Windows of Opportunity

Coming Soon to MSU: An Institutional Repository

Sprague Library has now subscribed to Digital Commons to bring an institutional repository to Montclair State University. Digital Commons is a hosted institutional repository platform, licensed by bepress, and used by over 500 colleges, universities, law schools, medical schools, healthcare centers, public libraries, and research centers to preserve and showcase their scholarly output, creative works, and special collections.

Why an institutional repository at Montclair?
Our recent Carnegie Classification as a research doctoral institution, as well as being classified by the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education as a doctoral degree-granting institution, all warrant showcasing the research being conducted at our University. Additionally, on July 21, 2017, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed legislation designating Montclair State University as a public research university.

An institutional repository at Montclair State University serves faculty and institutional interests by collecting, organizing, preserving, and disseminating faculty scholarship and creative works in a digital, open-access environment. It also brings together all of the University's research and creative works under one umbrella, with the aim to preserve and provide access to that research. The repository is also consistent with the Library's archival role and responsibility in preserving publications and other artifacts documenting Montclair State's history and the activities of its faculty, administrators, staff, and students.

What are the benefits?
There are many benefits to having a repository at Montclair State. It can significantly enhance the scholarship produced at MSU by offering our University community the opportunity to reflect upon past research and discover current research, and facilitate new research. It fosters collaboration among Montclair State's colleges and schools as well as scholarly communications and networking regionally, nationally, and internationally. Additionally it will help to increase institutional visibility and brand awareness,

Karen Ramsden
Research and Projects Specialist, Sprague Library

2017's Record-Breaking Totals

175 Proposals
$51,337,485

72 Awards
$12,548,369

improve community outreach and engagement, and facilitate institutional advancement and fundraising efforts.

Who is involved?

To initiate and guide the process of bringing the Repository to the University, Dean of Library Services, Judith Lin Hunt, formed an internal library advisory committee, and an external advisory committee comprised of various University stakeholders representing all colleges, schools, and many administrative units as well as the University Senate. The internal team is currently in the process of uploading content and preparing to launch the repository early next semester.

Why a hosted site for the repository?

With a fully hosted and supported platform we only need to focus on content, not technology. Additionally, it gives us the ability to customize and tailor the site to our individual needs.

Items are also search engine optimized, meaning that they appear high in the search results of sites like Google and Google Scholar, and authors also receive regular download reports and have access to Google Analytics. Another important feature is that upgrades to the platform are done with no downtime. Finally, and most importantly: Even though the repository is hosted, the content belongs to the University.

Want more information?

Just ask the repository team and we will be happy to talk to you about it. Our email for all inquiries is: digitalcommons@mail.montclair.edu. Or you can speak with Karen Ramsden, Coordinator of Digital Commons, at 973-655-5276 or ramsdenk@montclair.edu.

Featured Awards

Jinshan Gao (Chemistry and Biochemistry, CSAM) was awarded $279,000 by the National Science Foundation for "RUI: Glycan Characterization and Quantitative Analysis via Free Radical Induced Dissociation." This three-year project will develop a new approach for glycan characterization and quantitation by combining the merits of free radical chemistry and mass spectrometry.

Jonathan Howell's (Linguistics, CHSS) two-year project "Establishing a ground truth for focus placement in naturally-occurring speech" was funded by the National Science Foundation for $105,894. Dr. Howell will develop a method of automatically detecting focus that is both computationally effective, e.g. for the purpose of representing focus in language technologies, and linguistically transparent, e.g., to understand how focus is realized acoustically and conditioned pragmatically.

Jude Uy and Jaclyn Freidman-Lombardo (Counseling and Psychological Services) were awarded $102,000 by the US Department of Health and Human Services/SAMHSA for the first year of "Project Suicide Awareness Violence Education and Response (Project SAVER) at Montclair State University." Project SAVER is a three-year program that will support mental health services on campus focused on suicide and self and other directed violence prevention. Project SAVER is comprised of two major components: an MSU on-campus initiative—Project HawkSAVER—and an off-campus initiative to establish a consortium for suicide prevention among institutions of higher education throughout the state of New Jersey, or The University and College Alliance for Prevention of Suicide (UCAPS).

New Designations, New Opportunities

As Montclair State University's enrollment, reputation, and capacity for research and programming continue to grow, the number of funding opportunities available to the University community are following suit. Access to some of these new funding sources has come from designations and certifications that have been bestowed upon MSU in recent years.

Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education classified MSU as an R3 Doctoral University, signifying moderate research activity, in January 2016. This is a reflection of both an increase in doctoral students and the University's growing research funding. While the R3 does not make new funding opportunities available to MSU, it is a solid indicator of the University's increasing commitment to research and ORSP strongly encourages faculty to include this designation in future proposal submissions.

