



University of Colorado  
 Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus  
 UNIVERSITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS

# UIS, at your Service...

## eRA Edition



Issue 2

September 2014

### Why eRA?

Electronic Research Administration (eRA) supports the university's research community by addressing university-wide and campus initiatives for the pre- and post-award processes for grants and contracts, human subjects protocols and financial conflict of interest. In addition, the university subscribes to the world's largest database of funding opportunities – [InfoEd SPIN](#).

eRA lays the technical foundation to ensure that researchers can easily and effectively submit requests for funding and includes features for business process enhancement and redesign to minimize duplication of effort and maximize data sharing and collaboration within and across campuses.

Many factors drive the transition from our current research administration processes to eRA, including the changing landscape of regulatory requirements from federal sponsoring agencies. In a climate of increasing competition for research funds, the university must respond to these changing needs.

Want more information about CU's eRA program? Access [Electronic Research and Administration \(eRA\)](#) under the UIS Service Catalog.

**University of Colorado submitted over 300 competitive proposals worth ~\$378M using eRA system-to-system capabilities Jan 1 - Aug 31, 14**

## eRA Success Story

### Denver Proposal Development

The Office of Grants and Contracts (OGC) at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus is rolling out a new process to directly submit proposals to federal sponsors using the system-to-system capabilities that are part of the eRA software services offered by UIS. This new proposal development tool allows the CU Denver and CU Anschutz research communities to develop their proposals in a Web-based environment, enabling collaboration and eliminating double entry of proposal data. Web-based submission also facilitates higher acceptance success by our sponsors, which include the National Institutes of Health (NIH), United States Department of Defense (DoD) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), among others.

Because the NIH is the largest federal sponsor of research dollars for CU Denver and CU Anschutz and because of the strong support model they provide the campuses, the NIH is the first sponsor the campuses will submit proposals to exclusively using the eRA proposal development module (beginning October 2014).

Electronic routing is also rolling out for proposals. The research community will use the eRA software to route grant and contract proposals to appropriate signing authorities on their way to OGC for review. All the reviews and approvals are recorded electronically and the proposal is moved through the route automatically, replacing a paper-based or email process.



Office of Grants and Contracts  
 UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
 DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/GrantsContractsOffice/Pages/default.aspx>

## Electronic Research Administration at CU-Boulder

At CU-Boulder, great progress is being made in implementing an eRA system in the Office of Contracts and Grants (OCG) and Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA) office, collectively known as [Research Administration](#). The teams started reengineering their tools and processes a year ago. Rather than answering a short-term need, they kicked off a two-year project to transform the way eRA business processes are executed. The goal is to increase research revenue to the campus, improve service to the Boulder research community and increase industry collaborations.

The transformation of Research Administration started with improving the working environment and culture. The offices worked to identify areas of efficiencies and waste using the Lean Six Sigma Business Process Excellence framework. These activities set the stage for successful implementation of a new system. The

transformation effort has already paid off with increased award funding (refer to Chart 1).

Prior to beginning this project, many years of physical paper files were created as .pdfs, stored in a standalone file server and cataloged in a campus-developed database. While this saved space and made it easier to find files, there was still a lot of redundancy, making it difficult for teams across the CU-Boulder campus to collaborate.

By the end of 2014, Research Administration will begin using the eRA InfoEd system to track information, share files centrally and collaborate, adding significant functionality for the team. The new solution will support business process improvement, strengthen data integrity and enhance compliance while reducing cost. The project will complete by the end of 2015.

*“In an increasingly competitive environment for research dollars, we recognize that we need to do what we can to support our faculty; we are fortunate to work with some of the best minds in the world. We recognize that they are an important strategic competitive advantage for the University. This eRA system will help position the University to better manage and compete for these research dollars.”*

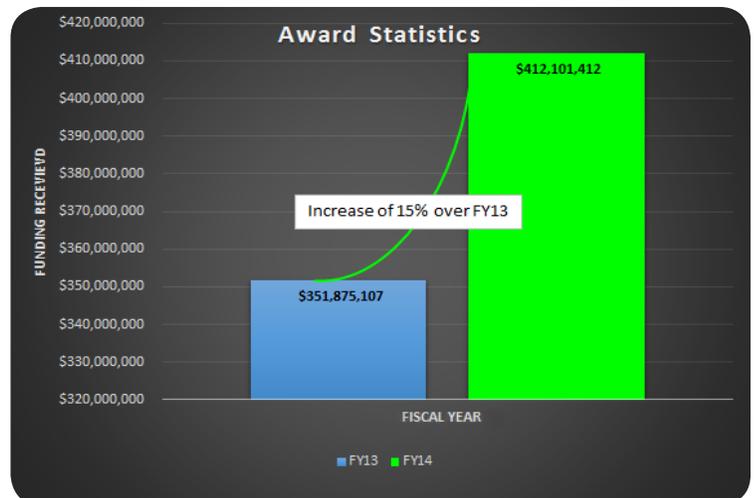
*James Uhes, OCG’s Assistant Director of Contracts, University of Colorado Boulder*



