Date: September 22, 2005

To: Grants Management User Network (GMUN) Steering Committee Members

From: R. Timothy Mulcahy, Ph.D., Vice President for Research
      Mike Volna, Associate Vice President and Controller

Re: Charge to Grants Management Users’ Network (GMUN)

The network of administrators you represent is vital to the effectiveness and efficiency of our complex research environment and support systems. The creation of the GMUN structure provides ongoing opportunity for central and Departmental research administrative units to work together and ensure the grants management systems meet the needs of those operating them. Because these systems are jointly owned by the office of the Vice President for Research and Controller, this memo is coming to you from both offices.

It is our understanding that there has never been a written charge to GMUN formalizing the relationship with the VP for Research and Controller. We think that a clearly stated purpose is necessary for the success of any group. Development of a charge for GMUN provides an opportunity to confirm our joint understanding of the purpose and roles and most importantly to clarify how the GMUN will interact with the various offices within the Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Financial Reporting (Controller).

Because of your administrative roles, you are in a unique position to provide feedback about the effectiveness and efficiency of our research support systems and to offer recommendations to improve both. Research administration is a constantly evolving environment with new rules, complicated regulations, unique situations, and there exists a strong desire (both within the U and the sponsors) to streamline processes and procedures. As such, we wish to work collaboratively and strengthen the research functions of the University of Minnesota. Given the size and diverse needs of the GMUN group, we ask that the GMUN group continue to use a governing board (steering committee) to function as a conduit to the offices of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Financial Reporting (Controller). Specifically, we invite you to consider the following purpose for GMUN:

**GMUN Purpose:**

- Create and maintain structured *channels of communication* between central and Departmental research administrative units via key contacts
- Recommend approaches and solutions to meet challenges, including changes to internal policies and practices affecting grants management
- Exchange information on collegiate best practices to help inform the University's strategic decisions related to its research mission

**GMUN Steering Committee Purpose:**

- Represent a broad and diverse constituency
- Bring forward factors and changing conditions for discussion that could impact the effective administration of the research process
• Reinforce the dissemination of grants management information both to and from the key contacts within each unit
• Coordinate the interests of other customer groups whose focus is grants management and provide an established vehicle to share their feedback with the VPR and Controller
• Provide a single point of contact for groups (project teams) seeking advice and input from sponsored projects end users

We look forward to working together and further establishing the necessary framework that will galvanize an effective partnership.

cc: Edward Wink, Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA)
Lisa Carlson, Office of Oversight Analysis & Reporting (OAR)
Sue Paulson, Sponsored Financial Reporting (SFR)