

**OAR Joint Institute Reviews
Review of Administrative Procedures**

**Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean (JISAO)
University of Washington
4909 – 25th Avenue, 1st floor
Seattle, WA 98195**

**Thursday, April 21, 2005
8:30 – 11:30 am**

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| Review Team: | John Cortinas, NOAA Cooperative Institute Program Manager and Mike Nelson, Director, NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD), Kathleen Jewett, NWFSC |
| JISAO Administration: | Fred Averick, Budget Analyst, Betsy Blinks, Office Assistant, Meena Chopra, Budget Analyst, Adrienne Karpov, CIG Program Manager, Cara MariAnna, Payroll Coordinator, Marjorie Reeves, Administrative Specialist, Mary Smith, Administrator, Mike Wallace, Director |
| UW Administration, Office of Vice Provost for Research: | Helen MacQueen, Special Assistant to the Vice Provost for Research |
| UW Human Resources: | Andrea McAuliff, Employment Specialist and Erin Rice, Senior HR Consultant |
| UW Office of Sponsored Programs: | Wendy Robertson, Grant and Contract Administrator |
| PMEL Administration: | Cynthia Loitsch, Program Support Offdicer, Gayle Elkins, Management Analyst |

1. Proposal procedures: How does the Institute select proposals to request funding from NOAA? What procedures are in place to request proposals by theme or task?

During the preparation of each Cooperative Agreement, the JISAO administration solicits interest from a broad range of established and potential Principal Investigators on the UW campus, as well as at PMEL, whose research falls within the four JISAO themes of: Climate, Marine Ecosystems, Environmental Chemistry and Coastal Oceanography. The response to this effort constitutes the initial basis for the five-year proposal that usually includes many long-term, ongoing projects, as well as new ideas. There are also provisions to include new projects that may be proposed after the initial award has been made, over the course of the 5-year period.

The JISAO staff provides information on the preparation and submission of grants through a variety of resources. A UW Researcher's Guide is available on the web at <http://www.washington.edu/research/guide/>. It has all the information a PI needs to create, process and submit a grant. Also, regular, updated information on current research opportunities is available to all Institute employees, as well as to the public, in the

administrative section of the JISAO administrative website at <http://www.jisao.washington.edu> This information includes other funding opportunities through NOAA, and also through NSF and other agencies. Potential PIs are periodically reminded of the information on this website via meetings held by JISAO's administrative staff at PMEL and UW departments and through email communications.

2. How does the JI/University/Institution ensure compliance with OMB circulars, Department of Commerce regulations and NOAA grant conditions?

All JISAO grants are processed through the University of Washington's Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), which serves as the "Control Office" and the ultimate authority for ensuring compliance. However, the responsibility for managing and ensuring compliance is shared through a structured system of checks and balances between OSP, the JISAO administration, the PMEL administration, the UW Office of the Vice Provost for Research, and the UW departmental chairs and deans within the PIs' academic units. A chart of compliance roles and responsibilities is available on a link off the OSP home page at <http://www.washington.edu/research/osp/>.

All of the university's regulations regarding grants and contracts are detailed in the *University Handbook* and the *Administrative Policy Statements*, both available through the Administrative Gateway at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/>. Additional information is detailed in the UW Grants Information Memoranda (GIMs), <http://www.washington.edu/research/osp/>. Quoting from the OSP GIM web page, "Grants Information Memoranda are statements of policy related to grant and contract issues. General University policies and procedures related to grants and contracts are outlined in the *University Handbook* and the *Administrative Policy Statements*. There are, however, some unique and more restrictive policies related to grants and contracts imposed by the funding agencies. Special statements of policy are sometimes required related to grant and contract issues. These additional requirements, instructions and explanations are embodied in a series of numbered Grants Information Memoranda that are posted at <http://www.washington.edu/research/osp/gim/>. Questions related to any of the Grants Information Memoranda or to other University Policy and Procedure documents concerning sponsored activity support may be referred to Office of Sponsored Programs at 206-543-4043."

