.facilities.research.northwestern.edu/)
How are Core Facilities Supported?

- **Central Oversight of University Core Facilities**
  - Administrative and Financial Services (NUcore, Cost Study Support, Business Planning)
  - Rigorous Evaluation of Annual Reports (Awards)
  - Policies and Regulations (Federal, University)
  - Professional Development Opportunities

- **Annual Financial Support**
  - Office for Research (approx. $3 million/yr)
  - Centers, Schools, Departments (approx. $5 million/yr)

- **Construction and Renovation Planning of Space for Core Facilities**
How are Core Facilities Supported (cont’d)?

- **Office for Research Equipment Grants**: two competitive rounds per year, supports “smaller” equipment purchases, ReLODE loan program for duplicative and legacy equipment
- **Office for Research Operating Support**: requested via the Annual Report, supports expenses not allowable on recharge, facility growth, unexpected expenses
- **FSM Dean’s Office Support**: competitive, single round per year, provides subsidies for cores serving FSM researchers
- **Voucher Program**: when a PI donates *new* equipment to a core facility, they are eligible for a voucher to use the equipment
Financial Services Support by OR

- NUcore Software
- NUFinancials Tracking
- Cost Studies/Pricing
- UBI (External) Reporting

Research Administrators can be added as “Business Administrators” on their portfolio of chart strings in NUCore

“Business Administrators” can review transactions, dispute charges, and manage access to their portfolio of chart strings across all core facilities

Advantages of active management: avoid overspending and unauthorized spending with active review, ensuring that researchers are selecting the correct chart string for purchases, have appropriate access, and are not overspending increasingly tight grant and non-grant budgets!
Additional Support of Core Facilities

- Schools and Departments provide operating subsidies or annual deficit coverage to core facilities
- Core-specific grants reduce the operating costs (NIH RHLCCC grant and other P30’s, NSF MRSEC grant)
- External users charged a higher rates - especially commercial users that can help a core facility balance its budget (some transactions may be taxable!)
How can I learn more about Core Facilities?

**Internal Opportunities**
- Core Facility Listserv (email Sasha for access)
- Quarterly Brown Bags (notes available on website)
- Kellogg Course: Leadership and Management in Core Facilities (annual 4-day mini-MBA focusing on core facilities, 11/14-11/17)
- Quarterly NUCore Tech Talks (session recordings on website)

**External Opportunities**
- National: ABRF (Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities)
- Regional: MWACD (Midwest chapter of ABRF)

**Visit our website:** [http://facilities.research.northwestern.edu/](http://facilities.research.northwestern.edu/)
Who can I contact with questions?

- Phil Hockberger, Assistant VP for Research
- Andrew Ott, Director of Core Facilities
- Steve Matz, Director of Facilities and Planning
- Aaron Rosen, Senior Financial Analyst
- Sasha Mechetner, Administrative Assistant
URICA Updates
FY18 Finances, Budgets, & Annual Reports

• FY18 Budget: New Budget Template
  – To be basis for Annual Meeting packets and discussions
  – Detail on positions included to aide discussion and clarity
  – Standard roll-up categories

• 110 vs. 171: Same end result, slightly different processes

• Vacancy Adjustments – First transfers in November (a few units)

• Mid-Year Salary Adjustments & Salary Increases in Budget Request

• Annual Reports
  – Timing: December 1st Call to go out, February 15th Due (~10 weeks)
  – Operational Evaluation: Refining and revising within same overall categories
  – Budget Template:
    • Significant revision in development, but same overall data and approach
    • Detail pages to feed to summary page with roll-up categories
    • Consistent structure to align for easy integration into annual budget template
    • Roll-up categories will allow specifics on detail pages, roll-up more generally on summary
    • Same approach to baseline budget with salary parameter increase; year-to-year & any additional requests to be more evident & accompanied by clear call for detailed justification
URICA Updates, Continued

• Staff Engagement Survey
  – Reminder to complete survey “The Northwestern University 2017 Staff Survey is Here!”

• IT Desktop Support Services Requests
  – To be provided at no-cost for administrative staff computers for those supported by operating budget (1x computer per individual)
  – Service Agreement or summary thereof will provide description of support provided under agreement
  – If covered under existing agreement, Institute/Center may continue that coverage, and will be reimbursed equal cost to provide support
  – Process to implement:
    • Request File to be completed to identify users requested for support/reimbursement
    • Request File will be confirmed to meet coverage guidelines, and:
      – Supported users list provided to Northwestern IT for coverage & paid by URICA directly
      – Users for reimbursement will result in a transfer into Institute/Center operating chart string