

College of Arts and Letters

Further guidance on essential and non-essential R&PD spending April 15, 2020

One of the highest priorities of the University of Notre Dame, after guarding the physical health of faculty, staff, and students and promoting high quality distance learning, has been to preserve the strength of our research programs. Much still remains uncertain about our return to regular business. Given our current situation, the guidance we provide here is in line with these principles and our best estimates of the future.

We urge you to be very good stewards of University resources at this time of significant uncertainty. It is our intent that no funding that has been awarded will be rescinded; only that the expenditure of the funding be delayed wherever possible. The University benefits in many ways if the expenditure of funds is delayed until the economy is back on a better footing. Endowment funds can rebound instead of being liquidated at depressed valuations. Cash flow can be used for highly essential purposes such as salaries instead of other lower priority items.

Given these circumstances, our current guidance (which may be altered in light of future events) is as follows:

1. All expenses that can be postponed, reduced, or eliminated, must be.

- *Examples: Travel, professional development, new publication subventions, speaker honoraria, subscriptions, memberships, entertainment, meals, books, supplies, equipment replacement or upgrade if still useable, research assistants after May 22, research expenditures by tenured faculty members that do not qualify as essential (see below).*

2. It may be possible to fund certain essential expenses. To help define essential expenditures (i.e. those that cannot be postponed, reduced, or eliminated) in your units using College funds or endowed funds, consider the following:

Is the expenditure critical to research that cannot be postponed?

- *Examples: Critical research expenditures by assistant professors, need for rapid response or other timely or seasonal occurrences, covid-19 related research, research that would introduce ethical concerns if discontinued.*

Is the expenditure critical to meeting current commitments and deliverables?

- *Examples: Research expenses for monographs under contract, or for invited articles or contributions to special issues with submission deadlines before the start of the Fall semester; expenses related to exhibitions or performances confirmed to occur before the start of the Fall semester (and do not involve travel or conflict with other Covid-related restrictions).*

Is the expenditure critical to meeting deadlines for externally funded grant competitions?

- *Examples: Internally-funded equipment expenditures utilized for external grants, pilot studies currently underway to support external grant applications that are due before the start of the Fall semester.*

Does the expenditure stem directly from contractual obligations entered into prior to April 1?

- *Examples: Cost shares, consulting agreements, publishing contracts, software licenses and subscriptions*

Is the expenditure critical for safety?

- *Examples: Replacement of safety equipment/infrastructure, required safety training*

- 3. Faculty must not commit funds or request reimbursements for any expense without prior approval of their chairs.**
- 4. Chairs should exercise the utmost discretion in approving requests. In the case of any doubt, chairs should consult with their divisional associate dean.**
- 5. All expenses over \$500 must be cleared with the dean's office via the online portal.**