

**Policies for Research, Scholarship,  
and Creative Endeavors**

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## **Section 1: Research**

One of the three basic missions of the University is research, which is the foundation and key to learning. Research is simply learning at the most advanced, creative, and systematic edges of knowledge, where discovery and imagination constantly recast the relation between the known and the unknown. University research makes application of existing knowledge to important practical problems; it also achieves in pure or theoretic form a basic knowledge that may eventually have application in surprising new ways.

As the largest and most comprehensive public university in the state, UT Knoxville has a major commitment to research in most of the traditional disciplines as well as in many new or emerging fields of study. Fundamental work is conducted in subjects as diverse as anthropology, agriculture, literature, religion, science, engineering, economics, art, and music. The University expects its faculty to participate in research, and encourages and rewards such activity. Deans, directors, and department heads are expected to make this commitment to research an important part of their planning and budgeting.

“Research” has many meanings at a major university. Its content and style vary substantially. It is the discovery of new knowledge, the development, reconciliation or refinement of existing knowledge, the insight and sense of relationship that may be drawn from that knowledge, the development of new techniques and technologies, and the application of such knowledge to the solution of problems. Both applied and basic research are appropriate pursuits of faculty and both are recognized at UT Knoxville. In the arts and humanities, research may include the creation of new art and argument, the edition or translation of texts, and the construction of new models and theories. The imagination and conscience here in evidence are judged indispensable to the University’s full research responsibility.

As the shape and direction of research changes, new problems and subjects arise that require the attention of several disciplines. At such times interdisciplinary research becomes significant. The University aims to encourage such interdisciplinary work by removing or inhibiting administrative barriers to the cooperation without which solid interdisciplinary research is not possible. Some research may demand the effort of a single faculty member working with a few students, another the concerted efforts of faculty from several disciplines or even several institutions. The ongoing research of the faculty provides the vehicle and the environment for theses and dissertation work of graduate students. Many faculty members regularly involve undergraduate students in their research programs as well, so there is an intimate relationship between teaching and research. Because much research aims to solve problems posed or faced outside the University, there is also a clear kinship with the University’s public service.

## **Section 2: Central Administrative Support**

The content and conduct of research are primarily the responsibility of the faculty members who do it. It is the corresponding responsibility of the administration at all levels to exercise strong leadership in encouraging, assisting, recognizing, and rewarding good research. At the central administrative level the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement is specifically charged to provide services in this connection. This office:

1. Assists the faculty in developing and promoting proposals to external sources of support;
2. Works with faculty, department heads, deans, and directors to make effective use of University resources;
3. Assists in developing new concepts, program directions, and procedures;
4. Maintains a support reference library and disseminates potential support information to faculty;
5. Helps faculty to use electronic sources of information such as the Community of Science;
6. Maintains a research website;
7. Reviews and approves all proposals for external support, as well as negotiated changes in existing programs;
8. Renegotiates changes, patents, copyrights and reports as needed;
9. Provides institutional leadership in the long-range development of general research effort;
10. Works to publicize the research accomplishments of faculty; and
11. Distributes Central Administration research incentive funds to aid faculty in their research.

### ***Section 3: Research Council***

The Research Council of the Faculty Senate is an advisory group broadly representative of the faculty. It serves an important function in research program development by analyzing and giving advice on many issues affecting research. The Council makes possible the interaction of representatives from the many areas and programs and provides a means of emphasizing the place of research in the University's mission. Information about research programs is shared and discussed by Council members, who are concerned also to disseminate such information among the general faculty. The Council works closely with the Office of Research on such matters as competitively distributing research incentive funds and advising the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement on policy matters.

## **Section 4: Research Funding**

The University sets aside its own money for research in a number of ways. It allows faculty time for “departmental research” and for “thesis and dissertation supervision.” The University permits a significant measure of discretion within departmental and college budgets to support research and it arranges for various levels of cost sharing, and provides a Faculty Research and Development Fund.

***The Faculty Research and Development Fund Program*** provides awards on a competitive basis for faculty, usually in the summer months. Special emphasis is given to research which is being developed (in which the grant might be viewed as “seed” money for attracting external support) and to activities which may give added emphasis to the development and growth of the individual, department, college and University. Competition for these awards usually occurs in the fall of each year. This fund is administered by the Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Graduate School.