Principal Investigators are required to attend a formal training in grants management and compliance, sponsored by OSP. After the initial in-person session, they must update their knowledge every three years via a web-based instructional system. The PIs are informed of this regulation several times per year and directed to the Faculty Grants Management Program information at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/traindev/fgm.html>.

The Institute's administrative staff are required to know and follow all OSP and funding agency procedures, as well as all of the university's regulations regarding not only grants administration, but all regulations that govern the operations and business side of JISAO, as outlined in the above documents. The staff works closely with both the UW and PMEL administration on ensuring compliance with all agency regulations. The *JISAO Operations Manual*, updated annually and located in the administrative section of the

JISAO home page, and appended to this document, is an additional reference for staff that outlines the infrastructure and procedures of JISAO administrative operations and also serves as a reference for auditors and others who require this level of detail.

3. How does the JI/University/Institution ensure compliance with internal grant policies?

JISAO's infrastructure is a system of checks and balances that is designed to ensure compliance in all areas of financial and operations management, fitting into the larger systems of checks and balances within the UW and PMEL. It was designed to meet auditing standards and best practices, as well as the requirements of all of its partner agencies. This system includes: grants and contracts, ICR and state budgets, human resources management, facilities, equipment inventory, and any other areas that relate to the business of supporting the Institute's research activities. These procedures are detailed in the *JISAO Operations Manual* appended to this document and located on the web at http://www.jisao.washington.edu/JISAO_admin/JISAO_DOCS/Document_Index.htm.

4. What are your formal and informal mechanisms for communications between JI and University/Institutions administrative/finance offices? Who are the NOAA contacts (admin & technical)?

JISAO's philosophy on administration is that it should serve to facilitate the research activities and mission of the institute. This requires staff to always strive to provide the best support possible, while also ensuring compliance with all the regulations of the collaborating agencies. Communication plays a key role in these services and is a particular challenge because JISAO's partners are scattered throughout campus, at the PMEL host lab, about 3 miles away, and at NOAA headquarters, NSF and other agencies.

The JISAO administration has been working to develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with all partners. To accomplish this, JISAO staff communicate regularly via email and phone, but also initiate regular, formal meetings as needed with PMEL and UW departmental staff to discuss any changes or updated information regarding policies and procedures related to all administrative operations (i.e., financial, grants and contracts, HR and general issues). Over the past year, the JISAO staff has met with PMEL staff about once per quarter to discuss all aspects of administration -- from changes in the HR policies (performance reviews, hiring procedures, etc.) to new grant and contract information (new UW electronic system and grants.gov, etc.), to ensuring that everyone is aware of the JISAO administrative website that is meant to be the main point of contact for information and to initiate many of our procedures.

In addition, JISAO staff met twice over the past year with UW departmental administrators on such topics as improving communication, grant procedures, equipment inventory coordination, etc. A copy of the minutes from a meeting held on November 18, 2004, is shown at the end of the *Operations Manual*.

The NOAA contacts for JISAO are Dennis Moore, Leader, Ocean Climate Research Division, Cynthia Loitsch and Gayle Elkins, Administrators. There is constant communication via phone and email between the two administrations, and the NOAA personnel always attend the quarterly meetings of the JISAO-UW staff at PMEL. There

are formal mechanisms in place to request amendments to the Cooperative Agreement through funding letters, and this procedure is completed by the JISAO grants specialists and the PMEL administrator. The funding letter package must first go through UW channels with approvals and signatures from the JISAO administration, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and any related UW departments involved. OSP is the final stop in the process and it must review and give approval before the packet is sent to PMEL. JISAO staff collaborate with PMEL and UW staff on all aspects of administering the Cooperative Agreement and other grants awarded to the institute.

5. How do you ensure compliance with university/institution human resources policies in such matters as: hiring, resignations, promotions, salary scales, disciplinary actions, etc.?

