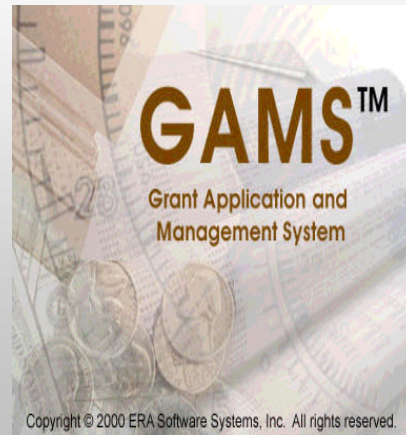


# GAMS - EPF Deployment

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

- Authorization of Proposals
  - Scope and Objective
  - Budgets
  - Cost Sharing
  - F&A Under-recovery
  - Conflicts of Interest
  - Space and time utilization
- Currently Paper, migrating to GAMS Feb 1, 2002



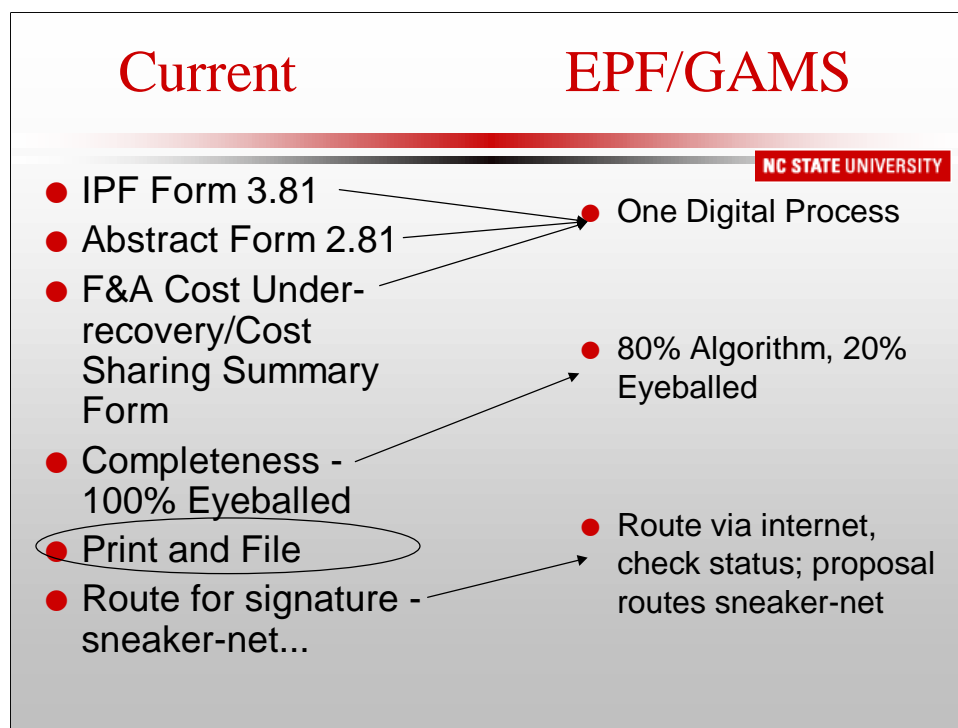
For many years NCState has talked about migrating to a digital Grants Application and Management System known as GAMS. In fact many homogenous and administratively-centralized colleges and units have indeed migrated, in part, to the GAMS system. However, for a variety of reasons, the institution as a whole, has struggled to achieve this landmark migration.

When evaluating NCState's proposal approval system upon arriving in September of 2000, Matt Ronning, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration soon recognized that there are two distinct hurdles to achieving a systematic approach to proposal processing that not only recognizes the digital age and capabilities of NCState's administrative computing infrastructure but provides for a highly efficient and meaningful portal into the apparent mysteries of the internal approval process encountered by the faculty and staff of the institution itself. These hurdles are: (1) digitizing without complicating an already laborious process; and (2) convincing the faculty and administration -- already "gun shy" about digital administrative processes -- of the value added and necessity of such an enhancement.

To overcome these hurdles it is necessary to abandon the all-or-nothing approach touted by our peers in the electronic research administration environment and concentrate on small steps towards much-needed administrative efficiencies. While the ultimate goal of sponsoring agencies and e-commerce savvy universities alike is the full and transparent transmission of complete proposal documents to sponsors and in turn receipt of disposition of those proposals (hopefully award documents) electronically, the reality is that most, if not all (with the possible exception of the National Science Foundation and supposedly all federal sponsors with the advent of Public Law 106-107) of our sponsors are not only not ready for such a transition but they are not interested (such as industrial and state agency sponsors).

Hence, movement to a more sustainable approach to the migration to true eRA systems is to first ensure that we can prepare, review, authorize and comment on the internal form sets necessary at every institution involved in externally sponsored work, electronically. As such, a very simple front end to the more comprehensive GAMS system has been developed to simply capture three fairly laborious form sets currently required by the UNC Office of the President; those being the IPF, the Abstract and the F&A Underrecovery and Cost Sharing Form. These form sets have been consolidated into one digital form set that flows together within the confines of a web session. Once completed they are routed electronically through the current approval chain for consideration and if appropriate authorization. Some minor adjustments to the current administrative process will be necessary because our sponsors continue to require physical signatures on proposal documents. However, as sponsors come on-line with the ability to accept digital signatures, the GAMS system is already poised to accommodate.

In addition to improved exposure to the proposal routing process and enhanced access to concerns expressed along the approval route, the EPF module will accommodate a new requirement by the UNC Office of the President; submission of electronic abstracts. Currently, abstracts are prepared and printed on the GA Abstract form. Rather than printing these documents on a paper form they will now simply be collected electronically. Of course, the system allows for cut and paste functionality from any windows-based or GUI-compliant word processing system.



The above slide illustrates the current paper form of completing, tracking and managing the current processing form sets necessary to submit a proposal from NCState under the heading Current. The EPF/GAMS heading illustrates how the current process is consolidated and how accuracy of processing information and movement of a proposal is enhanced.

As a requirement from the UNC Office of the President, digital access to project abstracts will allow for better pairing and evaluation of the institution's core competencies by senior management. This is paramount as we enter an era where multi-disciplinary, inter-institutional and inter-corporate partnerships are necessary for success.

## Benefits to Clientele

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

- Digital Repository of Approval Activity
- Awareness of where proposals are in the process
- Ability to clone former form-sets rather than recreate each time
- Elimination of paper documents
- Immediate feedback of concerns from administration
- Electronic availability from any platform – Web-based
- Introduction to full GAMS with budget builder, etc.
- Ultimate goal to migrate to electronic interface with multiple sponsors.

Above are some of the benefits to the faculty and those administrative staff involved in supporting proposal efforts. A common theme in the opinions expressed about research administration at NCState by its faculty and administrators is that when a proposal is submitted to various levels in the approval route it seems to enter a black hole otherwise known as the administrative abyss. The point above about awareness of where proposals are in the process eliminates this problem because now the approval process is illuminated by the GAMS system and everyone involved in the process will be able to offer assistance to encourage the process along expeditiously.

As administrators involved in the approval chain have feedback on the processing they are prompted to express their concerns and overtures using the GAMS system. These comments are logged permanently in the system and are e-mailed to the others involved in the process, including the PI. As such, enhanced communications will improve compliance with the administrative caveats expressed during the approval process.