

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR
RESEARCH & GRADUATE STUDIES**

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To: All Faculty, Deans and Department Administrators.

From: Kenneth J. Soprano, Ph.D.

Re: **Grants.Gov and Revised Grant Submission Procedure**

Date: March 20, 2006

Over the past few months there has been a great deal of information and misinformation circulated about grant.gov and electronic transmission of grant proposals to federal agencies. The purpose of this memo is to review some of this information and notify all of you of the procedures which our office will use to submit grants via the system that has been established by the federal government. Please understand that to a certain extent, this is a work in progress and is likely to change as the system is used by all of us "in the field." The goal of my office and staff has been to make this transition as painless as possible for the investigator. We will continue to review the grant submission process and revise our internal procedures to achieve this goal. We welcome feedback and comments from you!

Background

- OMB guidance - By the end of FY 2006 75% of proposal submissions to most federal agencies will be via *grants.gov* (100% in FY 2007).
- The *grants.gov* system is still in relative infancy and is experiencing associated growing pains: servers cannot handle a large volume of proposal submissions at one time; it frequently takes many attempts to submit a proposal (i.e. log in, submit, receive confirmation); for technical reasons unknown, the *grants.gov* system "freezes up" and access is not possible (sometimes for days).
- As of now, *grants.gov* is merely a standardized proposal submission mechanism. Once submitted, the proposals are transferred to the appropriate federal agency. Most agencies will convert the proposals to their own grants management systems (FastLane, NIH Commons, IIPS (DOE), etc.).
- NIH has added an additional required step – once the *grants.gov* submission is converted to NIH commons, within two days both the PI and the Signing Official (SO) must log into NIH Commons and "sign" to validate the proposal. NIH will send

notification of this requirement to the PI and SO for each proposal. The December 1, 2005 NIH SBIR/STTR submissions was the first time this procedure was used.

- For all submissions, the date/time the proposal is received by *grants.gov* is considered the official proposal receipt date. *Grants.gov* does a cursory check to make sure all the sections are completed. When the proposals are reviewed by the respective agencies, if a problem is encountered applicants will be given the opportunity to make corrections. HOWEVER, if the corrections are not submitted by the ORIGINAL due date, the proposal may be considered late. NIH has confirmed this policy; NSF is formulating its policy.

Solution

- PIs making last-minute proposal submissions risk running into problems with *grants.gov* and risk non-acceptance by funding agencies because of lateness. This scenario would be especially aggravated when many proposals are due at the same time, e.g. NIH standard deadlines, NSF CAREER deadlines, NSF submission windows, overlapping agency due dates.
- To ensure properly completed proposals are received at agencies on time, OVPR should be able to submit *grants.gov* proposals at least three working days before the due date.
- Our office hours will remain Monday-Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM to assist in any way possible during those times only.
- *Grants.gov* is the new world order. Temple's proposal/research volume is only going to increase.

NEW PROCEDURE EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2006

- *Grants.gov* proposal submissions – fully completed proposals with a signed SPAF (approval form) must be received in OVPR a minimum of **five** working days prior to the agency deadline.
- All other proposal submissions – fully completed proposals with a signed SPAF (approval form) must be received in OVPR a minimum of **three** working days prior to the agency deadline.
- **Proposals not meeting the above submission criteria run the risk of not being submitted.**