The framework for compliance with university, state and federal human resources policies is similar to that for grants and contracts and all other administrative functions at UW. There is a complex system of checks and balances that ensures compliance in all areas of human resources that is a collaborative effort between JISAO's administration, the UW's Human Resources Operations and Compensation Offices, the PMEL administration and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, as well as any other involved UW departments. The JISAO employees who serve as supervisors are updated regularly on new information regarding hiring, resignations, performance reviews, promotions, salary increases, disciplinary actions, etc. The meetings that the JISAO staff hold at PMEL and in UW departments cover this information, and it is also posted on the administrative section of the JISAO website at <http://jisao.washington.edu/> and in the *JISAO Operations Manual*. Complete University of Washington HR information is located at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/>. An excerpt from the *JISAO Operations Manual* describes the current system in place to ensure compliance:

JISAO Human Resources Management and Supervision

JISAO follows all UW, state and federal regulations regarding human resources management. Information on UW Human Resources is found at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/>. The administrator serves as the JISAO human resources manager, in collaboration with the UW and PMEL administrations. Responsibilities include: managing the hiring process; overseeing the performance review process; providing counsel and information to supervisors and employees on federal, state and university human resources regulations and policies; initiating personnel actions, such as merit reviews, promotions, in-grade salary increases; and handling disciplinary processes as necessary. The administrator directly supervises the JISAO administrative staff. Extensive experience and training in human resources management and in effective supervisory skills are required.

The administrator provides consultation on information regarding communication, conflict resolution, proactive problem solving and team building, facilitates staff training and disseminates information as needed. The administrator promotes good working relationships and open communication with all staff, faculty and students, and all other personnel and agencies dealing with JISAO.

All personnel appointments are coordinated through the administrator's office, in collaboration with PMEL and the UW HR Operations and Compensation Offices, including new hires, promotion paperwork, visa requests, etc., ensuring correct procedures are followed and documents are complete for submission to the appropriate offices for processing. The administrative specialist works with the administrator on these actions.

To ensure compliance with University and federal regulations, the administrator and administrative specialist initiate, manage and track the hiring process, including new position advertisements, maintaining appropriate contact with applicants and keeping accurate records of applications. For employees who handle hiring of personnel, the administrator will provide access to training on the new UW online hiring system, which is found at: <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/>. Additionally, the administrator provides consultation to staff members on the process of writing position upgrades and job descriptions, procedure interpretation, etc.

The administrator maintains human resources files for faculty and staff, including CVs, job descriptions, promotion documents, performance evaluations, and training records and sends appropriate documents to the UW HR Department for filing in official personnel records. The administrator identifies and participates in HR training courses to add to job skills, as desired/required since the position is dynamic and evolving as JISAO changes. Training courses are also available to all JISAO administrative and scientific staff.

6. Who supervises JI employees working in NOAA facilities? How is this implemented on site and reported (e.g., leave and performance evaluations)?

A formal structure of JISAO/UW supervisors responsible for JISAO/UW employees at PMEL was developed a couple of years ago. Many in this group have been trained through the UW's Strategic Leadership Program and, informally, by the JISAO administration and UW HR representatives. These trainings include hiring and promotion procedures, how to conduct performance reviews and disciplinary actions and how to assist employees in the area of professional development.

It is JISAO's policy that all human resources actions are approved and initiated by the JISAO/UW supervisor. The PMEL administrator and the PMEL advisors participate in a collaborative process with the UW supervisor to give input and to ensure that finances are available for personnel changes and that equity issues are checked. All JISAO employee timesheets and leave records are approved and signed monthly by the JISAO/UW supervisors.

7. Reports and requests to NOAA -- how is the JI informed when the University/Institution formally sends in the financial reports and annual technical reports?

The UW Grant and Contract Accounting office (GCA) is responsible for completing all formal financial reports on UW grants and contracts, and information on their

procedures is at <http://www.washington.edu/research/gca/office/>. The JISAO administration works with this office on a continual basis in the ongoing accounting work of managing grants and also on closing out budgets and providing necessary financial information for final financial reports. GCA sends the final copy of the financial report to NOAA, with copies to the PI and the JISAO grants office.

Funding requests are sent to the PMEL administrator after they have been approved by the JISAO director/administrator, any involved UW departments, Office of the Vice Provost for Research, and OSP. Other reports and requests for information are usually handled between the JISAO director/administrator and the OAR/JI program officer.

