

MEMORANDUM

TO: Principal Investigators
Department Chairs
Deans

FROM: Stephen Kresovich, Vice President, Research and Graduate Education

DATE: March 11, 2010

RE: **INTERNAL DEADLINE for SUBMITTING PROPOSALS – Three Business Days**

The Office of Sponsored Awards Management (SAM) is committed to assuring the timely submission of complete, accurate and excellent proposals. To achieve this, it is critical that SAM receive proposals in sufficient time to provide adequate review and allow for the additional processing time associated with electronic submissions systems (e.g. Grants.gov). Interfacing with these electronic systems has improved many aspects of grants administration, but SAM is encountering increased challenges related to a last minute rush (literally) of proposals submitted with the assumption that only “pressing a button” is required to complete the submission process. This assumption has resulted in numerous “near misses” and one large proposal was rejected for missing the agency deadline by minutes.

While SAM has long maintained an internal guideline that proposals be submitted three days prior to the deadline, the norm is for proposals to arrive for submission on the day of the agency deadline. This is proving to be very risky as SAM staff members routinely encounter difficulty submitting proposals via Grants.gov (and other electronic proposal systems) with single proposals often requiring multiple attempts before acceptance by the Grants.gov system. There must be adequate time to review proposals at the departmental and institutional level to ensure University compliance, as well as the timely submission of proposals.

- **Effective April 1, 2010, a copy of the complete and final “ready to submit” proposal must be submitted to your SAM administrator at least 3 business days in advance of the sponsor’s due date. A complete proposal includes the final scope of work, budget, and all administrative components of the proposal as specified by program/agency guidelines.**

This requirement applies to proposals that are submitted electronically as well as those being submitted on paper.

- The three day lead time does not include the time required by the local unit/ department/ school for its review.
- Although SAM will make every effort to submit all proposals by the required deadlines, successful submission cannot be guaranteed for proposals submitted with fewer than three days lead time.
- Proposals submitted with adequate lead time will be given priority over late submissions. unless an agency specifies an earlier time in the day for electronic submissions,
- SAM will submit proposals no later than the close of business on the due date, whether or not a later "time stamp" is permitted by the agency.

We recognize that this represents a major shift from current practice, and request your assistance with implementing this new approach for ensuring that USC proposals receive adequate administrative review and a timely submission. Should you have any questions, please contact the SAM institutional representative serving your area.