History

The SWAP system was started for a couple of reasons. Firstly, a group of CGOs in the UCB Sponsored Projects Office were interested in taking on distinct roles within the scope of our office’s mandate rather than covering the full flavor of cradle to grave service. Secondly, our office (as perhaps with yours!) was facing an increasing workload and a shortage of staff. This was particularly acute due to budget cuts at our campus which prevented us from filling positions which were vacated.

Our office at the time required that every Contract and Grant Officer perform the following tasks: review proposals from PIs, submit proposals, complete Just-In-Time and other pre-award requests, award review and negotiation, and post-award contractual maintenance such as prior approval requests.

Jessie and I also postulated that permitting 2 CGOs to spend time working on the areas of our work which we prefer would increase efficiency and job satisfaction.

The System:

Jessie handles pre-award actions, and Shoshana handles post-award actions for their combined units. This is both of the CGO’s preferred job duties. As part of our proposal to our management, we defined what actions would constitute pre-award and post-award matters. Our management sent a list of these items to the supervisors for our respective units.

Back-ups for out of office: When one of us is out of the office, our system provides for backing up matters as follows:

- **Sick leaves**: The CGO in the office handles all emergency matters.
- **Vacation**: The CGO in the office handles both pre-award and post-award actions for her originally assigned units. The CGO going on vacation seeks additional back-up(s) for her originally assigned units.

Redistributing work: At periodic check-ins, we see whether one of us need to re-assign proposals or awards that CGO is overloaded, to maintain an even distribution of work.

The system has been in effect since September 1, 2017.

The Challenges.

Routing of matters: In the beginning, Shoshana was required to route her proposals to Jessie but this has become automated.

Navigating Split Roles: As we are one of two teams, RAs on campus have to navigate our special split. The RAs we work with the most are generally more familiar with the workload split
so there are fewer transactions sent to the wrong CGO.
We have had trouble communicating to the whole campus in part due to quirks of our internal system. While our internal database, which RAs can view, is able to show a split of pre-/post-award RAs, our internal IT team indicated it is impractical at this time to create a split for CGOs. They therefore only show the CGO who is assigned to proposals. Thus, the solution to having proposals route to Shoshana has meant that our office outward faces that all actions are assigned to Jessie, unless it is a new award in Shoshana’s que.

Thus far this has meant questions are routed to Jessie for the most part.

After the Fact Awards: Our system requires that we review an internal proposal record before we review a new award. We have had to navigate the hand-offs here particularly closely as once the proposal is completed Shoshana has to get started.

Tips – In case you want to join us!
1) Communication:
   a. Between CGOs: Communication between the CGOs is essential. Keep regular meetings between the CGOs, especially for the first few months.
   b. With Unit RAs: Try to reach out to CSS RAs so they understand the split.
2) If one side of the team is overloaded, make sure to distribute workload.
3) Build into your system the ability to outward-face which CGO is assigned to a task/unit

Take-aways
1) Both CGOs are able to concentrate on their preferred areas of interest. There is less back and forth between different kinds of transactions.

2) The back-up plan has worked well

3) Having your internal system set up for your split is helpful in time-management and communications externally.

The Future: We hope to keep this going, but we have just changed our internal proposal review structure so we are re-thinking how we can make this work so both proposal and award side CGOs have the same workload.

Questions?