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By Theresa Defino

◆ **Although a continuing resolution is now in place that funds the federal government through Feb. 18, committees are still working on bills that could contain provisions onerous to universities,** the Association of American Universities (AAU) warned. AAU officials noted that some bills being debated have eliminated provisions requiring contractors for the Department of Defense to make “publicly available all diversity, equity, and inclusion training materials, internal policies, and other educational or professional materials ‘for review and identification of Critical Race Theory,’” which AAU and other groups oppose.

AAU also reported that “not included in the final [appropriations] bill are measures related to increased cyber incident reporting requirements; prohibitions on the participation of federally funded researchers in malign foreign talent recruitment programs; and the creation of a new pilot program to vet researchers working on non-classified research.” Still, these provisions could be “considered during conference negotiations on other legislation,” AAU said, such as the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, National Science Foundation for the Future Act, the Department of Energy’s Science for the Future Act, and the fiscal year 2022 Intelligence Authorization Act. (12/16/21)

◆ **The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) has agreed to pay a little more than 11% of costs questioned by the National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Inspector General (OIG) in a Dec. 9 audit.** Auditors tested \$671,000 of \$37 million in costs claimed from Sept. 1, 2017, to Aug. 31, 2020, and questioned \$249,210 related to 25 awards. “Specifically, the auditors found \$91,771 of inadequately supported expenses; \$70,604 of expenses not appropriately allocated to NSF awards; \$63,753 of expenses for which NSF approval was not obtained before transferring the award research to other organizations; and \$23,082 of unallowable expenses [for travel]. The auditors also identified two compliance-related findings for which there were no questioned costs: non-compliance with UTD policies and insufficient controls related to the application of indirect cost rates.” Auditors made a total of 24 recommendations “to ensure UTD strengthens administrative and management controls.” Overall, UTD disputed \$220,199 and agreed with \$29,011 in questioned costs.

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