RICRO- Job Sharing, Observations and Beyond - Marty Welsch

RICRO IRB Coordinator and RICRO Report editor, Evelyn Swiss, and I embarked on a “job share” situation in November, 2009. Evelyn was to learn and participate in some of my duties as Human Resource Coordinator at the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), and I was to learn and participate in some of Evelyn’s duties as a RICRO IRB Coordinator. I believe this idea fell into the “job enhancement” category, but Evelyn and I were mainly just nervously enthusiastic as we walked, ran, drove and rode bikes between our two offices. This is important to note as we made these trips sometimes two or three times a day. For my part, my best tool kit for my new assignment consisted of a bike and a backpack! It soon appeared that Evelyn and I really had to work at getting some sort of coordinated and organized schedule; this proved to be tough as each of our positions included spontaneous and complicated work. The irony of our predicament was not lost on either Evelyn or me: we are both coordinators, and this was one part of the job share effort where we struggled—coordination.

Human Subject Training

I began my new assignment by undertaking the training opportunities available for research involving human subjects. I took the online CITI training for human subjects’ research (available on the RICRO website at: http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/hrb/training.aspx). This training at first appears to be daunting (many sections with a quiz at the end of each section!), but it was very thorough, comprehensive and interesting for someone new to the field (plus students can re-take the quizzes as many times as they need to achieve the 80% mark). I learned a lot taking and re-taking the CITI training quizzes!

I also took the in-person Human Subjects’ training offered by RICRO. These sessions offer a great opportunity to learn about CSU’s IRB as they are taught by CSU IRB members, including Dr. Matt Hickey, the IRB Chair. This training option requires no test and is generally well attended by new researchers or people that need to renew their human subjects’ certification (researchers must renew their human subjects’ protection training every three years). While it was very lively and informative, many class questions were answered, at least at the session I attended, with “Oh, just call Evelyn.” Evelyn was just delighted to hear this!

Evelyn’s OVPR Gig

Evelyn has an extensive background in editing and writing, so her duties for her OVPR assignment called upon her writing skills. Evelyn and I worked with a wide range of departments as they struggled to make decisions regarding staffing and organization structure. Her main duties were to draft and re-draft job descriptions synthesized from interviews with a variety of departments under the OVPR umbrella. Evelyn also participated in a colloquium sponsored by the OVPR, and enthusiastically joined in on the two-day event and helped wherever she could. Anyone who has helped host a large event knows how much legwork (literally) is involved, and Evelyn’s help was much appreciated.

Luckily for the OVPR, Evelyn’s photography skills are on par with her writing skills! She brought her camera to several functions and was able to capture many highlights of OVPR events for us.

Evelyn’s work in the OVPR was short-lived, however. A key resignation in RICRO in December threw the small organization an unexpected wrinkle and Evelyn’s expertise in virtually all aspects of RICRO administration were in much demand. Since the concept of a job-share situation was meant to help professionally develop and not mentally destroy an employee, Evelyn wisely chose to withdraw from the program.
Restructure
As is most often the case with RICRO, the resulting RICRO organizational restructure strategy to address the loss of a key employee was truly a collaborative effort that resulted in two current employees stepping up and assuming greater responsibilities. Due to the economics of the University (and seemingly the entire universe), there were some gaps to fill in the organization that I am still able to fill. Evelyn had patiently and persistently taught me some fundamental skills of an Assistant IRB Coordinator and I certainly did not want all of my IRB training to go to waste! I felt like I could continue to assist RICRO to the best of my abilities while they sorted through their job structure implementation. I continue to make my trips over to RICRO and I am now assigned to work in RICRO about one day a week. I understand that I am to be involved in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) activities as part of their restructure and am looking forward to that adventure.

Learning eProtocol
To date, most of my time at RICRO has been working with eProtocol (the electronic protocol submission system for IRB and IACUC protocols) and assisting in processing the IRB continuing reviews (i.e., renewals). The rudiments of eProtocol (eP for short) take a bit of time and practice to learn but, due to the efforts of the RICRO staff, the training information is readily available. Learning eProtocol is a learning curve made possible by simply using the system and following the procedures outlined in the training manual. There are many ways of learning eP: online training modules are offered by the developers of Key Solutions; in-person training sessions offered frequently by the staff; an electronic reference manual and tip sheets put together by RICRO for the asking; a hard copy notebook that the staff will assemble for anyone that expresses a need; and an eP helpline manned by a RICRO student employee.

Unsolicited Observations
**RICRO 24/7?** The eProtocol implementation is the first attempt for the RICRO to go paperless. Maybe that is why an inordinately large amount of RICRO staff time is devoted to individually guiding stakeholders through the use of eP day in and day out. While this customized assistance is seldom realized in our “press zero to speak to an operator” world of customer service, it is a luxury that comes with a price to the RICRO employees. Much time is lost explaining the procedures over and over to folks who invest no more time in the eP training than to call RICRO. This is confusing to me as an observer since eP training opportunities are as comprehensive and plentiful as any system training on campus.

