Greetings from the Executive Director | Laura Lynn

Dear Walden faculty,

We are happy to bring you our first issue of re: Research, the bi-monthly newsletter of the Center for Research Support (CRS). This newsletter gives us an opportunity to keep you up-to-date on research policies, opportunities, and initiatives to enhance research quality for our university. We hope it will also help you to know us better and understand how we can serve you.

Meet the CRS Team

In this first Issue, our directors provide important updates on their offices and areas. We also want to introduce you to the hard working team of people in the Office of Student Research Support, who help you and your students throughout the research process.

Doctoral Capstone Quality Enhancement

Over the past several months, the CRS has been focused on supporting a variety of efforts to improve the quality of doctoral capstone projects. Several active faculty committees, with representatives from each of the colleges, have been charged to ensure a systemic approach to supporting research capstone quality, with a special focus on having the necessary assessments and supports in place across the student timeline. The working groups include:

- Prospectus Revision
- Dissertation Rubric Revision
- Faculty Development for Research Mentoring
- Curriculum Review
- Benchmarking

As they come forward, the recommendations of the working groups are vetted through the Research Advisory Council, and we are already we seeing the fruits of these efforts. One example is a Litmus Test for doctoral-quality research problems, which highlights the expectation that the final doctoral project is not just well planned, but also will make a contribution that addresses a gap in the literature or a gap in practice.

We expect this quality enhancement effort will result in many new ways to support our faculty who work with doctoral students, which will be implemented in 2011 and 2012. And, we will continue to update you on the progress of these efforts, particularly as they relate to new tools, policies and training resources.

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Given the increasing numbers of international research studies, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) would like to share research ethics tips for international research and other special topics. Additional guidance can be found in the IRB section of the CRS website.

Research Ethics Standards in Other Countries

Any researcher proposing specifically to recruit research participants in countries other than the USA, must consult the compilation of international research ethics standards provided by the USA’s Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). This compilation includes each country’s regulations, government entities, and guidelines that are relevant to research with human participants. In the IRB application, researchers will be asked to confirm that they are aware of all relevant regulations and have taken measures to remain compliant with these standards.

Reconciling Multiple Countries’ Standards

When any other country is involved in data collection, Walden typically applies the ethical standards of whichever country is more strict. However, when there is a conflict between countries’ standards (regarding consent, privacy, etc.) the IRB will ask you to consult with local stakeholders to determine what practices would best adhere to the Belmont Report: Ethical Principles of Justice, Beneficence, and Respect for Persons. The IRB can sometimes waive the USA standards when a local standard directly supports one of the three main ethical principles articulated by the Belmont Report.

Training for International Research Assistants

All research assistants in the USA and partner countries are required to complete some sort of human participants protection training. Family Health International (FHI) shares a free, online module in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. The IRB also will consider approving use of other training programs or materials that are custom-built by the researcher, provided that the Belmont Report principles and best practices in informed consent, voluntary participation in research, and research safety/confidentiality are covered.

Language of Informed Consent

The IRB only approves protocols in which informed consent can occur in a language/dialect in which the participants are fluent. In multilingual countries, it is acceptable to prepare consent documents in the official language of the country, but it is required that the person obtaining informed consent is fluent in at least one of the dialects/languages in which a participant is fluent. Participants may not be recruited if they are not fluent in at least one of the following: (a) the language of the consent form, or (b) one of languages/dialects spoken by the person(s) obtaining informed consent.

Translated Documents versus Use of Interpreters

The IRB requires written translations of as many documents as possible at the time of IRB review, as opposed to plans to conduct on-the-fly interpreting. Any time that consent documents or other research materials are translated, the IRB requires (a) that back-translation procedures confirm the accuracy of the translation, (b) that the qualifications of the translator(s) and back-translator(s) are documented, (c) that translation and back-translation procedures are documented.

Questions: IRB@waldenu.edu

Greetings from the Executive Director - continued

CRS Webinars

We’ve been pleased to recently complete webinars that provide an overview of our staff and services that support students and faculty. Recorded versions of these webinars will soon be available on the CRS website under “What’s New”. Stay tuned for upcoming webinars on specific topics like: Using ICPSR for Accessing Secondary Data, Using the Participant Pool for your Research, Abstract Development, and Guidance for Intervention Research.

Please enjoy this first newsletter and do not hesitate to write me at crs@waldenu.edu with any questions or with suggestions on information you would like to see here.

