Frequently Asked Questions: Research Support Accounts
August 22, 2008

What’s a Research Support Account?
This is an account for your college/department that was called the Indirect Cost Account. This old name reflected the source of most, but not necessarily all the funds in such account. In addition, the federal government has, for the most part, changed its terminology and is now using “Facilities and Administrative Costs” in lieu of “Indirect Cost.” For this combination of reasons, the account names have been changed.

Why am I getting this mailing?
As chair or dean, you are the one who makes decisions about the use of the Research Support Account for your department or college.

What is the Purpose of the Research Support Accounts?
In order to encourage research in its institutions of higher education, the General Assembly has determined the majority of indirect cost recoveries are to be used for research and the enhancement of research. This account is one of the ways Radford University is encouraging research.

What Types of Projects or Expenditures may the Research Support Accounts support?
Anything within state guidelines, as long as the expenditure is to support research or the enhancement of research. Examples:

- Provide funds to Principal Investigator who generated the funds for time, travel, supplies,
- Pay for overruns in grant accounts in that department/college
- Hire clerical assistance for grants or publications
- Use for matching funds
- Purchase or contribute to the cost of equipment/furniture or supplies
- Support "bridge projects" to pay for project activities between funded periods
- To jump-start projects
- Supplement ongoing externally-funded research
- Fund internal research projects or activities that will enhance or lead to research

Over what period may these funds be used?
These funds do not expire at the end of the fiscal year, but carry over from one fiscal year to the next.

Where do funds in this Research Support Account originate?
Research funds originate primarily as distributions from recoveries of the Facilities and Administrative (F&A) or Indirect Costs charged to grants and contracts directed by faculty members in your department or college.
What are Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs?
Those are real costs to a project that are difficult to allocate on a project-by-project basis, such as utilities, libraries, space, equipment and building depreciation, time of personnel in Financial Reporting, Housekeeping, Human Resources, Payroll, Sponsored Programs, etc. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires 70% of those recoveries to be spent on research and the enhancement of research and your account receives a portion of those.

When are the funds available to spend?
Funds are generally distributed annually in late summer/early fall, based on the amount of F&A costs recovered during the preceding fiscal year. Occasionally, funds are distributed earlier because of a specific need. It is then up the Department Chair or Dean to contact Sponsored Programs to have the revenue set-up in expenditure codes of their choice.

How can you see your revenues and expenditures?
Running a Banner budget report will show you expenditures and revenues within the current year. This letter shows you how much was carried over from last year.

When are F&A charges made to a grant?
F & A is only charged to the grant as the money is spent (i.e. $0.00 expenditures = $0 F&A into the research accounts). F & A shows up in the assigned research account as revenue under the object code 769300 and 769310.