**What expiration date?** How many email reminders from RICRO do you have in your email in-box? If you have a handful of protocols, my guess is that you have several reminder emails from the RICRO group (some human subjects’ researchers have even received reminder emails from me over the past few months). I’m told that when a research protocol expires, all work must stop and all data that is collected after the expiration date is not usable. RICRO staff take this stipulation very seriously and do everything possible to make sure that the research can move forward (continuing review form) or is officially closed with a Final Report. Much, much time is spent on tracking reminders to PIs! This is a small organization with much to do, so every activity comes at the expense of another activity. It seems like a steady stream of PI reminders to either renew an existing protocol or close out a protocol is necessary. With access to your protocols online via eProtocol, renewing or closing your protocol does not involve a large time commitment. I’ve learned that the best way to respond to these reminders is to simply log onto eProtocol, create your form and submit. That way, RICRO staff has the necessary information and is in the best position to represent the research interests.

**We’re Lucky!** I’m sure that it won’t come as a surprise when I say that the staff at RICRO is a dedicated group of individuals and I believe that we’re fortunate to have this group on campus. I’m proud to be spending part of my work week with this group, and don’t be surprised if, in the months ahead, I send you a reminder to renew an IRB protocol or see you at an RCR event.

**Tips as a newcomer to RICRO:** 1) Don’t forget to click the **Submit Form** button on eProtocol! and 2) A bike and a backpack can really come in handy!
Artificial Feeding System saves Animals and Research Dollars—Corey Campbell

Everyone knows that mosquito bites are annoying and can transmit disease pathogens to humans. You may not know, though, that in the case of mosquitoes, only the females bite, and they require a blood meal in order to bear young. This need for a blood meal requires the use of living animals and has made the rearing of mosquitoes for infectious diseases studies expensive for researchers. For years, the standard method of maintaining mosquito colonies at the Arthropod-borne Infectious Diseases Laboratory (AIDL) on the CSU campus has been through the use of live mice.

Researchers at AIDL are developing ways to combat mosquito-transmitted pathogens and even the mosquitoes themselves. Pathogens of interest include Dengue virus, West Nile virus, and a suite of alphaviruses, such as Western Equine Encephalitis virus. Novel methods of mosquito population reduction are also being explored. To reduce the financial and ethical burdens of using live mice, AIDL has made recent progress to reduce the number of mice used at the laboratory by substituting artificial blood feedings to reduce the number of live mouse feedings. For this method, commercially available sheep blood is used, combined with a heating technique that attracts the mosquitoes. Unfortunately, not all mosquito strains are able to survive without the use of mice. Nevertheless, in just a few months, AIDL has reduced mouse usage by almost 50% and hope to reduce it further in the future. This will save AIDL thousands of dollars per year on animal care costs and eliminate the use of hundreds of mice.

Welcome our new eProtocol Help Desk staff member: Ben Gondrez

Do you know that we have a staff member who is available to answer your eProtocol questions by email or phone 24/7?? We began to offer this service last summer, and with both the IACUC & IRB modules now mandatory for animal/human researchers, we wanted to continue to offer our eProtocol users as much assistance as possible. Our first eProtocol Helpdesk intern, Brian Lee, recently “passed the Blackberry” to Ben Gondrez. Ben is a CSU sophomore majoring in Applied Computing Technology. With a background that includes working as the Technology Educational Assistant at Fletcher Elementary School in Aurora for three years, and assisting customers troubleshoot problems with electronic devices as a Sales Associate at Radio Shack, Ben brings critical technical expertise to the office.

Have a question or problem with eProtocol, contact Ben at: 970-689-0641; RICRO_eProtocol_Help@mail.colostate.edu.

IACUC Semi-Annual Inspections

Spring is just around the corner, and for those of you in tune with the IACUC’s schedule, that means it’s almost time for the IACUC’s spring semi-annual facility inspection. The inspections are tentatively planned for early April. Please stay tuned for additional information on the schedule, and plan to be available for the inspectors when they schedule a visit to your laboratory. For a few tips for preparing for an IACUC inspection see http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/acuc/documents/LaboratoryPreparationfortheSemi-AnnualInspection.pdf.
Online IBC Training...becomes a requirement March 15, 2010.

If you plan to submit/resubmit a grant proposal that requires an AARF or PARF to be reviewed by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), THIS MESSAGE IS FOR YOU!

The IBC is implementing a PI training course that you are required to take! The IBC training course has been available for the past two months through the online IBC database (https://protocols.research.colostate.edu/rco/) that PIs currently use to view and submit IBC approvals. Thank you to those of you who have already taken the training and/or provided feedback! Beginning March 15, 2010 this training will become a requirement of all PIs submitting new or renewing Agent and/or Project Approval Requests.

- When you logon to the database, you will see the link to the training (Take or Renew IBC PI Training) on the main menu.
- The training includes details on work with rDNA, work with transgenic organisms, the CSU IBC review and approval process, as well as, the biosafety levels and the types of research covered by the NIH Guidelines, and the roles and responsibilities of investigators under the NIH Guidelines.
- After the initial training, PIs will be required to update their training every three years.

