Center for Nursing Research

Policy & Procedure

RA Support for Faculty Research Projects

Date Approved: Last Reviewed: 3/26/2014

Background: The mission of the CNR is sharing scientific skills that promote research at the CON, with a special focus in the areas of research methods and statistics. As part of this mission, CNR Research Assistants (RAs) are available to support research and scholarship activities of College of Nursing faculty members, with the goal of helping faculty to produce publications and grant applications related to their area of scholarship.

RAs in the Center for Nursing Research (CNR) are full-time graduate students at the College of Nursing or School of Public Health (Applied Biostatistics track). The CNR RA position is designed to be an educational enrichment experience to supplement coursework in research by contributing to CON faculty research projects and student projects. RA duties include the following:

Policy: The CNR RAs are available to complete small projects related to funded or unfunded CON faculty scholarship/research activities.

Procedure for requesting RA Support on Faculty Projects:

1. Faculty members who want assistance from a CNR RA must submit their request for support to the CNR Director (not directly to the RA). The CNR Director will approve or deny the request, and will prioritize it with respect to other currently active requests.

2. Requests for support on faculty projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:
   a. Projects must be related to a faculty member’s program of research or scholarship as outlined in the faculty member’s performance plan. (Rationale: the mission of the CNR is to support faculty research and scholarship)
   b. Projects must be of a size and scope that is manageable given existing CNR resources, generally involving less than 60 total hours of work. Examples of projects that might meet this criterion are quantitative data entry projects with less than 150 participants and less than 5 instruments/forms per participant, or qualitative data coding projects with less than 6 one-hour individual interviews or 4 one-hour focus group recordings. (Rationale: CNR RA support is a communal resource, and needs to be available to all faculty. Limiting work to small projects helps to ensure sufficient capacity to meet most requests for support. Also, continuity of RA support cannot be ensured across semesters on larger projects).
   c. CNR RAs are not available for transcription work. (Rationale: transcription is harder to integrate with the RA’s primary duties – i.e., remaining available for consultation or questions from students in the CNR lab and monitoring safety, security, and efficiency of the lab). Faculty member will need to secure additional support for transcription work.
   d. Both unfunded and funded faculty research projects will be considered, with priority given to unfunded projects that provide preliminary/pilot data to support subsequent applications for extramural funding. (Rationale: the CNR’s overall mission is to support
the development of faculty members’ programs of research and scholarship at the CON, and is intended particularly to be a resource in the early stages of research programs when other resources may not be available).

3. Specific timelines for completion of a faculty project may be estimated, but cannot be guaranteed. CNR RAs’ primary responsibility is to be available for consultation; faculty projects are completed as time allows, secondary to the RA’s consultation responsibilities.

4. If a faculty member with a funded research project makes use of CNR RA support, the CNR Director will work with the faculty member to determine the appropriate amount and mechanism for payment. Such programs or projects may be funded by State general fund, external sponsors, donors or auxiliary cash. A service exchange may include the provision of specified time and effort by Research Assistants (RA), the CNR Director, CNR or OREA staff support. When a service exchange is approved, then the itemized cost of the services will be credited to the ORS Research auxiliary as Interdepartmental (ID) revenue and charged as ID expenditure to the requesting office, program or project. The CNR will act as contractor for the requesting office, program or project, which will act as contract.

5. If a request for services is deemed to exceed the scope of work that can be reasonably and timely performed by CNR RAs (as outlined above), then such services will be referred to another source or back to the external project to directly fund, independent of the CNR. If an initial small service exchange agreement grows in size or scope, a decision may be made to refer the project to other resources or to recommend that the requesting office, program or project identify other resources.

6. CNR RA’s will be committed to funded or unfunded projects on semester basis regardless of the project length. Each semester the RA, CNR Director and the Faculty member will meet to discuss CNR commitment for the next 6 months. For the funded projects, new contract for RA funding will need to be executed each semester.

Procedure for Involving the CNR Director in a Faculty Project:

7. If CNR Director is involved as a CO-I or Co-PI on a faculty grant application, he will have to be budgeted for at least .15 or .2 FTE, depending on the complexity of the project. As opposed to the RAs contractual agreement, CNR Director will be available for multi semester or multiyear commitment. Priority will be given to projects from early career faculty who are trying to lunch their research program as well as projects directly related to CNR Director’s expertise.

8. CNR Director will also be available for consultation on power analysis and statistical methods consultations that take less than 2 hours as a service to CON. CNR Director will not be available for Research Plan development or editing unless he/she is directly involved in the project (has committed an FTE percentage).
Publication Credit

If the CNR Director’s or RA’s work is featured in a faculty publication, author credit will be requested. The order of authorship should be discussed before the paper is finalized. If there is a strong reason for not being able to accommodate this request, it will need to be discussed with the CNR Director.