Two other research incentive funds administered by the Office of Research are:

***Research Incentive Funds.*** The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, deposits F&A costs recoveries from sponsored grants and contracts into a general campus fund. A portion of the F&A recovered is given to the generating college/unit. This process is usually completed in October based on the previous fiscal year’s recoveries.

Prior to FY04, the standard methodology for distributing F&A back to the units was 25% of recoveries. In Fall 2004, an updated allocation methodology was adopted based on the recommendations of a committee charged with reviewing the research incentive funds (RIF) procedure. The updated procedure allows for 40% of a rolling three-year average of the F&A recovered by a college or unit to be transferred back to the unit as RIF. Colleges are allowed to request a carryover of up to 30% of their unspent RIF each year-end.

Each college establishes its own internal procedure regarding the distribution of RIF back to their departments. The college may elect to retain all the RIF at the college level. Some colleges retain a percentage for central research support, such as equipment purchase and faculty startup packages. Colleges may elect to transfer all of the funds (and responsibilities) to their departments. Other colleges share a portion with the principal investigator.

RIF funds are intended to be used for research purposes, either departmental research, which could include travel, proposal preparation, startup funding, bridge funding, etc; and/or in support of sponsored grants and contracts by paying for those costs that are unallowable direct charges to grants and contracts, such as telephone, printing, computer purchases, clerical staff, and other unallowable costs.

The F&A cost recoveries that are maintained by the campus administration become part of the general budget and are used to pay Operations and Maintenance costs for the campus as well as various other campus research support costs. In addition, a campus-wide incentive fund,

SARIF (Scholarly activity and research incentive fund) is funded yearly for grant matching, international travel, and other research related needs.

**Scholarly and Research Incentive Fund (SARIF).** This fund was created with the cooperation of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in 1994 and consists of three parts:

- a. **Equipment Matching and Other Research Incentives.** This part of SARIF represents an addition to the Research Incentive Fund directly administered by OR staff. These funds are primarily used to provide matching funds on equipment proposals. Contact the Office of Research for further information.
- b. **Summer Graduate Research Assistantships.** Each department or graduate program can submit one application for support of a graduate student for 3 summer months. Application is made by the faculty member who will oversee the student during the award period. Awards are \$3,000 for 3-month summer graduate research assistantships. These are 50% GRA appointments, and awardees should hold no other GRA or GTA appointments. The \$3,000 award does not include funds for graduate maintenance fees. If the student has not earned a fee waiver from an academic-year GRA or GTA appointment, and if there are no department or college funds to support summer maintenance fees, the faculty member should request additional SARIF funds to cover these costs. Contact the Office of Research for further information. This part of SARIF is cooperatively administered by Office of Research and the Research Council of the Faculty Senate.
- c. **Exhibit, Performance, and Publication Expense Fund (EPPE).** The intent of this fund is to help faculty defray expenses involved in placing the results of their scholarly activity in the public domain by publication, performance, or exhibit. Such expenses might include (but are not limited to) preparation of manuscripts, diagrams, or photographs; page charges; mounting or framing of artworks; rental of exhibit space; preparation of programs or other costs of instrumental or other performances. Manuscript typing costs are excluded from this program. Grants typically are well under \$1,000. Applications may be submitted at any time. Funding decisions will be made monthly by a committee of the Research Council and the Office of Research. Contact the Office of Research for further information.

A steadily increasing amount of external support is available through a variety of grants, contracts, and gifts, which faculty are strongly encouraged to seek. Such money comes from government, business, industry, foundations, and individuals.

Considerable research is also conducted by the faculty without extra financial support, simply on their own initiative and motivation. The University tries, however, to assist faculty members in finding suitable support from appropriate sources.

## **Section 5: Sponsored Programs**

Procedures for the preparation of proposals are covered in detail in the *Sponsored Programs Manual*, copies of which are available in the Office of Research and in departmental offices and online at <http://research.utk.edu/spm>. This manual deals with such topics as allowable costs in federally funded research, proposals and grant processing, personnel costs, indirect costs (overhead), staff fringe benefits, cost sharing, and establishment of accounts.

Initiation of proposals for grants and contracts is the prerogative and responsibility of the faculty. The Office of Research seeks to assist the faculty in this enterprise.



