The University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez
Proposal Development Unit
& its Mentoring Relationship with the
University of Kentucky

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October 20, 2009
Importance of Finding a Mentor Institution

Mentor can demonstrate a fully functional service model:

- Incorporating desired elements of service support
  - Unique niche: UK PDO plays a unique role in institutional research administration, i.e., actually working as consultants on developing proposal narrative
    - NOT a common feature of many institutions

- Providing global insights on service configuration
  - Assisting in defining what set of services could/should be offered and how might that be done
  - How to adapt the (UK) service set/service delivery model to our institutions needs
The UPRM PDU: Our Story...

► March 10-12, 2008: Y. Rojas & E. Albino attended the “University of Kentucky / NIGMS Research Administrator’s Workshop”, held in Lexington, Kentucky and funded by NIH/NIGMS.
  - Underwent intensive training on supporting PIs in developing competitive NIH R01 proposals
  - Learned about their Proposal Development Office (PDO)
  - Learned about the NIH-Extramural Associate Research Development Award (EARDA)

► April 25, 2008: Submitted an NIH-EARDA proposal entitled: “Establishment and Institutionalization of a Proposal Development Unit (PDU) at the UPRM”
  - Included: 1) UK PDO as Mentor to the PDU; 2) PDO’s Associate Director as member of UPRM’s EARDA’s EAC.
UPR Mayaguez versus U Kentucky

- Is the only Land-Grant, Sea-Grant, & Space-Grant Institution in UPR System.
- **Has 4 Colleges:**
  - Engineering, Agricultural Sciences, Arts & Sciences, Business Administration
- **Students:**
  - @ 13,000 UG; 1,100 G
- **Carnegie classification:**
  - Master’s/L Doctorate granting institution

- Is a Land-Grant and Space-Grant single campus institution.
- **Has 19 Colleges and Schools,** among them: Engineering, Agriculture, Arts & Sciences, Business & Economics.
- **Students:**
  - @19,000 UG; 5,500 G
- **Well established research infrastructure with unique proposal development services**
- **UK’s mission to become a Top 20 public research university by 2020** (Kentucky General Assembly mandate)
Our story…

► November 4-21, 2008:
  ◦ M. Vera attended the 3-weeks NIH-Extramural Associates Residence Training in Bethesda, MD

► January 15, 2009: NIH-EARDA Award received. Project for the Establishment of the PDU starts... & Collaboration with UK’s PDO starts formally, too.

► February 20, 2009: First External Advisory Meeting held with the presence at UPRM of EAC Member Kathleen Grzech, M.A., Associate Director of U Kentucky Proposal Development Office (Mentor office/institution)
March 16 – 18, 2009: M. Vera (EA) & A. Heredia (PS) attended the UK/NIGMS 2009 Research Administrator’s Workshop – underwent intensive training on supporting PIs in developing competitive NIH R01 proposals.

March 19 – 20, 2009: Two-days stay to visit UK’s PDO facilities, meet its staff and learn about its day-to-day operation.

- Initiated training of the UPRM’s PDU Staff using UPRM examples of proposals & summary statements of non-funded proposals being considered for resubmission.

April 13, 2009: Visit to UPRM of UK Federal Relations’ William Schweri & Dr. Brent Seales (Computer Sc.) from U Kentucky - to promote collaborations between UPRM and UK.
Challenges in Securing the Relationship

- **Essential to identify a mentor with a history of outreach in research administration**
  - UK outreach – role on NIGMS grant to support faculty and research administrators at multiple universities in developing NIH proposals (Frazier, PI; Selwitz, McCullers, Grzech)
  - Prior NCRR award to enhance human subjects protections with five minority-serving institutions (Collins, PI; Selwitz)

- **Geographical/travel issues**
  - Budget and willingness to travel on both sides, technology support for web meetings and interim communications

- **Essential to select a mentor whose service model can be adapted.**
**Mentor can:**

- Offer guidance on daily operations and service challenges.
- Provide examples of office resources and input on adapting their use
  - *Workshop presentations/PowerPoints*
  - *Flyers, publicity*
  - *Web service suite (online service requests, PI proposal development resources and tools)*
  - *Database (function and user manual)*
- Discuss experiences and solutions to challenges
- Provide training in service delivery (proposal review, funding searches) and follow up
- Provide set of model operating procedures
- Recommend national resources
  - *(e.g. NCURA, AASCU Grant Resource Center, etc.)*
Positive outcomes of this mentoring relationship

- **Involvement of the UK’s PDO in:**
  - Advising on Job Description for the Proposal Specialist
    Critical step prior to recruitment
  - Guidance on how to implement UPRM - PDU Services
    - Offer & implementation of services

- **UPRM Compliance with Training Requirements:**
  - UPRM (as UKy) is now enrolled in the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative - CITI-program as an affiliated university since **July 1, 2009.**

- **New Workshops – R&DC Research Administration Academy**
  - CID 002: Grantsmanship (Aug. 2009)
  - CID 003: Compliance Issues and the use of CITI (Sept 2009)
UPRM PDU Services & Successes

Pre-submission proposal review & Resubmission Consultation/support – on-going services

- First UPRM RO1 approved after resubmission (ARRA)
- UK – PDO collaborated – Provided input on resubmission

Continued PDU Staff Training on Research Administration Issues:
PDU Staff attended NCURA Fundamentals in Sponsored Research Administration (SPA1) Workshop – July 29-31, 2009

PI/EA Directed New R&D Center Web Page Project – includes PDU
More information on services and procedure (Used UK’s OSP and PDU pages as examples)

New PDU webpage: Includes on-line request forms (eg. fund searches), as UK’s PDO pages.
Current UPRM’s Proposal Development Unit Services

- Pre-submission proposal review
- Resubmission consultation/support
- Grant related trainings/workshops
- Dissemination of funding opportunities
- Custom funding information and searches
- Serve as an agency (NIH) liaison
- Sample of funded proposals
- Written institutional descriptions

Add on:
- Support to UPRM Institutional Research Committees
- Support to R&D Center Webpage
Final Comments: How to secure this mentorship relationship?

Key: Seek mutual benefit & establish collaborations

How?

- Annual visits by UK PDO’s Associate Director to **UPRM** (5 year commitment with EARDA)
- **Continued Communications** – Support for Training on PDU Services & Advising on Research-Related Administration Issues
- Promote collaborations between UK and UPRM Professors
  - **Serve as liaison** - sponsor visits of UPRM Researchers and Students to UK
    - **Planned Visit of UK Researchers to UPRM (@ Nov 2009)** to promote Summer Research Opportunities for UPRM students at UK (e.g. Computer Sc./Eng. & Biosciences)
UPRM Research Administration R&D Center
Organizational Chart  NOW!!!

UPRM Chancellor & Board of Directors

R&D Center Director’s Office

Enhanced Pre Award Services

Administration & Services

Office of External Resources (Proposal Submission)

Proposal Development Unit – NEW!

Intellectual Property & Technology Transfer Unit – NEW!

Human Resources
Accounting and Finance
Budget
Purchasing
Information Systems
Receiving and Delivery
Maintenance Operations
Thank you!

▶ UPRM Research and Development Center