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| **Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health** |
| **Monthly PI/GM Meetings: Guidance and Agenda** |
| Originally issued: 6/1/2023  Last revised: 7/28/2023 |

**Purpose**

Meetings between PIs (Principal Investigators) and GMs (Grant Manager) are required on a monthly basis; they are an important method of presenting up-to-date and accurate information so PIs can make informed decisions regarding their labs, their research projects, and the full spectrum of their funding: sponsored, gifts, endowments, dean’s, and discretionary accounts. In addition, regular discussion of pre- and post-award management is essential.

PI/GM meetings provide both parties with an opportunity for real-time discussions, questions asked and answered, and confirmation of plans. The PI/GM Meeting Agenda template, provided on the last page of this document, was created to assist GMs navigate the meeting.

**Monthly Meetings should inform PIs of the following:**

* Current funding status, projected balances, budget shortfalls, outstanding expenses.
* Funding gaps and the need to reapply or submit new applications.
* Effort commitments/salary allocations for PI and staff, including teaching; any needed changes should be identified.
* Appropriate use of gifts and endowments and other non-sponsored funds according to terms and conditions, purpose, or restriction, if any.
* The impact of new policies and/or procedures.

For PIs to make informed decisions regarding the stewardship of their awards and the staffing of their labs, they need monthly reports with projections through the end of each award to show the full cycle of funding and where they may need to adjust their spending plans. In addition, it is important for GMs to meet regularly with their PIs to discuss both the pre and post award management of their portfolios.

**Monthly Meetings should inform GMs of the following:**

* PI plans to submit proposals within the next few months.
* Anticipated changes in personnel: hires, terminations, leaves of absence.
* Needed effort adjustments for PI and staff.
* Shifts in non-personnel spending, e.g., equipment, increased travel, survey expenses.

**Scheduling**

* GM is responsible for scheduling the meetings with the PI. Tip: Schedule in advance for as many months as possible.

**Prepare for the meeting: Analysis and Review**

* Run and analyze reports in PI Dashboard (Root Report, Personnel Plan, Account Reports as needed).
* Review details: ensure that intended changes have taken effect as expected; identify questions and/or areas of concern.
* Check the Committed Funds Report for any large purchases that remain outstanding.
* Run and review Active and Pending Projects report from GMAS (to compare against effort tracker and to review pending status with PI).
* Review effort levels on personnel report.
* Process any correcting journals that arise from the review process.

**Prepare for the meeting: Email communication with PI**

It is best practice to email the agenda and reports to PI 2 days before the meeting.

* Update meeting agenda template (see next page) with questions, concerns, and highlights. Include a summary in the body of the email, emphasizing any urgent issues.
* If you know the PI is unable to meet in any given month, send the email and reports anyway. Be sure to follow-up with your questions.

**Meet and Follow-up with PI**

GMs should use the agenda template (see next page) for what to discuss with the PI. The GM should lead the meeting to ensure that all topics are covered.

* Take notes during the meeting; include all items discussed and outline all action/follow-up items that will need to be addressed after the meeting. Review with PI at the end.
* Provide an email summary within 2 days of the meeting. Include any decisions that were made (such as effort changes) and a list of action items for the GM and for the PI.
* Ask PI to confirm receipt and agreement to action items.

**Best Practices**

Save documents in shared drive per department structure. Include the following:

* Root report, unedited and final version, with all tabs
* Account reports as needed
* Personnel report
* Salary effort calculator
* Any other reports or documents sent to the PI
* Emails to/from PI: Initial, prior to meeting and Summary, after the meeting.

**Communication basics**

* Respond in a timely manner.
* For email, reply with a concise message, referring to the agenda, for all related questions in one email.
* Use the same email string for follow-up to keep history together, summarizing important items at the top.
* If you need more time to complete an item, acknowledge that it is outstanding and commit to a response time. Stay on top of your commitments and communicate if time starts to slip.
* When out of the office, include in your message who to contact in your absence.
* If you do not receive a response, follow up. When you experience non-responsiveness from a PI, continue to follow up and let your manager know what is going on. Check with your Team Lead/ADF about escalation process; use your best collective judgement.
  + It can be helpful to use the same email and bump the important item to the top.
  + Other options – call, text, message via teams/slack.

**Revision History**

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| 06/01/23 | Document first published |
| 07/28/23 | Include meeting requirement; add to agenda to follow up on prior month |

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| **PI Meeting Agenda, Name of PI** |
| Date: |
| GM/Other Attendees: |

| **REVIEW ITEM**  **Reports and Topics** | **DISCUSSION POINTS**  (The items below are samples) | **MEETING NOTES** |
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| **Previous Month Check-In**   * Last month’s agenda and action/follow-up items | *-Are all items addressed or resolved? If not, carry the item into current month’s notes* |  |
| **Faculty Effort**   * Salary Calculator * Effort tracker   -Identify changes to effort allocations; address grants ending or beginning.  -Confirm Teaching | *-112000 ending on 3/31 – 5% effort?*  *-113000 ending on 4/30 – 10% effort?*  *-When grant 234567 begins you will be overcommitted by 10%*  *-I have you teaching course ABC for 5 credits and sole instructor* |  |
| **Personnel Report**   * Terms/Departures * Hires/Changes in Staff * Confirmation on reappointments * New students? Upcoming graduations? | *Mary – parental leave 11/1-1/31*  *Bob – 10% ending 117722 on 10/31*  *Cameron expected to leave June 2023*  *Steve P. - Reappointment for FY24* |  |
| **Financial Review**   * Root Report-Active Accounts tab * Account Report, as needed. * Spending by Object, as needed   Discuss  -awards beginning or ending  -spending, accounts projected over or under plan  -special review such as lab supplies, travel etc. | *-123456 is overspent $5K*  *-Gift 333333 projected overspent on 11/1*  *-221133 is projected to have a large balance at end of grant year*  *-Sponsored funding is projected to run out in 9 months*  *-Lab supplies are averaging $10k higher per month – are there additional people in the lab? Has a new phase of work begun?* |  |
| **Awards**   * Upcoming submissions? Including subs * Update on pending applications * Reports, upcoming or late * Approvals (IRB etc) * Subawards   + Issues, check-in | *R01 scored – may be funded – expect JIT?*  *R21 scored – not funded*  *ABC R01 RPPR due 11/15*  *R01 resub due 11/15*  *BU – Sub any issues with data or activity? No recent invoices* |  |
| **Other**   * Planned Travel/vacation * Invoices to be approved * Important dates/info such as eCert, and audits | *Any planned time away?*  *BWH invoices still need approval* |  |

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