Two types of monthly financial reports are prepared by the JISAO grants staff: 1) updates for the use of PIs in planning and projecting their grants; 2) expenditure reports for the PMEL administration on the Task II budget for salaries, services/supplies and travel.

The JISAO director and administrator prepare annual technical reports with input from all JISAO researchers. These reports are submitted to NOAA/OAR each fall.

8. How are other formal requests to NOAA communicated between the JI, University/Institution (e.g. large equipment purchases, sub-grants)?
 - a. **Equipment:** Equipment is strictly controlled by both the UW Purchasing Department and the Equipment Inventory office. The definition of what is considered to be equipment and related information is at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/APS/61.02.html> JISAO has a purchasing procedure that is described on the administrative website at http://www.jisao.washington.edu/JISAO_admin/PURCHASING/PURCHASING.htm All equipment purchases must be initiated on a JISAO purchasing request form and approved by the PI of the budget on which it is being purchased. Once the purchase is made, JISAO has a procedure for tracking the item that follows the UW and federal regulations on keeping an inventory of these items. Once an item is no longer needed, there is a controlled surplus property system and any items originally purchased with federal funds must go through a special process of review and approval before they can be surplus.
 - b. **Subcontracts:** Subcontracts, whether they are being granted to other institutions by UW or granted to a UW PI through another institution, must follow the same procedures as any other grant application. Any required funding agency forms must be completed, along with the necessary UW forms and a letter of intent from the PI must be submitted through the UW approval process (JISAO administration, other UW departments, Office of Vice Provost for Research, OSP, etc.) before a subcontract can be established.
9. Demo of electronic communications (e.g., preparation of required financial reports from univ/Inst. fiscal data).

The UW Office of Grant and Contract Accounting, in collaboration with the JISAO administration, completes the official, final financial report for all grants awarded. Other financial reports are prepared by the JISAO grants staff, who provide regular, monthly

updates for the PI on all budgets and also submit monthly reports to the PMEL administrator with detailed expenditure spreadsheets on Task II salaries, services/supplies and travel. The data comes from the UW BAR/BSR financial system and from information that the staff maintains that has not yet reached the BAR system. A demonstration of this process can be done for the Review Team. A detailed description of the procedures followed by the grants staff in this area is found in the JISAO Operations Manual.

10. Publications, property and intellectual property records (demo view of these).

- a. **JISAO Publications:** There is a system established that requires the lead author of any new JISAO publication to contact JISAO staff to obtain a “contribution number.” When all of the publication information is available, the author(s) submit it to the JISAO publication coordinator who enters it into a publications database. The JISAO Publications policy is posted at:
http://www.jisao.washington.edu/JISAO_admin/PUB_CONTRIBUTIONS/publication_policy.htm

- b. **UW Property – Equipment Inventory System:**

As with all other administrative procedures at UW, the equipment purchase and tracking system is multi-layered to ensure compliance with UW and funding agency regulations. The office responsible for administering this system is the UW Equipment Inventory Office,

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/finacct/eio/office/> UW’s Equipment

Accountability Policies are located at

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/eio/fedreports/fedaud.html> JISAO’s

administrative specialist keeps a detailed tracking system of all JISAO equipment that has been purchased, in collaboration with the equipment inventory system of the UW.

- b. **Intellectual Property.** There is an intricate support system for intellectual property protection and control through the UW TechTransfer office. The JISAO director and administrator are responsible for managing this process, in collaboration with the UW TechTransfer office. Following is an excerpt from the *JISAO Operations Manual*:

“Should there be a need, the administrator is responsible for creating a plan to ensure protection of JISAO’s intellectual property and any products developed, in compliance with UW procedures for copyrighted and intellectual materials. This plan should be developed in collaboration with the UW’s Tech Transfer Office. Information on this office is at:

<http://depts.washington.edu/techtran/> The administrator would facilitate the process by directing the development and implementation of technology transfer documents, including participation, licensing and royalty agreements.”

Additional information for PIs on managing their intellectual property is available at <http://www.washington.edu/research/guide/intellectual.html>

(NOTE: See appendices for the JISAO Operations Manual and an example of minutes from a collaboration meeting between JISAO staff and other UW administrators.)