Thanks,

Laura
The Abstract • Window to Your Research
by Gary Burkholder

The abstract is one of the most important aspects of the dissertation. Dissertations, doctoral studies, and project studies are published through ProQuest / UMI (University Microfilms, Inc.); thus, our doctoral students’ research becomes immediately accessible to scholars around the world. While many probably won’t read an entire capstone, there is a higher likelihood that they will read the abstract. The abstract is the window into your student’s research – readers will view that to get a sense of whether they want to read more of the study. And, if they read your students’ study, there is a higher chance that their work will be cited by others in their research. This is why it is important to spend time with your students, after the research has been written, to think carefully about what they want to communicate in the abstract about their study. Some tips to maximize interest are to:

• Ensure that there is a clear statement about the gap in knowledge that the research has filled.

• State the key research questions and/or hypotheses that were addressed in the study.

• Check to ensure that research questions, data analysis strategies, results, and recommendations are aligned with each other. The analysis strategies, results, and recommendations should be directly and clearly related to the research questions.

• Include a strong statement in closing that addresses implications for social change. Who benefits from the study and in what ways? This statement should address benefits at the individual as well as social, community, and societal levels. The clear benefits of the research are extremely important.

For more information about the requirements for Walden University abstracts, please visit: the CRS website and scroll down about half way to review abstract guidelines for different kinds of Walden University capstone projects.

Office of Research & Sponsored Programs
by Molly Lauck

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) offers both pre- and post-award research funding services to Walden students and faculty. These services include, but are not limited to, assistance with identifying possible funding sources and applying for research grants (pre-award activities), to grant financial management, progress/final reporting support, and grant close out assistance (post-award activities).

Following is an external funding opportunity offered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) that may be of interest:

Program Title: Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program

Program Solicitation: NSF 11-690

Synopsis: The Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program is a foundation-wide activity that offers the NSF’s most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their organizations. Such activities should build a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research. NSF seeks submissions of CAREER proposals from early-career faculty members at all CAREER-eligible organizations (which includes Walden) and especially encourages women, members of underrepresented minority groups, and persons with disabilities to apply.


For questions about applying to external research funding opportunities, including determining eligibility, and information on obtaining The Walden Faculty Guidelines for Applying to External Funding Agencies, please contact: grants@waldenu.edu.
Communities of Scholarship and Practice
by Daniel Salter

A Community of Scholarship and Practice (CSP) at Walden University is a CRS-sponsored eCampus group that supports faculty and student interactions around a topical area. CSPs can range from a small, by-invitation-only group of scholars working on a focused project, to a large, open-invitation community for all interested members of the academic community.

Some current and launching CSPs include

Disaster Research Community: This community is comprised of a consortium of cross-disciplinary researchers exploring ways to improve interventions and assistance in situations of trauma and disaster.

Research in Online Learning: This community is comprised of researchers using both qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the nature of online learning and determine best practices.

Research in the Arts and Arts Education: The purpose of this developing community is to create a network of faculty able to serve and support students with arts based dissertations and doctoral studies. Collaborative research opportunities are also being discussed.

Social Change Interdisciplinary Research: This is a community of faculty and students from different programs. The purpose is to research on social change, with an interdisciplinary scope. This interdisciplinary research will try to reintegrate knowledge, culture, politics, and business over sound and reliable values.

LGBT Issues Research Group: The purpose of the LGBT Issues Research Group is to establish a diversity-affirmative community to support and promote faculty and student research and development in gender, sexuality, and sexual/gender identity/orientation.

Instructions for applying for and joining a CSP can be found on the Communities of Scholarship and Practice page of the CRS website. Questions should be directed to: researchcommunities@waldenu.edu

The Participant Pool
by Jenny Sherer

The Participant Pool has seen tremendous growth over the past couple of years. Not only are there over 7000 participants, several researchers have completed their studies due to the support shown by users of the site. On average there are between 10-15 studies in which interested individuals can participate.

This site is a valuable tool for our researchers as it provides access to the unique and diverse Walden community. Additionally, it offers the chance for students to learn not only about research in general, but about the research being conducted by Walden faculty and staff.

We encourage you to join the Participant Pool to support the research of our students and colleagues. The first time the site is accessed, participants will need to create a participant account by clicking on the “New Participant?” Link at the bottom of the page.