## **Section 6: Bureaus, Centers, Institutes, and Joint Institutes**

Various bureaus, centers, institutes, and joint institutes exist at UT Knoxville. They provide the opportunity to cluster faculty, staff, and student expertise into a specialized unit within the existing structure of The University for the betterment of one or more of our primary missions: teaching, research, and public service. UT Knoxville defines these units as follows:

- **Bureau.** An academic entity focused on a single discipline within a department. Primary funding might come from internal college and/or department sources. The bureau director should have faculty rank within the sponsoring department. The bureau would report to the appropriate department head.
- **Center.** A stand-alone academic entity generally involving more than one college with external funding for its support. The center director should have faculty rank within one of the represented colleges. Centers report to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement.
- **Institute.** An academic entity focused on the disciplines of a single college or center with external funding sources as its primary support and/or ancillary support from the college or center (E-account funds). The institute director should have faculty rank within a representative department. The institute would report to the appropriate college dean or center director.
- **Joint Institute.** An academic entity involving parallel units at UT Knoxville and other institutions. The focus could be on a single discipline or be multidisciplinary in nature. The joint institute director should have faculty rank. The reporting of the joint institute would depend on its disciplinary breadth.

Proposals for such new units are submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement through normal academic channels (e.g., department head, dean). After approval, the performance of these units is periodically reviewed. Many interdisciplinary or other specially oriented programs are handled through informal cooperative arrangements among faculty and departments.

## **Section 7: Research Policy Issues**

### **7.1 Policy on Misconduct in Research and Service**

Institutions of higher education have maintained a centuries-old tradition of integrity and objectivity. The University of Tennessee is pleased with the overall support given by its faculty, staff, volunteers, and students in upholding this tradition and wants to ensure that the highest level of integrity in all academic activities is continued. In recent years, a few well-publicized cases of misconduct in research, including fabrication of results, plagiarism, and misrepresentation of findings, have aroused concern among institutions of higher education, individual investigators, sponsors of research, professional societies, and the general public. Although verified instances of such dishonest behavior are relatively rare, they do indicate the need to be diligent in protecting the integrity of academic work and the stewardship of public and private funds. Allegations of dishonesty by members of the university community must be dealt with carefully and thoroughly and with appropriately defined procedures if a university is to merit continued public confidence and trust. It is with the intent of formally defining the appropriate procedures for addressing allegations of misconduct in research and service that this *Statement of Policy on Misconduct in Research and Service* has been adopted.

### **7.2 UT Research Foundation**

The *University of Tennessee Research Foundation (UTRF)* is formed as a not-for-profit corporation to promote and manage research and technology commercialization throughout the statewide university. With offices in Knoxville and Memphis, the foundation seeks to promote entrepreneurial spirit and grow Tennessee's economy by supporting development and dissemination of intellectual property and helping create technology-related businesses. As the foundation implementation continues, input from faculty and research staff is essential.

The University of Tennessee Research Foundation (UTRF) provides research and technology transfer services to The University of Tennessee and provides expertise in matters involving intellectual property (e.g., patents, copyrights, trademarks, know-how, trade secrets), sponsored research agreements, materials transfer agreements, confidentiality agreements, licensing and related areas. Statements of policy on all policy matters are available in the UTRF office or online at <http://utrff.tennessee.edu>.

### **7.3 Conflicts of Interest**

Objectivity and integrity are essential qualities for employees of any organization and particularly for those who are engaged in the service of a comprehensive public university. If a public university is to carry out its missions in the areas of instruction, research, and public service with unquestioned credibility, it is imperative its employees maintain the highest levels of integrity and objectivity in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. To ensure objectivity and integrity on the part of faculty and staff of The University of Tennessee in areas relating to conflicts of interest both real and perceived, the University has adopted a policy for disclosure with research proposals.

## 7.4 Patents and Copyrights

When the University agrees to render specified services under a contract or grant, it may be obliged to grant certain rights in connection with data developed, copyrights, inventions, etc. Persons working on the grant or contract will be required to sign a disclosure related to creations and inventions. A copy of the disclosure form may be obtained from the Office of Research.

In sponsored research, the sponsors' criteria for patent rights and copyrights will prevail. Therefore it is important for the project director to be thoroughly familiar with the patent and copyright regulations applying to any grant or contract, whether they be in the award document itself or included by reference to other documents, such as Federal Procurement Regulations.

