Expected Outcome 1: Avg. fund creation less than five days.
Contracts and Grants Accounting will create fund numbers for newly received awards in less than five days on average. Contracts and Grants Accounting (CGA) creates fund numbers for newly awarded contract and grant agreements. The timely creation of funds allows investigators to properly record expenditures for work performed and will lessen delays to the commencement of work and lessen the need for expenses transfers.

Assessment Method 1: Coverform Log

Assessment Method Description
CGA maintains a cover-form log for the purpose of tracking the status of new fund set-up requests (cover-forms) received from the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). Upon receipt of the cover-form, CGA logs the date received among other essential data elements. Should CGA need to return it to OSP for revisions, it logs the date when it is returned to OSP. Upon its return, GGA logs it back in with a newer date. Once CGA creates the fund, it logs the create date.

Findings
CGA processed 745 new fund requests during fiscal year 2013 and averaged 5.87 days for creation. Of the 745 processed, CGA created 590 new funds, 80%, in five days or less. Of the 590 new creates, the average create time equaled 2.59 days. Of the new fund creates that exceeded five days, the average time equaled 18 days.

How did you use findings for improvement?
CGA will continue to work with OSP to quickly resolve discrepancies within the award documentation to speed up the process. CGA now receives award documentation via email which removes time waiting for the award packets to be transferred between offices. When we identify troubling issues that delay the fund set-up, we will stress the utilization of the “Anticipated Fund” procedure with the investigators.

We are partnering with OSP to develop a campus wide, electronic routing system that should allow transparency to the process and expedite the award set-up.

Additional Comments
Expected Outcome 2: Contract & Grant Collections
CGA is charged with reporting expenditure data and collection of funds from sponsoring agencies. CGA will collect receivables due from sponsors for work performed under sponsored agreements.

Assessment Method 1: Monitor Receivables List
Assessment Method Description
As most sponsors enter into cost reimbursable grants or contracts, Auburn via CGA must specifically request reimbursements as per the terms of the agreements. As part of the requests, CGA records receivables onto the financial system, requests payment from the sponsors, and clears the receivables when payments are received. Fund balances are monitored monthly so that funds due to AU are appropriately requested, and timely payments are received from sponsors. At year-end, receivable balances are compared to previous year-end balances to note significant growth (>20%) in the dollars outstanding. Any significant growth is investigated to ensure that the growth in receivables does not indicate resulting decline in collections from the sponsors.

Findings
During the year, CGA managed 2,346 active awards. It processed 3,295 accounts receivables transactions to request $91 million of funds from sponsors. As of 9/30/13, the accounts receivable total managed by CGA grew to $16 million from the prior year’s balance of $14 million, indicating a 15% increase.

How did you use findings for improvement?
As the increase fell below the 20% threshold, CGA did not perform a detailed analysis. CGA continues to monitor outstanding claims and takes a more aggressive approach to contact sponsors when the claims age to greater than 60 days.

Additional Comments