If there are questions about the Participant Pool or for more information, please do not hesitate to contact: participantpool@waldenu.edu

Dr. Gayla Keesee, a Ph.D. in Education alumna, presenting at the poster session held at the Winter 2011 Research Symposium in Miami.
Meet the Staff - Office of Student Research Support

Maria Sullivan
Research Service Specialist

Maria answers all of the student and faculty emails and phone calls regarding the Ph.D. dissertation process. She’s responsible for keeping track of University Research Reviewer (URR) reviews in the Ph.D. programs; helps URRs to stay on time with their reviews; and assists with various projects, such as updating committees and maintaining up-to-date and accurate records.

Alex Dohm
Research Service Specialist

Alex provides support to students and faculty throughout the doctoral study process. He manages the Banner database to track student progress; updates and notifies committee chairs, members, and URRs of their committee assignments; and educates faculty and students on the steps in the Ed.D. doctoral study process.

Kristina Harris
Research Service Specialist

Kristina assists the students and faculty with the DBA doctoral study and thesis programs. She manages the content for the CRS website and supports various projects for the CRS team. She has been instrumental in the staff development for the CRS. Kristina also reviews all dissertations and doctoral studies prior to publication and graduation.

Andy Kermode
Reporting and Data Processing Specialist

Andy assists Ed.D. students in the doctoral study process by maintaining records in Banner, but assists with students in other programs as needed. He runs and organizes reports and requested data for faculty and is involved with database clean-up and verification projects.

Migliuax Childs
Reporting and Data Processing Specialist

Migliuax manages the committee requests and approvals for the Ph.D. programs, including processing of all committee nomination forms, URR assignments and any revised committee/URR assignments. She updates student records in Banner database with committee members’ information, runs reports for centers, colleges and departments; and helps with database clean-up and verification as needed.

Bev Hall
Reporting and Data Processing Specialist

Bev also works with committee requests and approvals for the Ph.D. programs, including processing of all committee nomination forms, URR assignments and any revisions and assignments. She updates the student record in Banner; runs various reports for centers, colleges and departments; and aids with database maintenance and verification as needed.

Tony Ajsenberg
Center Coordinator

Tony manages the Office of Student Research Support and supervises a team of six employees. He makes sure the office operates as smoothly and efficiently as possible. He also works to maximize our current systems and is developing new and improved processes for students and faculty.
The Research Dissemination Support (RDS) Program supports faculty who promote the visibility and scholarly reputation of Walden University through the dissemination of their research and research-related activities. The RDS Program offers two types of awards: 1) Presentation RDS – travel support for research and research-related presentations at conferences; and 2) Publication RDS – support for research and research-related publications. For further information about this program, including how to apply, please download the RDS Program Guidelines, which can be found on the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs page of the CRS website. RDS recipients’ names appear in bold-face.

College of Health Sciences


Richard W. Riley College of Education & Leadership


College of Management & Technology


College of Social and Behavioral Sciences


February 2011 RDS Award Recipients continued


Center for Undergraduate Studies


Center for Research Support


Key Role Accounts

Research Center Questions: crs@waldenu.edu
Dissertation Questions: research@waldenu.edu
Ed.D. Doctoral Study Questions: doctoralstudy@waldenu.edu
D.B.A. Doctoral Study Questions: dba.docstudy@waldenu.edu
Thesis Questions: thesis@waldenu.edu

Administrative Team

Laura Knight Lynn, Ph.D.
Executive Director
laura.lynn@waldenu.edu

Gary J. Burkholder, Ph.D.
Director, Graduate Research Curriculum Standards and Assessment, and Senior Research Scholar
gary.burkholder@waldenu.edu

Leilani Endicott, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Research Integrity and Compliance Chair, Institutional Review Board
leilani.endicott@waldenu.edu

Molly A. Lauck, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Research & Sponsored Programs
molly.lauck@waldenu.edu

Louis C. Milanesi, Ph.D.
Director, Research Quality Management
louis.milanesi@waldenu.edu

Daniel W. Salter, Ph.D.
Director, Strategic Research Initiatives
daniel.salter@waldenu.edu

Jenny Sherer, M.Ed., CIP
Operations Manager, Office of Research Integrity and Compliance
jenny.sherer@email.waldenu.edu

Marydee A. Spillett, Ed.D.
Faculty
marydee.spillett@waldenu.edu