

# Research@KU

Updates on the Lawrence campus from the Vice Provost for Research



## KUCR Opens Research Proposal Services Office in Strong Hall

The KU Center for Research has opened a branch office in Strong Hall to assist faculty with the submission of externally-funded research grants. Staff from Proposal Services at KUCR will be in 222 Strong on a regular basis. Researchers may drop off proposals for review or discuss a proposal with staff.

“Strong Hall is convenient for faculty,” said Jim Roberts, vice provost for research. “They won’t need to come to Youngberg for these services. Having a visible presence on the main campus will also give faculty a better understanding of all the other services KUCR has to offer.”

Planning for the Strong Hall office has been under way for the past year. The recently announced temporary relocation of staff from the south wing of Youngberg makes the Strong Hall office even more timely.

“Most of Proposal Services is now at the Life Sciences Research Laboratory at 15th and Wakarusa,” said Roberts, “and will be for five to six months while we renovate the Youngberg heating and air conditioning systems. Having a branch office in Strong means faculty can get help just a few steps from Jayhawk Boulevard.”

Brad Bernet, Nancy Biles, and Maile Fincher of Proposal Services are housed in Strong Hall, along with one student employee. While KUCR will have an office in Strong on a permanent basis, Roberts said the units located there may change over time as the needs of researchers change.

As part of the Youngberg relocation, Sponsored Program Administration and Contract Negotiations are moving to the Wakarusa Research Facility. Staff in Human Subjects and Research Training are moving to the Multidisciplinary Research Building. These temporary moves do not affect phone numbers or e-mail addresses for the affected offices and staff. More information about the relocation, including individual office locations, is available online at <http://www.research.ku.edu/hvac>.

## KU Research Summit Planned January 16

The Office of the Vice Provost for Research and the Faculty Senate will host a KU Research Summit on Tuesday, January 16 in Wescoe Hall. Researchers in all disciplines, including graduate students and post-docs, are welcome to attend.

The free summit is patterned after KU’s successful annual teaching summit, held during the week before the start of classes in the fall. The half-day meeting will begin in the morning, with opening remarks, followed by three 50-minute break-out sessions. Each session will offer a variety of topics for participants to choose from. The summit will conclude with a feedback session and box lunch.

“The purpose of the summit is to foster a conversation about research,” said Jim Roberts, vice provost for research. “It is part of promoting a culture at KU that says we can compete with anyone for graduate students, funded grants, and prestigious awards.”

The idea for a research summit grew out of the KU Research Convocation in November. “The question session at the end of the convocation was very useful,” said Ruth Ann Atchley, associate professor of psychology and chair of the Faculty Senate. “I approached Jim about extending and broadening that kind of discussion, using the teaching summit model. He was very open to that idea. So was the provost.”

The topics and facilitators for the KU Research Summit are being finalized. The complete agenda will be posted soon at <http://www.research.ku.edu/researchsummit>. Participants are asked to pre-register no later than January 10.

December 2006

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Research@KU is produced by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. For more information, please contact Christine Foshier, OVPR Research Communications, [cfoshier@ku.edu](mailto:cfoshier@ku.edu).

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The University of Kansas

## Construction Begins on Phase III of the Structural Biology Center

Site clearance for the construction of Phase III of KU's Structural Biology Center (SBC) began on the West Campus just before Thanksgiving. The site for the addition to the existing SBC, dedicated in 2004, is east of the Multidisciplinary Research Building, dedicated in March. Completion of the \$16 million core research facility is expected in December 2007.

## Spring 2007 Undergraduate Assistant (URA) Fund Applications Due December 15

Undergraduate Research Assistant (URA) Fund applications for spring 2007 are due 5 p.m., Friday, December 15.

Applications must be submitted by e-mail to [jaugusto@ku.edu](mailto:jaugusto@ku.edu) or via paper copy delivered to 320 Multidisciplinary Research Building by the deadline.

The vice provost for research will assign a faculty review committee to oversee the URA Fund awards. The review committee will work to ensure that the URA positions awarded represent the broad spectrum of disciplines and research methods at KU.

These criteria will be considered during the selection process:

- Description of the undergraduate research assistant's role in the faculty's research program;
- How the student's work will contribute to the student's learning about research within his/her discipline;
- Matching funds from other sources to support undergraduate research;
- The faculty member's current and past mentoring of undergraduates and/or graduate students; and
- Research and publication activities of the applicant.

For more information, contact John Augusto, research training coordinator, [jaugusto@ku.edu](mailto:jaugusto@ku.edu) or 864-7351.

## Research Administration

### National Science Foundation releases revised Grants.gov application guide

The [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#) released an amended version of the guide for preparation and submission of NSF applications via the Grants.gov online document system. The revised guide, released Nov. 17, is available for download from <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/manuals/grantsgovguide606.pdf>.

### Changes in standing receipt dates for NIH/AHRQ/NIOSH in 2007

Due to the transition to electronic submission via [Grants.gov](#), the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\)](#), and [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#) have changed the standard receipt dates for grant applications effective January 2007. Some of the new receipt dates are earlier than previous years, while others are later. The new receipt dates apply to both paper and electronic applications. More information about the changes is available at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-07-001.html>.

### OVPR staff changes

The following staff changes occurred during November:

- Tracie Watkins, grant specialist, sponsored program administration.

## Researchers in the News

### KU researchers head to Antarctica to test unpiloted aircraft

<http://www.news.ku.edu/2006/december/4/meridian.shtml>

Rick Hale, associate professor of aerospace engineering, is working with researchers at the Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets to build the Meridian Unmanned Aerial Vehicle.