Public Research University

MSU's most recent designation as a public research university came in July, 2017. The American Academy of Arts & Sciences' Lincoln Project released a series of publications exploring such universities and concluded that, among many other factors, they have become the primary sources of research in the United States.[1] Similar to MSU's R3 Carnegie Classification, it should be leveraged in proposal narratives to demonstrate MSU's commitment to research, training and economic growth in the region.

Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)

In 2016, Montclair State officially met the requirements to be recognized as an HSI with the number of full-time undergraduate students exceeding 25 percent Hispanic. In 2015, 472 institutions were designated as HSIs, accounting for 13.8% of non-profit colleges and universities and enrolling 62.3% of all Hispanic students.[2]

MSU's HSI status allows the University to apply to previously unavailable opportunities from a number of funders. These include:

- The U.S. Department of Education's Hispanic-Serving Institutions Division announces programs for HSIs once a year, the most recent being in February 2017. These opportunities offered funding for a wide array of projects, such as equipment, student support services, faculty development, and revising or developing curriculum.

- The National Endowment for the Humanities offers Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions every June. Grants are awarded to support the development and enhancement of programs in a number of humanities disciplines, and support bridge programs and collaborative projects.

- The National Science Foundation issued a Dear Colleague Letter in June 2017, stating that the organization will be establishing an HSI program in FY 2018 that will focus on undergraduate STEM education.

Sam Wolverton
Pre-Award and Outreach Specialist, ORSP

Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture (NLGCA)

Montclair State gained the NLGCA designation in July 2015. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture announces an opportunity—Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program—on an annual basis that is specific to NLGCAs. Proposers can request funding for pilot programs, collaborations, equipment, faculty professional development, and other projects relating to agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines.

Dr. Renata Blumberg (Nutrition and Food Studies) and Dr. Pankaj Lal (Earth and Environmental Studies) are recent awardees of a NLGCA Program grant for "Bridging the Gap Between New Jersey Farmers and Consumers Through Research, Education and Outreach." Their project analyzes how farmers markets in urban communities could play a role in improving both farmer livelihoods and the nutrition of low-income consumers with limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables, in addition to strengthening food and agricultural research, education, and outreach through community engagement and Service-Learning at MSU.

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[1] American Academy of Arts & Sciences, *Public Research Universities: Why They Matter*.

[2] Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, "2017 Fact Sheet: Hispanic Higher Education and HSIs."

Awardee Profile: Eileen Murray & Amir Golnabi

Dr. Eileen Murray of the Department of Mathematical Sciences and her co-investigator, Dr. Amir Golnabi, were awarded a three-year, $300,000 grant by the National Science Foundation for their project, titled "Adjunct Mathematics Instructor Resources and Support: Improving Undergraduate Precalculus Teaching and Learning Experience." As part of our *Awardee Profile* series, we asked Drs. Murray and Golnabi to share their insights into the proposal submission and award process.

What are the major aspects of your awarded project?

The project aims to measure the impact of course coordination and support on adjunct mathematics instructors' knowledge, instructional practices, and job satisfaction. In this project, we use the organization and coordination of Precalculus with the goals of implementing best practices for learning and instruction, improving content and pedagogical content knowledge of instructors, and creating a professional learning community.

As a result of this organization and coordination, adjunct instructors will be provided numerous instructional and professional resources that will support their professional knowledge as well as provide them with a sense of belonging in the department.

What were your first thoughts after having received the news that you were awarded?

We were excited to continue the work we had begun the previous year with this increased level of support. In particular, we were excited to be able to provide funding for our graduate assistant and to continue to compensate the adjuncts for their time.

What are some of the challenges involved in a project like yours? How are you tackling these?

One of the challenges we have is how we can improve the adjuncts' experiences and job satisfaction. However, a lot of this falls out of our control (e.g., salary, benefits, office space). We have been tackling this by advocating for the adjuncts in our department and within the college. Another challenge is recruiting participants for the study. The nature of the adjunct life makes participation difficult for some, even with the additional compensation. We are tackling this by providing incentives as well as flexibility in how they can participate. Additionally, the quality of the supports is a good selling point.

How would you advise colleagues interested in submitting a grant application?

Get started early! Get the summer grant writing funds from the university. Have a clear goal and interesting research questions.

What, if anything, do you believe MSU can do to make grant submission and management more appealing and less intimidating?

ORSP staff were very helpful. People in the community should learn about all the office can do and how well they support people in this process. That in and of itself makes the task less daunting.

2018 Brings Changes to IRBs with NIH Funded Research

Amy Krenzer
Senior IRB
Coordinator

As many researchers may have heard, the Common Rule has been revised and will take effect in January 2018, but that is not the only change ahead for Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). In June 2016, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced a new policy, the Final NIH Policy on the Use of a Single Institutional Review Board for Multi-Site Research. With the coming effective date of January 25, 2018, we would like to outline the policy and explain what it means for MSU researchers.

