

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Chairs, Institute/Center Directors

FROM: Dr. Jean Ann Linney, Chair
SPAR Advisory Committee

DATE: August 4, 2003

RE: Electronic Submission of Proposals

At its most recent meeting, the SPAR Advisory Committee discussed issues and concerns related to submission of electronic proposals at USC. The growth in the number of mandatory electronic proposal systems and problems with sponsor bandwidth and server speed on deadline dates has caused us to look at what things we can do to alleviate or eliminate problems encountered in the e-grant submission process.

SPAR has traditionally requested that proposals be in their office three (3) days prior to the sponsor due date. While we had hoped that electronic submission would facilitate the proposal process, the truth is that it has raised a whole new set of issues and concerns. Also, many of our USC investigators do not finalize their proposals for submission until the afternoon of the sponsor due date. When the number of e-grant proposals was small, SPAR was generally able to handle submission with few problems. As more sponsors have come online with mandatory electronic submission systems, SPAR has had to work very hard to ensure successful submission of these e-proposals, sometimes at the expense of traditional paper submissions. SPAR's primary concern is that, without help from faculty submitters, **there is an increasing probability that one or more proposals will miss the sponsors' deadlines.**

In order to facilitate electronic proposal submission by SPAR, the SPAR Advisory Council recommends the adoption of the following guideline:

All electronic proposals along with required institutional approvals must be received in SPAR in final form for submission not less than 24 hours prior to the sponsor deadline in order to ensure successful submission by the deadline.

We believe that this guideline will help USC to stay ahead of the curve in evolving e-grant systems and enable timely submission of electronic proposals.