Research Administration & Support  
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**



Chart 1. CU-Boulder Research Administration Award Statistics



### Conflict of Interest

A strong Conflict of Interest (COI) policy is critical across all of the university's external interactions. [The Office of Regulatory Compliance \(ORC\)](#) is responsible for managing COI policy at CU Anschutz. They are governed by [university-wide COI policy](#) and apply additional, more stringent policies when COIs are involved due to the extra complexity in the medical research process. An example is the [OCG's Pharma policy](#) that governs the interaction between physicians and pharmacies.

Researchers at CU Denver and CU Anschutz must submit their COI disclosures annually. With the 2014 addition of student researchers and campus expansions, almost 13,000 disclosure requests will be submitted. With that many requests coming in, the paper-based model used before eRA was no longer manageable.

The ORC began moving faculty disclosure submissions into the eRA module in 2011, followed by the ability to review and collaborate electronically. To be truly automated and effective, the OCG, IRB and COI teams needed visibility into each other's disclosure materials, which eRA provides. eRA also filters out the disclosures with no financial interest and automatically emails researchers. In 2013, this automation compressed the number of disclosures needing manual review from 8,000 to 970 – a decrease of 88%!

### Document Management System at CU-Boulder and CU Denver

By the end of 2014, the CU-Boulder and CU Denver Institutional Research Board (IRB) teams will transition to UIS's Document Management System (DMS) to streamline how research documents are shared, managed and accessed.

Research documents are regulated by the federal government, with sponsoring agencies (providers) imposing additional requirements, as needed. In the past, campuses dedicated vast amounts of floor space to file cabinets overflowing with research documentation. File locations were managed manually using spreadsheets and home-grown databases. In fact, CU Denver had to reinforce the floor of the file room in the historic Building 500 just to support the incredible volume of research files.

Both campuses began using the eRA InfoEd application for electronic storage of files, but the processes surrounding uploading and accessing documents are cumbersome. Additionally, the audit process is currently difficult because it is hard to locate requested

files. The new DMS will provide a paperless solution by "sweeping" all relevant documents into the DMS in a nightly process. The exception is U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) content due to stringent requirements.

One of the biggest benefits of the new DMS is the ability to easily share information with provider auditors, including giving them their own access to the protocols they need.

CU-Boulder will continue to use the InfoEd tool interfaced with the DMS. The DMS will make searching, training and workflow easier while keeping the familiar backend in place. It will also provide flexibility and increase overall efficiencies by facilitating sharing between the IRB and Research Administration.

For CU Denver, the current InfoEd system provides the document storage they needed, but also increases the time needed to print submissions (up to a minute per file). The new DMS will greatly reduce processing time, freeing the IRB to focus on other projects.

*"Our team went from a having a new system we didn't really like to one that now works well for our campus and we can't live without."*

*Dr. Claire Dunne, CU-Boulder's Director, IRB Office,  
University of Colorado Boulder*

*"Our job is to do all the thinking, the technology's job is to do the processing... our goal is to continually improve our timeline to provide excellent service to principal investigators."*

*Dr. Warren Capell, CU Denver Research Services Director and Director of  
Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB),  
University of Colorado Denver*

## Semester Start Process and Outcomes

The fall semester startup just completed and it went off without a hitch! CU Denver classes began on Monday, August 18 (Week 1) and CU-Boulder and UCCS started Monday, August 25 (Week 2). How does UIS prepare for a smooth semester start each term? Here is our process.

In the weeks before and after term starts, we don't hold maintenance windows and we place a production moratorium, restricting changes to enterprise applications to minimize any chance of unanticipated impacts to systems. Although we monitor systems regularly as part of our daily process, we beef monitoring up as we near the first day of classes. At semester start, a team of UIS staff gather in a command center to continuously monitor

system performance and to respond to any variations in what we expect. A critical puzzle piece is detailed load testing to catch potential issues in a variety of scenarios.

The result? 131,568 faculty, staff and students portal sessions on the highest volume day alone with no significant issues, resulting in a record number of total single day logins (not unique logins). During semester start, we saw a 112% increase over typical portal logins for Week 1 and a 207% increase over typical portal logins for Week 2 ("typical" portal logins include all portals across all campuses and System). Refer to Chart 2 through Chart 4 for additional semester start success data.

