OVPR Risk Recalibration:
Pilot Project: Reduce Burden From the Ground Up

Premise: In order to be truly successful, risk recalibration initiatives must be endorsed and implemented at all levels of the institution.

Project Goals and Objectives
1. Reduce administrative burden for researchers and grant administrators by identifying processes that represent departmental requirements in excess of policy.

2. Assist researchers and staff with developing and implementing new procedures.

3. Determine perceived burden reduction through interviews, focus groups.

4. Determine financial impact of changes.

5. Build consensus and consistency broadly across the institution.
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Barrier: Concern expressed at Certified Approver/Departmental Administrator level that re-aligning processes with risk recalibration revisions puts these staff at higher risk should an issue related to expenditures on sponsored funds be identified through audit (UMN or sponsor initiated).

Barrier: “Stacking” of processes related to sponsored expenditures to ensure strict compliance with UMN policies and sponsor regulations

Barrier: Identification and revision or elimination of processes, validation that tenets of risk recalibration efforts will be upheld institutionally (Audits, SFR, etc.)
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**Proposal:** Identify 2-4 units willing to participate in a pilot project lasting 6-12 months. Participation would include:

- Meeting with Research Education & Oversight (REO) staff to review processes related to specific policies such as Traveling on University Business, Purchasing Goods and Services, Justification Standards and processes related to account reconciliation and reports to PIs
- Identifying processes that exceed policy requirements or relate to reviews of expenditures that fall below specific dollar thresholds
- Revising or eliminating specific processes
- Tracking burden reduction

Participation by a unit would require endorsement of dean and department head and researchers would be expected to provide input periodically regarding the impact of these changes on their own administrative burden.
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REO responsibilities would include:

- Meeting with unit staff to review processes related to specific policies such as Traveling on University Business, Purchasing Goods and Services Justification Standards and processes related to account reconciliation and reports to PIs
- Identifying processes that exceed policy requirements or relate to reviews of expenditures that fall below specific dollar thresholds
- Assisting with revising or eliminating specific processes
- Establishing criteria for assessing burden reduction for both staff and researchers
- Conducting targeted expenditure reviews at specified intervals as a means to assess progress
- Conducting interviews with staff and faculty at specified intervals to assess perception of change
- Prepare and disseminate final report