FROM: Kirsten Volpi and John Poate   **DATE:** November 5, 2013

TO: Research active faculty

COPY: College Deans and Department Heads

SUBJ: Proposal deadlines

REF: ORA Proposal guidelines (inside.mines.edu/Proposals), Budget Exception policy (inside.mines.edu/UserFiles/File/policies/RES/Budget_exception_policy_2008-09.pdf)

Fiscal year 2013 proved to be another record year for research at Mines with nearly $62 million in research awards received. That level of research was only achieved by the determined work from faculty in developing proposals and shepherding them on to successful awards. Faculty submitted a significant number of proposals in 2013 numbering 500 in total; an increase of 25% from only five years ago.

With that level of research engagement from the faculty that is only projected to grow, we will be focusing our efforts this year on improving processes, employing technologies, and ensuring we have the right organizational structure to streamline how we administer research.

As we actively engage in a process to better serve the research venture, there is one area that can be impactful now by making the proposal submission process more efficient. Currently ORA has guidelines that require titles, preliminary text, and budgets for standard proposals to be sent to ORA at least one week before proposal deadlines. This one week timeframe allows ORA to devote as much attention as possible to each proposal, it gives both the faculty and ORA time to deal with last-minute problems and it maximizes the probability of successful submission of all proposals.

In addition to the one-week deadline for the full proposal, the following items need to be submitted at least two weeks before the deadline to allow time for appropriate review and approval:

- Documentation related to subcontracts

- Budgets that include cost sharing or F&A Cost exceptions

- Documentation related to partner institutions

- Aspects of the proposal that are subject to complex and/or non-standard instructions

With our growing proposal complexity and volume, these deadlines are critical to ensuring that we have a good product submitted. When deadlines are not met, ORA is often faced with the untenable choice of either not processing the proposal, postponing work on other proposals, or dealing with the costs of working overtime.

To help engage the campus in a more rigorous proposal submission process, ORA will be working with your respective Deans and Department Heads to prioritize proposals for any proposals that miss the deadlines. If for any reason you have missed the one week and two week deadlines as mentioned above, and ORA deems it is a workflow problem, you will need to deliver the draft proposal and budget to the appropriate College Dean with a recommendation from your Department Head. Note that the one week deadline applies to text and budgets but the PI can still make changes in the technical components of the proposal during that week.

ORA will provide the Deans a listing of open proposals to make it easier for the Dean to determine the impact the proposal will have on their current workflow and the potential difficulty of doing budget negotiations and obtaining the necessary approvals in an orderly fashion.

If it appears that the proposal can be processed without creating problems, the Dean may forward the material to ORA and request that they proceed.

If processing the proposal would create problems for ORA, and the Dean decides its priority is not high enough to warrant those disruptions, the Dean may return it to the faculty member for submission in a future competition.

If processing the proposal would create problems, but the Dean decides it is a high priority, the Dean may forward the proposal to the VPRTT with a recommendation that the proposal be given priority. The VPRTT will make the final decision about how to proceed.