

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

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WCU PROFESSOR PROTECTS THE DUSKY GOPHER FROG FROM EXTINCTION

Several cattle tanks filled with swarms of tadpoles were all that kept the dusky gopher frog from going extinct. Now, Joe Pechmann, professor of biology at Western Carolina University, is helping the frogs return to their historical range and populations.

[READ MORE...](#)

Research Data Dive

[View the Data of WCU's Research Pursuits](#)



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Administration

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PRE-AWARD SERVICES NEWS

Funding Opportunity: Public Humanities Projects

The Public Humanities Projects program invites proposals that bring humanities scholarship to life through creative public programming. Funded projects must explore themes in history, literature, ethics, or art history, using engaging formats that resonate with broad, diverse audiences outside traditional classrooms.

Focus Areas:

- The 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence
- American Military Valor
- The American Dream & Economic Freedom
- America's Role on a Global Scale

[Click here to learn more](#)

NIH Issues Policy to Support Originality and Fairness in Research Application Process

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can be helpful in limited aspects of preparing NIH research applications. However, it is critical to maintain the fairness and originality of NIH's research application process. The rapid submission of large numbers of research applications from a single Principal Investigator (PI) may also unfairly strain NIH's application review processes.

With this in mind, NIH is issuing a policy to outline guidance for appropriate usage of AI in research applications. To support this goal, NIH is also limiting the number of applications that NIH will consider per PI per calendar year.

Full policy information can be found at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-132.html>

Funding Opportunity: Mathematics and Physical Sciences - Simons Symposia Program

The Simons Foundation's Mathematics and Physical Sciences division invites proposals for its Simons Symposia series, which brings together mathematicians, theoretical physicists and theoretical computer scientists to interact and collaborate in a series of three symposia, held every two years and focusing on one topic or a tightly connected group of topics.

[Click here to learn more](#)

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POST-AWARD NEWS

Preparing for Fund Closures: The 30-60-90 Day Notification Process

As part of our commitment to ensuring smooth and compliant fund management, the Post-Award team sends out notifications to Principal Investigators (PIs) when their sponsored funds are approaching closure—specifically at the 90, 60, and 30-day marks.

During this time, it is essential for PIs to:

- Review remaining balances and spending plans.
- Review personnel actions if employee(s) are being paid from your grant fund by moving him/her to a different fund and please follow appropriate HR policy if an employee needs to be terminated.
- Ensure recurring monthly charges are going to be ending or moved to another fund.
- Confirm with subawards that deliverables are met and final invoice is received before the project end date.
- Notify Post-Award of any changes to the project timeline or scope.
- Submit requests for budget revisions, no-cost extensions, or supplemental funding through our Administrative Action Form.
- Prepare for any final reports and Post-Award can work to provide any financial data needed for the reporting.

If you receive a 30-60-90 day closure email, please take a moment to assess your fund's status and reach out to the Post-Award team with any questions or updates. Your engagement helps us ensure a seamless closeout process and sets the stage for future funding success.

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM!



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COMPLIANCE NEWS

International Travel

If you are planning to travel internationally:

- Review University Policy 100, complete the Policy 100 form with approval from your Department, and include your detailed itinerary.

Faculty and staff inviting international visitors/scholars to campus:

- You are required to obtain the Provost's approval prior to the visit using the International Visitor Approval Form, which asks for a copy of the visitor's itinerary and any technical data or university-owned equipment being shared with the visitor.

For questions, contact: Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

Compliance Presentations

The Research Compliance Office is available to give presentations for classes or faculty groups upon request.

- Sessions can be customized to address specific compliance topics, including:
 - IRB (Institutional Review Board)
 - IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee)
 - Export Control
 - Responsible Conduct of Research
- Presentations can be scheduled to support instructional goals or departmental training needs.

To arrange a session, contact: IRB@wcu.edu

Research Security Training (RST)

Effective Oct. 10, 2025, NSF requires Research Security Training (RST) covering: cybersecurity, international collaboration, foreign interference, proper use of funds, disclosure, conflicts of interest/commitment, export control, and reporting.

- As a result, investigators must complete: RCR, RST, and Export Control training for NSF proposals.

This is based on the recent notice from NSF (Important Notice No. 149: Updates to NSF Research Security Policies | NSF – National Science Foundation)

- Training Provider: citiprogram.org

For questions, contact: Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

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STUDENT RESEARCH NEWS

SoCon Undergraduate Research Forum (SURF) Application Open!

The Southern Conference (SoCon) Academic Exchange is proud to announce that the annual SoCon Undergraduate Research Forum (SURF) Conference will be held on **October 24-25, 2025**, on the campus of Wofford College in Spartanburg, SC. This multidisciplinary conference will bring together approximately 150 student presenters from all ten colleges/universities of the SoCon for a two-day event that features projects in the arts and humanities, as well as the STEM disciplines.

- Key Dates:
 - Info Session: August 27, 2025 | 12:30–1:00 PM | <https://wcu.zoom.us/j/89704596046>
 - Application Deadline: September 15, 2025
 - Acceptance Notification: September 24, 2025
 - Pre-Travel Meeting: September 25, 2025 | 2:30 – 3:30 PM
- [Apply Now!](#)
- Questions? Contact: Suzanne Melton (Research Programs Coordinator) scmelton@wcu.edu

Undergraduate Academic Project Grants Fall Cycle Opens Soon!

Academic Project Grants (APGs) support undergraduate research and creative work efforts at Western Carolina University. Any student or group of students working with a faculty sponsor is eligible to apply for a grant.

- Funding Uses:
 - Equipment, materials, and supplies
 - Individual or group travel to present at conferences
 - Support for travel to NCUR

**Awards are competitive, with limited funds awarded*

- Important Dates:
 - Submission Portal Opens: August 18, 2025
- Cycle Deadlines:
 - Cycle 1: September 25, 2025
 - Cycle 2: October 23, 2025
 - Cycle 3: January 22, 2026
 - Cycle 4: February 19, 2026

Visit the [APG webpage](#) for guidelines, templates, and the submission portal.

Questions? Contact: Suzanne Melton (Research Programs Coordinator) scmelton@wcu.edu