Chart 2. Semester high volume login days, fall 2011-2014

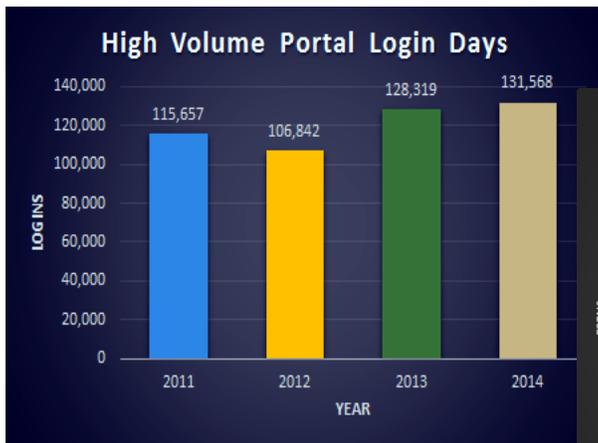


Chart 3. Fall 2014 portal logins to typical logins

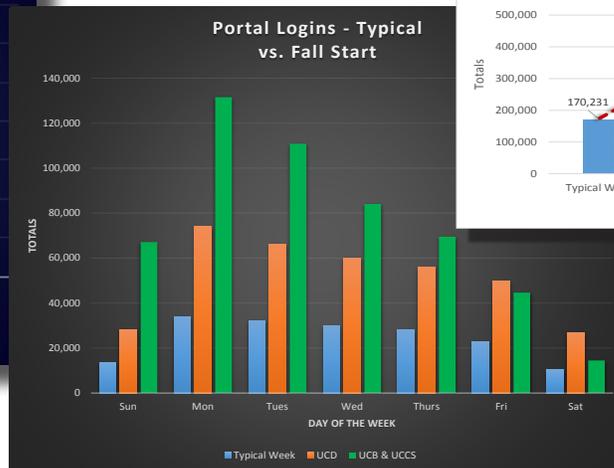
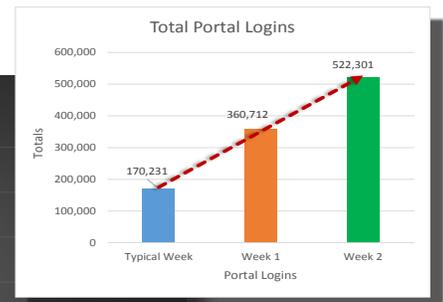


Chart 4. Fall 2014 total portal logins for the first two weeks of term



## UCCS2Go Mobile Student App

The University of Colorado has gone mobile with the UCSS2Go app on iOS and Android! Deployed with the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, the new mobile app enables students to view, add, drop and wait-list classes, check their schedule and class locations, review their grades and more. In its first two weeks of operation, UCSS2Go had almost 20,000 logins

with more than 3,000 downloads. That's over 27% of the student population! Check out the [UCSS2Go app page](#).

With the success of the mobile app at UCCS, UIS is in the planning stage with CU-Boulder and CU Denver to move forward with their implementations.

### Snapshot of Mobile App Stats

Logins week of 8/17  
(Before start of classes)  
6,489

Logins week of  
start of classes  
13,274

iOS and Android downloads  
~3,000

Since Announcement  
2,248 hits to app Web page

# ***We want to hear your feedback!***

Please take a moment to tell us how we did and how *UIS, at your Service...* can better support you.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/uis\\_newsletter\\_era](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/uis_newsletter_era)

Interested in learning about the  
UIS project pipeline?  
Access  
[Project/Portfolio Highlights](#)  
*Important: You must be logged into  
the CU network to access this page.*

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**Check us out at**  
[www.cu.edu/uis](http://www.cu.edu/uis)

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## **UIS Open Positions**

- [Assistant Director, ECS PeopleSoft and Database Team \(C/U03487\)](#)
- [PeopleSoft Administrator \(C/U03041\)](#)
- [PeopleSoft Security Administrator \(C/U03203\)](#)

## **[Jobs at CU](#)**

## **Upcoming Events**

- CS Bundle 34 & PeopleTools Maintenance, Oct 5
- Non-Production planned maintenance, Oct 13
- Non-Production planned maintenance, Oct 20
- Production planned maintenance, Nov 2
- Non-Production planned maintenance, Nov 17
- System Administration closed for Thanksgiving,  
Nov 27-28
- Production planned maintenance, Dec 7
- System Administration closed for Christmas,  
Dec 25-26
- System Administration closed for New Year's,  
Dec 31-Jan 1