ORA Reorganizes Support Units

With the departure of our Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) administrator last fall, Diane Ament, Director of the Office of Research Assurances (ORA), saw that some changes were needed in the department. She then proposed—and the Vice President for Research and Economic Development approved—combining the administrative support for the IBC and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) into one unit.

As a result, the former IACUC Administrator, Sarah Zamzow, became the IACUC/IBC Administrator, and a new position of IACUC/IBC Coordinator was created and filled by Kate Elwood (see story below). Prior to her promotion, Sarah already had biohazard experience with animals and considerable experience with the IBC since she had provided backup support for the IBC administrator position for two years.

Having one support unit for the two committees offers advantages for the committees and investigators, as well as the ORA. For example, many research projects involving animals also involve biohazards, which required frequent communication between the two support units. A single administrative unit handling projects for both committees will be able to provide more efficient pre-review and communication between the committees.

This change also means increased support and education for investigators because one administrator will be able to provide information related to the activities of both committees. In addition, because the administrator and the coordinator work as a team in supporting the two committees, they will be better prepared to provide backup for each other when needed.

Kate Elwood was hired as our new IACUC/IBC Coordinator on January 13. Kate had been working in our offices as a student employee for 1½ years so she already had experience in providing support for both the IACUC and IBC committees.

Kate is continuing her studies through Internet and evening classes and will graduate in May with two bachelor’s degrees. One of her degrees is in psychology with a minor in journalism and the other degree is in sociology with a minor in human development and family studies.

Kate’s responsibilities as committee coordinator include maintaining databases for the two committees, handling correspondence with committee members, and keeping the review process flowing and the file drawers in order. Kate has also been assisting Sarah Zamzow with semiannual facility inspections, which started in late February. Kate can be contacted at 294-5412 or kate1204@iastate.edu.