### KU researcher wins protein prediction competition

<http://www.news.ku.edu/2006/november/21/zhang.shtml>

Yang Zhang, assistant professor of molecular biosciences, won first place in the automated server predictions category at the Critical Assessment of Structure Prediction competition.

[Continued >>](#)

## Upcoming Events

December 15

Spring 2007 undergraduate research assistant (URA) fund applications due 5 p.m.

Contact: John Augusto, [jaugusto@ku.edu](mailto:jaugusto@ku.edu)

January 16

Research Summit

<http://www.research.ku.edu/researchsummit>

researchsummit

Contact: Kevin Boatright, [kboatright@ku.edu](mailto:kboatright@ku.edu)

January 23

National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) video workshop on Sponsored Projects Essentials

10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Simons Auditorium, Higuchi Biosciences Center

RSVP information TBD

### KU researchers investigate effects of marriage, family on women in science

<http://www.news.ku.edu/2006/november/27/stem.shtml>

Karen Multon, professor and chair of the department of psychology and research in education, and Barbara Kerr, Distinguished Professor of Counseling Psychology, received a grant to research how a woman's relationship with a significant other may impact her career.

### KU researchers explore disease through tiny roundworm

<http://www.news.ku.edu/2006/december/1/worm.shtml>

Lisa Timmons, assistant professor of molecular biosciences, and Erik Lundquist, associate professor of molecular biosciences, use the worm *aenorhabditis elegans*, or *C. elegans*, to study human diseases.

### KU researcher to head scientific society

<http://www.kgs.ku.edu/General/News/2006/mandel.html>

Rolfe Mandel, associate scientist at the Kansas Geological Survey and associate professor anthropology, was elected to head up the **American Quaternary Association**.

## Research Integrity Issues

### Theoretical Case Study: Congruence or Conflict of Interest?

A KU researcher in the department of Physics, Dr. Roy G. Biv, is filling out his annual Conflict of Interest (COI) report. His spouse, Bev, co-owns and is employed by Kaleidoscope, a company that produces multimedia materials. On the COI form Roy correctly answers "No" to the questions of whether or not he has significant financial interests in a business related to his area of research. Although Bev's ownership, income and office in the company meet the dollar thresholds of significance on the COI form, her work has no relationship to Roy's research and therefore should not be disclosed on the COI form.

During the year, Roy collaborates with a colleague from the School of Education to submit a grant proposal to develop and test multimedia materials to teach concepts in his area of specialization. The proposal budget includes a subcontract to have the educational materials produced. Roy and his Co-I see Bev's company, Kaleidoscope, as the perfect choice to produce the materials. Kaleidoscope has done similar work for other clients with good success and Bev is far more familiar with the nature of Roy's project than another contractor would be. This situation is more of a congruence of interests than a conflict of interests!

*Would hiring Kaleidoscope on the proposed project constitute a conflict of interest for Dr. Biv?*

Yes. A potential conflict of interest arises once Roy proposes a project that could involve a company in which he, his spouse or other household member have a significant financial interest.

An actual conflict of interest would arise if Bev's company were awarded the subcontract. An outside observer might reasonably suspect that project funds from public sources were being preferentially directed on the basis of the marital relationship, for personal gain, and without regard for finding the best and least expensive company for the job. At this point, whether or not Roy's preference for Kaleidoscope is biased and whether or not the company actually is the best choice for the job are moot. The PI has decision-making authority over the project budget and has decided to direct project funds to his spouse. The situation needs to be reported and managed.

*What should be done?*

The first step would be for Roy to file an ad hoc COI report disclosing his spouse's financial interest in a business that has suddenly become related to his research activities. (Ad hoc COI reports can be filed through the online Web site, <https://webapp.research.ku.edu/COI/home.html> or the COI form can be downloaded from the Research Integrity Web site, <http://www.research.ku.edu/kucr/forms/comp/coi.shtml>.) Disclosure is important at the proposal stage because a

conflict of interest must have an approved management plan in place before award funds are spent. In addition, depending on the funding agency, KUCR may be required to disclose the conflict to the agency at the time of the proposal.

After filling out the ad hoc report, Roy meets with his chair to discuss the issue and obtain her signature. Roy and his chair opt to draft a short management plan to submit with the COI report. Roy's chair will be responsible for overseeing the management plan. The completed report is passed to their dean for the final signature and the fully-executed form is forwarded to Research Integrity. Research Integrity arranges for Roy's report to be reviewed by the COI committee. After some correspondence between the committee, Roy and his chair to refine the plan, the COI committee recommends approval. Final approval of the management plan is made by the vice provost for research.

*What management strategies would be appropriate for a situation such as Roy's?*

The purpose of this management plan is to ensure that the choice of subcontractor is objective and based on the best candidate for the project. Management strategies might include a) the PI's recusal from the decision on the subcontractor (note that the decision should not be handed down to someone who reports to the PI), b) approval of the subcontractor by peers not involved with the project, c) documentation of the decision on the subcontractor, and d) public acknowledgement of the relationship.

*What happens when the project is over?*

When the project is over and Bev's company once again has no relation to Roy's research activities, then Roy should submit a new COI report and attach a note to the effect that the previously reported disclosure no longer exists. This way Roy's chair is notified when she signs the new report that her obligation to oversee his management plan is over, and Research Integrity can update its disclosure records. Since the reduction of a conflict is not as critical as the occurrence, it is acceptable for Roy to wait for the annual reporting cycle to file this change in COI status.

*Next month:* Six common techniques used to manage conflicts of interest.

The December Funding Opportunities Bulletin is available online at  
[http://www.research.ku.edu/kucr/fundops/bulletin/2006/fob06\\_12.pdf](http://www.research.ku.edu/kucr/fundops/bulletin/2006/fob06_12.pdf).