For more information about the Online IBC Training, please contact Christine Johnson, IBC Coordinator, at: christine.johnson@colostate.edu.

Who is the Mystery Person Answering the Phone at RICRO?

If you have recently called our main office number, you have already met the new RICRO employee, Luci Storelli-Castro. When Molly Gutilla moved from the front desk to her position as IACUC Coordinator, we were fortunate to find Luci to join our group for a short time to fill in at the front desk. Luci is a CSU alumna, having graduated Cum Laude with a BA in Political Science and Philosophy in 2008. In addition to working full-time at RICRO, Luci teaches English as a Second Language at Front Range Community College, and is in the midst of applying to graduate schools to continue her studies. Among the many skills that she brings to RICRO, the IRB, in particular, has benefitted from her linguistic skills (in addition to English, Luci is fluent in Spanish, German, Italian and is beginning to learn Twi). Luci will only be with us until the end of May, and we hope you have an opportunity to meet her!

Bienvenido y Gracias, Luci!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ELISA FRENCH - The 2010 Technician of the Year!
Always Wondered If You are Up-to-Date with Human Subjects Protection Training?

As human subjects researchers know, all PIs and Co-PIs on protocols must have completed either on-campus or CITI training in order for the IRB to review/approve their protocol(s). This training must be renewed every three (3) years. The IRB coordinators realize that it is hard to keep track of when your training will expire. In an effort to take the guess work out of this for PIs and co-PIs (who may be creating the protocols, and not have access to this information), RICRO will soon be posting a list of all human subjects researchers with up-to-date training. We will list the names alphabetically, followed by the month and year of training expiration. This list will be accessible at the IRB Researchers Training link: http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/hrc/training.aspx. If you believe that your training status is not reported correctly, please contact us, and we will update our records. For training information and updates, contact: Evelyn Swiss (491-1381).

Website Updates for eProtocol Users

RICRO would like to thank Diane Rees from Research Services and our eProtocol Help Desk staff member, Ben Gondrez, for creating a new layout for eProtocol Information for both the IACUC and the IRB.

You will now notice an eProtocol Resource box on our RICRO main page: http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/. Select either IACUC or IRB from the drop-down menu, and you will be directed to Tips Sheets, contact information, and (we hope) answers to many of your questions regarding the electronic system.

When you visit your committee’s eProtocol page, you may notice that we are now launching a ticket system for eProtocol questions/problems. Form not coming up? Not sure how to handle the popup blockers? If the RICRO staff are unavailable to answer your question, please submit a ticket, and we will get back to you with an answer to your question within 24 business hours.

You will find the link to the Ticket site on your committee’s eProtocol page. Click here to submit a ticket:

**Quick links:**
# SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS

## March-April, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 3</td>
<td>IBC Submission Deadline (12:00 PM)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Authorship Issues for GTAs and GRAs: How to Publish Responsibly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4:30 PM – 6:30 PM) TILT 221 Lecture Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, March 5</td>
<td>Rodent Necropsy Workshop (8:00-11:00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 9</td>
<td>IACUC Submission Deadline (12:00 PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 10</td>
<td>IBC Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 11</td>
<td>IRB Submission Deadline (5:00 PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, March 22</td>
<td>IRB Human Subjects Protection Training Session and eProtocol Basics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9:30 AM – 12:00 PM) RM 340 General Services Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 23</td>
<td>IACUC Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 25</td>
<td>IRB Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, March 26</td>
<td>IACUC Ethical Care and Use of Animal Subjects Training Session</td>
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<td>(2:00 PM – 3:00 PM) RM 340 General Services Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 7</td>
<td>IBC Submission Deadline (12:00 PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday April 8</td>
<td>IRB Submission Deadline (5:00 PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 13</td>
<td>IACUC Submission Deadline (12:00 PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IRB Human Subjects Protection Training Session and eProtocol Basics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9:30 AM – 12:00 PM) RM 321 General Services Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 14</td>
<td>IBC Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 15</td>
<td>IRB Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 27</td>
<td>IACUC Meeting</td>
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## The University Veterinarian Presents

The University Veterinarian will be hosting **Rodent Necropsy Workshop** on March 5th from 8:00-11:00 a.m. This is a hands-on workshop. Following a demonstration, each individual will have the opportunity to perform a necropsy on a mouse and a rat.

**Pre-registration is required.**
To register or for more information, contact Denise Ostmeyer at 491-7184 or denise.ostmeyer@research.colostate.edu.
AUTHORSHIP ISSUES FOR
GTAs AND GRAs:
HOW TO PUBLISH RESPONSIBLY

ALL ARE WELCOMED!
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

What does it take to get your name on a research publication?
Do you deserve first author position on a paper?
What kinds of publications, other than research papers, can a student author?
Can an undergraduate publish on research projects?
Who owns the copyright for your work?

DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
TiLT 221 Lecture Hall

Pizza will be served!