NIH's policy involves putting into place a single IRB of record, or sIRB, for any research project taking place at multiple sites in the United States. All sites participating in a multi-site study will be expected to rely on a sIRB to carry out IRB review and functions. In their own words, NIH's goal is "…to enhance and streamline the IRB review process in the context of multi-site research so that research can proceed as effectively and expeditiously as possible. The shift in workload away from conducting redundant reviews is also expected to allow IRBs to concentrate more time and attention on the review of single site protocols, thereby enhancing research oversight."

Who will the new final policy affect?

▪ Researchers funded by any component of NIH conducting multi-site research, with the exclusion of studies conducted under career development, research training, or fellowship awards.

▪ Individuals who submitted grants applications or contract solicitations that were received after May 25, 2017.

Besides NIH funding, what other conditions apply?

The research must be:

▪ Non-exempt human subjects research, and

▪ Carried out at more than one site in the US.

Who makes the determination of which site serves as the sIRB?

In some cases, NIH may specify the sIRB in the funding announcement. Typically for most grants, NIH expects the lead PI to identify a specific sIRB in the grant application. (NIH has noted that the "proposed single IRB will not be evaluated as part of the peer review process and will not affect the overall assigned score… or the overall rating…")

Are there any exceptions to a sIRB?

▪ Exceptions will be allowed only if the designated sIRB is unable to meet the needs of specific populations or where local IRB review is required by federal, tribal, or state laws or regulations.

▪ NIH will consider requests for other exceptions to the policy and will determine if there is adequate justification to approve an exception. Most exceptions are expected to be site-specific (i.e., the exception to sIRB review will be made for a particular site, but all other sites conducting the same protocol will rely on the single IRB).

What will happen at MSU?

MSU's IRB has implemented IAAs (Institutional Authorization Agreements) for over two years, in which our IRB serves as the IRB of Record, or cedes review to another institution in a multi-site research project. The sIRB would work in the same manner. This can be put into effect in your Cayuse IRB submission. Please contact the IRB office for more information.

If you're looking for more specifics from NIH on this policy and how it developed, please check their webpage: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-16-094.html.

In the next issue of *Windows of Opportunity*, we will address some of the changes in the new Final Common Rule, 45CFR46.

Save the date:
Wed., Jan. 24, 1-2:30pm

"It's a New Year and a New Common Rule: What human subjects Researchers need to know"

Presented by the IRB & Research Compliance Office Staff

Insights from an NSF Insider

Dr. Lora Billings recently returned to Montclair State in the role of Acting Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics after serving as a Program Director for the National Science Foundation (NSF). With such an insider's view of major Federal funder, ORSP was eager to speak to Dean Billings about her experiences and to ask her for any advice for MSU grant seekers.

How long were you working for the NSF and what was your role there?

I was at the NSF for three years as a Program Director for the Applied Math Program in the Division of Mathematical Sciences in the Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS/DMS). I primarily handled the Applied Dynamical Systems area of research, but assisted in many areas of applied math, such as stochastics, mathematical biology, math-physics, and computational math. I was the DMS liaison to the Engineering Directorate and regularly worked with other programs in cross-cutting initiatives.

What did you learn from your experiences at NSF that faculty at MSU could use to make their NSF grant applications more competitive?

It sounds simple, but it is important that a PI follows the directions when submitting a grant and pay attention to the details. It is very easy to discount a proposal because the broader impacts are not well-developed. The grant also needs to be very clear in communicating the novel scientific idea and its importance. Include a description to justify the plan to carry out the project, but not so much that the reviewers get lost in the technical details. A track record of good work in the discipline also carries weight. Provide a knowledgeable, broad view of the field, how your work compares or fits in with cutting edge work, and a vision of how this work impact and shapes the future of the field.

How can faculty at MSU compete with applications from larger, more well known or more research intensive institutions?

The NSF strives to maintain diversity in its awards. Reports of bias towards top research schools is a misperception which diverts attention from the real problem: insufficient funding provided by the US government and the falling success rates. In all of the panels I participated, proposals were judged solely on the merit review criteria. A professionally prepared proposal from MSU will review as well as any other proposal if a novel scientific idea is presented.

Any insights on NSF's peer review process that applicants would benefit from?

As mentioned above, make sure a proposal contains your best ideas and the enthusiasm you have for its success. If you feel that you have been close to being successful, but need insight of how to make a proposal just a little better, you are welcome to volunteer to be on a panel. The NSF is always looking for panelists to provide a diverse representation of the scientific area. It will be a lot of work, but most people find the experience rewarding.

Is there anything else you have brought back to MSU?

The NSF provided all of its program officers the opportunity to participate in management decisions. I was active in groups that created, revised, and evaluated programs and activities. It was an incredibly engaging atmosphere where debate and discussion were encouraged in a transparent and respectful way. The group was engaging and all opinions were valued. I hope to emulate a similar environment in CSAM and capitalize on the insights of our faculty.

Marina Savransky
Assistant Director, ORSP

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