

SYNOPSIS:

The UHD Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) experienced a change in leadership and reduction in staffing in 2022. Between the period of January 2023 – January 2024, ORSP has experienced numerous, repeated, and egregious failures in pre-award services, post-award services, compliance, and communication.

These failures include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to process data use agreements with collaborating institutions;
- Delayed processing and executing grant award contracts;
- Delays in executing subcontract agreements with collaborating partners and institutions;
- Delays in scheduling grant kick-off meetings;
- Delays or failures to process invoices and expenditures to vendors and collaborating institutions;
- Delayed or failure to respond to time-sensitive faculty and staff e-mails;
- Abrogation of traditional duties in post-award and compliance to faculty;
- Failure to submit grant applications and required financial progress reports to granting agencies by agency deadlines;
- Failure or delays to submit requests for No-Cost-Extensions; and
- Delays in setting up grant cost centers and loading of grant budgets.

The UHD Faculty Senate was formally notified of these failures by presentation of a partial list of failures of ORSP over the calendar year by Chair's Council. The Provost has been made aware of these failures throughout the year by the affected faculty and staff, and failed to take immediate and corrective action(s) to address the problems. It was not until recently that the Provost's Office retained outside consultants to independently and comprehensively examine ORSP and the university systems it relies on for support and effective continuity of services.

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS, the actions or inaction of ORSP has denied faculty and staff the opportunity to receive grant funding;

WHEREAS, the actions or inaction of ORSP has resulted in awarded grant dollars remaining unspent and being returned to granting agencies;

WHEREAS, the actions or inaction of ORSP has diminished the reputation of UHD with collaborating institutions, vendors, and funding agencies;

WHEREAS, the actions or inaction of ORSP has sacrificed the trust and confidence that UHD faculty have in it;

WHEREAS, the actions or inaction of ORSP has compromised the individual and collective scholarship of the UHD faculty;

WHEREAS, ORSP has abandoned its service-oriented mission to faculty, staff and students;

WHEREAS, the UHD Provost has not filled the open staff position for compliance with an individual with appropriate expertise and whose sole responsibility is compliance;

WHEREAS, the UHD Provost has failed to transparently take urgent corrective action in response to accumulating failures of ORSP;

WHEREAS, the UHD Provost and/or ORSP have not taken direct, transparent action to correct, mitigate, or compensate the lost time, lost resources, direct harm, and destruction of trust to individual faculty and staff negatively affected; and

WHEREAS, the nature of faculty members' meetings and interactions with the hired consultants produced evidence to support 1) doubts concerning the independence of the retained consultants; 2) questions about whether the consultants' report can and will comprehensively judge UHD's system components' contribution to the problems with ORSP, inclusive of the Provost's Office; and 3) concerns about whether the university followed the normal contract bidding processes to hire the consultants.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate requests that the Provost present a root cause analysis and enact a detailed and transparent short-, medium-, and long-term plan to the campus by 3/22/24 to rectify the problems in ORSP, install visionary and competent leadership and staff in ORSP, return the office to a competent, service-oriented unit within academic affairs, and provide a transparent explanation concerning how the retained consultants were identified, selected, and hired.