

Special RAN Q&A Session:
**Impacts of COVID-19 on
sponsored projects**



Moderator:

Mary Jo Daniel, Ph.D., Director, Faculty Research Development Office

Panelists:

Rosa Gonzalez-Rosenblatt, Director, Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP)

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Agenda

- OSP/C&G Offices and overview of OMB memo (M-20-17)
- Overview of available resources and information
- Summary of exceptions for COVID-19
- Q&A Session

OSP/C&G Offices

- Office hours remain 8am-5pm, all staff working remotely
- Workload remains constant in each of the offices
- Research still a big part of UNM even under limited operations!
- Research Administrators' work extremely valuable

Overview of OMB Memo M-20-17

Office of Management and Budget (OMB):

- M-20-17 [Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) due to Loss of Operations](#) (3/19/20)
 - Provides administrative relief to recipients of Federal funds by the loss of operational capacity
 - Authorizes Federal awarding agencies to grant exceptions as they deem appropriate
 - Refer to [COGR's Federal Agency Guidance Matrix](#) to see how each Federal agency is applying these exceptions

Overview of available resources and information

Council on Governmental Relations (COGR):

- Institutional and Agency Responses to COVID-19 and Additional Resources:

<https://www.cogr.edu/institutional-and-agency-responses-covid-19-and-additional-resources>

- **Agency Guidance Specific to Federal Award Impact**
 - [COGR's Federal Agency Guidance Matrix](#)
- **Institutional Guidance**
- **Additional Resources**

Overview of available resources and information

UNM General Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information:

<http://www.unm.edu/coronavirus/>

<http://www.unm.edu/coronavirus/guidance-for-unm-regarding-covid-19.html>

Coronavirus Guidance for UNM Employees:

<https://hr.unm.edu/cv19>

Overview of available resources and information

UNM Research Guidance:

[Statement from VPR and Executive Vice-Chancellor on Research Activity during Stay-at-Home Order](#) (3/25/20)

[Temporary Restrictions on Student Access to Research Laboratories and Facilities](#) (3/20/20)

[Face-to-Face Human Subjects Research Activities Restricted](#) (3/20/20)

[COVID-19 Preparedness](#) (3/13/20)

Overview of available resources and information

Graduate Studies:

<https://grad.unm.edu/about/coronavirus.html>

Office of Sponsored Projects / Contract & Grant Accounting:

<http://cgacct.unm.edu/agency-updates.html>

- I. UNM Institutional Guidance
- II. UNM Research Guidance
- III. COGR Guidance and Resources
- IV. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidance

Summary of exceptions for COVID-19

- Flexibility with application deadlines
- No-cost extensions (NCEs) on expiring awards
- Allowability of salaries and other project activities
- Allowability of costs not normally chargeable to awards
- Prior approval requirement waivers
- Extension of financial, performance, and other reporting
- Extension of closeout

NOTE: Refer to [COGR's Federal Agency Guidance Matrix](#) for specific Federal agency guidance.

Q&A Session

Q: Are standard submission dates for federal grants being delayed during this time?

A: In some cases, yes. Check the [COGR website](#) and look for specific guidance issued by your federal sponsor.

Q&A Session

Q: Are private foundations in NM and across the country adjusting or changing upcoming deadlines for submission?

A: In some cases, yes. Check the foundation websites and with your individual sponsor.

Q&A Session

Q: Are some sponsors more flexible with submission deadlines compared to others?

A: It depends on the sponsor. Sponsors are posting the impact to existing deadline dates on their respective websites. Check the sponsors website for exact information.

Q&A Session

Q: What is the impact on grant award issuance?

A: We have not seen any impact to grant award issuance. The volume of awards is consistent with normal operations.

Q&A Session

Q: What are the potential changes to funding priorities?

A: Congress recently passed the CARES Act, which does appropriate funding for institutions of higher education, specifically focused on research. Details are forthcoming; therefore, check sponsor websites for more information. Private foundations may be making changes to their funding priorities as they develop new requests for proposals. Specific information should be included in solicitations.

Q&A Session

Q: How do I find funding opportunities related to COVID-19?

A: The OVPR website has been updated with a designated section on COVID-19. Information related to funding opportunities will be added to the site regularly; however, agencies are sending out information on a minute-by-minute basis, so it is best for PIs to keep in close contact with Program Officers or check sponsor websites daily for new applicable funding opportunities.

Q&A Session

Q: What should PIs do if they have research ideas related to COVID-19?

A: PIs should start by discussing ideas with Program Officers within sponsor agencies. Program Officers may be able to point PIs to viable funding sources. As Federal appropriations related to COVID-19 are passed by Congress, funding opportunities are being developed under emergency solicitations. Emergency solicitation are allowed to be posted for less than 30 days, so it is best to keep in close contact with sponsors.

Q&A Session

Q: What is OSP doing to ensure emergency solicitations get reviewed and submitted in time?

A: The Proposal Team in OSP has available appointments for Comprehensive Reviews. In accordance with the current process, proposal will at least receive Essential Component Reviews prior to being submitted to sponsors, but we will work to schedule Comprehensive Reviews as time allows.

Q&A Session

Q: Do federal agencies have the ability to address adjustments to scope of work changes as they relate to programmatic delivery problems?

A: It depends, agencies have been asked to be flexible, but final determination should be made by the sponsors.

Q&A Session

Q: Much of the performance based stuff we do cannot proceed as long as we can't gather in groups. Will periods of performance be extended as necessary?

A: In most cases, yes. Check the [COGR website](#) and look for specific guidance issued by your federal sponsor.

Q&A Session

Q: Will there be extensions due to the impact on federal deadlines?

A: In most cases, yes. Most Federal agencies are offering no cost extensions (NCEs) if the project is getting ready to end. Check the [COGR website](#) and look for specific guidance on performance reporting and closeout extension issued by your federal sponsor.

Q&A Session

Q: Can we get reimbursement for cancelled trips, specifically for airfare cost?

A: In most cases, yes. Check the [COGR website](#) and look for specific agency guidance on allowability of costs for cancelled trips.

Q&A Session

Q: Is there any projection at this time as to when travel restrictions might be eased?

A: No. At this time, we have no indication when travel restrictions will be eased. It is best to check with the [UNM Coronavirus Information](#) for domestic travel restrictions and the [Department of State website](#) for international travel restrictions.

Q&A Session

Q: I have undergraduate students working in DOE sponsored projects. They typically perform work in the lab as needed. Due to the limitations, they are not allowed to go back in the labs. Can they still be paid even if they can not perform any work related to the project?

A: Yes, in most cases. According to [UNM guidance](#) issued by HR students can get paid (even on Tier 3 status) through May 15th. ***Students will be paid regardless of actual work performed.*** This is consistent with guidance issued by OMB related to salaries. However, it's always best to check specific guidance issued by your sponsor.

Q&A Session

Any more questions from the group that we can address at this time?

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

STAY SAFE AND BE WELL!

