

Policy on Principal Investigator Eligibility

Policy Title	Principal Investigator Eligibility
Policy Owner	Associate Vice President for Research Administration
Responsible Office	Office of Sponsored Projects
Contact Information	Questions about this policy should be directed to the Associate Vice President for Research Administration (401) 874-2636
Approved By	Ted Myatt
Effective Date	August 28, 2019 / revised October 23, 2019 / revised July 2, 2020
Next Review Date	August 28, 2020
Entities Affected by Policy	All Colleges, Departments, or other University entities that conduct sponsored research.
Who Needs to Know About and Follow this Policy	All individuals that plan on conducting sponsored research, sponsored instruction, or other sponsored activities.
Definitions	None
Statutes, Regulations, and Policies Governing or Necessitating This Policy	2 Code of Federal Regulations § 200 UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS
Reason for Policy/Purpose	To define who is eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator.
Abstract	This policy describes who is eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator on a sponsored research proposal.
Related Procedures	None
Procedures Owner	NA

Policy Statement

The Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) reviews, approves, and provides institutional signature for university-wide proposals, awards, and contracts as these documents relate to sponsored research. In addition, OSP is responsible for monitoring of compliance with Federal regulations and University and sponsoring agency policies and procedures regarding the management of sponsored research programs.

Eligibility

A Principal Investigator (PI) is an individual responsible for the preparation, conduct and administration of a grant or contract. The PI and Co-PIs of a sponsored project agree to accept responsibility for the scientific and fiscal conduct of the project and to provide all required award deliverables.

PI's must be tenure track a Full Professor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Emeritus Professor or Marine Research Scientists (URI-GSO). For Emeritus Professors, colleges may have internal review criteria that must be followed. Full-time Lecturers and Senior Staff may serve as PIs if they meet the University criteria and have approval from their Department Head and/or college's Dean's Office. An Adjunct Professor, postdoctoral fellow or student may be recognized as a Co-Investigator.

In the following situations, students or postdoctoral fellows can be recognized as PIs:

- When required by the sponsor and per program guidelines, (i.e., NIH, HRSA, etc.) a student or postdoctoral fellow may be recognized as a PI in the sponsor's proprietary system, like NIH Commons.
- On grants for which the start and termination dates are within the expected term of their fellowship appointment at the university. This situation requires pre-approval from the AVP for Research Administration.

To route proposals through internal systems and obtain required internal approvals, students and postdoctoral fellows must seek a sponsoring PI, who will assume budgetary and reporting responsibilities at the university level (i.e., serve as the internal PI). Even though a student's or postdoctoral fellow's faculty mentor/sponsor is listed as the PI of record in internal university systems, the research must be conducted by the student or postdoctoral fellow as proposed to the sponsor and as required by program guidelines.

In situations where the PI leaves the institution, it is the responsibility of the applicable Dean's Office to ensure all outstanding sponsor reporting is completed in a timely manner.