FERMI

News from HQ

Ilana Harrus

FERMI

Congressional language around NASA's FY10 budget appropriation:

"While the conference report does not adopt the position proposed by the House to limit appropriations available to NASA to one-year while providing an allowance of ten percent for two-years to reflect the research and development nature of the work performed, the conferees will continue to monitor NASA's efforts to improve its obligation rate with commensurate improvements in accrual of costs and outlays to determine if the House's proposal warrants further consideration."

TRANSLATION: Too much of the money lies around "unspent" for too long. We will come back to take it if you don't "spend" it.

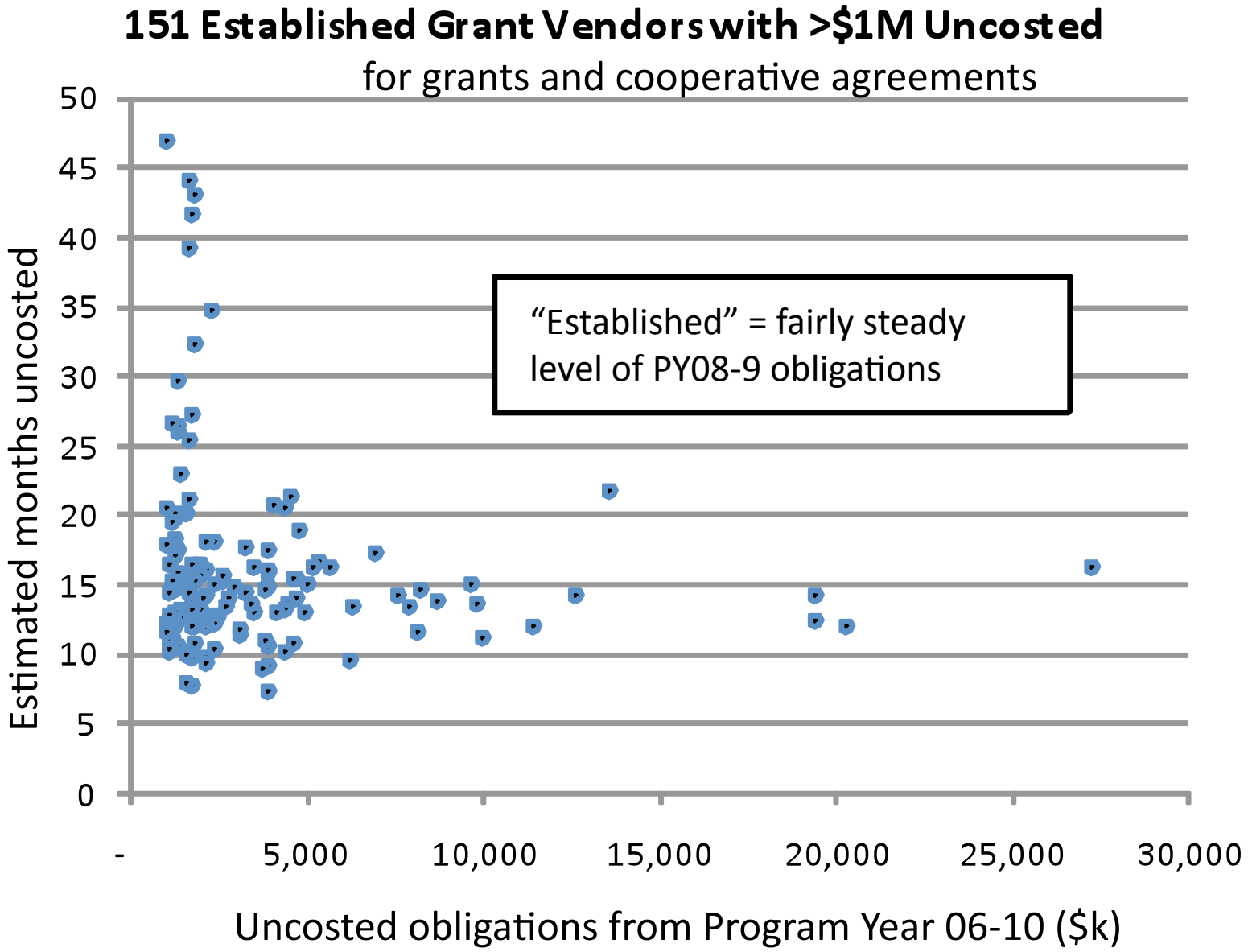
FERMI

Why does this happen?

- Time lag in hiring students and postdocs at universities
- Universities and labs report spending after the fact (often quarterly)
- No-cost extensions to grants
- People “squirrel” away money
- Universities tend to spend their money FIFO (oldest grants first)
- Launch date was in August – Cycles are tuned to that timeframe *(Unique to Fermi)*

In the Science Mission Directorate (Astrophysics, Heliophysics, Planetary Science, Earth Science), grant programs represent **50%** of the uncosted amounts, although they are only **15%** of the total spending.

Typical uncosted carryover equivalent to 14 months spending



FERMI

What can be done?

Many solutions – none of them completely satisfactory.

See Julie's talk – later this morning.

Cycle 3:

Results were just announced (sent out on Monday).

Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
167	198	182
36	77	75
8	3	2
~26%	~40%	~42%

For comparison:

Missions/Programs (2009/2010)	Success rate
Astrophysics Theory	18%
Swift (Cycle 6)	28%
Astrophysics Data Analysis	44%

FERMI