If patentable or copyrightable items should be developed at University expense, these items may be handled through the UTRF. Items developed independently by faculty may be handled through the Foundation at the discretion of the individual.

## 7.5 Standard Review Requirements

The University is morally and legally bound to observe a high level of professional care in these situations. Presently, there are four review committees.

1. The Institutional Review Board (IRB). Federal law requires specific approval and continuing review of research involving human subjects in the social, physical, or biological sciences, or in education, law, or humanities. The University has an established procedure for reviewing proposals for research that involves human subjects. Application for review by the Institutional Review Board must be made before the research is initiated.
2. The Committee on Radioactive Substances is responsible for reviewing, authorizing, and monitoring the use of all radioactive substances on campus. Research involving potential experimental hazards associated with use of toxic materials, infectious organisms, and genetic recombination also require review.
3. The Biohazards Committee is responsible for reviewing proposals for research involving such materials and/or procedures.
4. The Institutional Animal and Care Use Committee (IACUC) is a federally mandated committee, qualified through the experience and expertise of its members, that oversees the institution's animal program, facilities, and procedures. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Public Health Services (PHS) require institutions using animals to appoint an IACUC and charge it with specific responsibilities. To ensure compliance with all regulations, policies and standards in place to protect animal welfare, committee members review all requests for approval to use vertebrate animals. The committee also conducts inspections of all areas where animals are housed and used, reviews the institutional program for animal use, and reports its findings.

## 7.6 Special Review Requirements

Several kinds of research require special review. These include research involving potentially hazardous experiments, narcotics and other dangerous drugs. Guidelines for special review requirements are available in the Office of Research. Because of the necessary lead time for review, it is important to contact the chair of the appropriate review committee at an early stage of proposal preparation.

For example, the Federal Controlled Substances Law of 1971 regulates the legal handling of narcotics and other dangerous drugs (“controlled substances”) in an effort to reduce illicit drug traffic. Persons using narcotics or other dangerous drugs in their research or teaching programs involving either human beings, lower animals, or plants must register through campus channels with the state and obtain a registration number for each research project.

The faculty member should discuss with the department head the need for narcotics and/or dangerous drugs during the early planning stages of a research project or instructional program.

## 7.7 Classified Research and Proprietary Restricted Research

A researcher should inform the department head, the dean of the researcher’s college, and the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement of any classified or proprietary projects. Should research become classified in the course of a project, the principal investigator should inform the above members of the University administration. It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure the protection of research material.

A basic principle in graduate education is that theses and dissertations produced by graduate students will be published and made available promptly to other researchers in the field. When a graduate student is involved in classified or proprietary research, and such research is intended to lead toward a thesis or dissertation, prior approval should be secured from the department head and Dean, and from the Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Graduate School. Should research become classified in the course of a project, these same persons should be notified immediately so that proper procedures can be assured. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to the rejection of a thesis or dissertation manuscript.

## 7.8 Export Control

An export is any oral, written, electronic or visual disclosure, shipment, transfer or transmission of commodities, technology, information, technical data, assistance or software codes to

- anyone outside the U.S. including a U.S. citizen
- a non-U.S. individual wherever they are (deemed export)
- a foreign embassy or affiliate

Export Control regulations are federal laws that prohibit the unlicensed export of certain commodities or information for reasons of national security or protections of trade. Export controls usually arise for one or more of the following reasons:

- The nature of the export has actual or potential military applications or economic protection issues;
- Government concerns about the destination country, organization, or individual, and
- Government concerns about the declared or suspected end use or the end user of the export

The majority of the University of Tennessee's teaching and research activities fall within an exclusion to the export control laws, **BUT** researchers need to know how the laws and exclusions apply to teaching or research in order to know when a change in circumstances can raise an issue.

- Researchers at the "front line" of export control issues because they are in control over the scope of the project.
- Determining whether a certain project or item falls within export control regulation is fact-specific and can change based only on the item or project researchers are involved with.
- If a researcher needs a license and fails to get one, he or she could be subject to individual civil and criminal penalties.

Any research activity may be subject to export controls if it involves the actual export or "deemed" export of any goods, technology, or related technical data that is either **dual use** (commercial in nature with possible military application) or inherently **military** in nature.

Researchers should educate themselves about export controls by attending the Faculty Awareness Workshops that are offered through the Office of Research. It is not necessary to become an expert, but researchers should have a fundamental understanding of the subject to be able to know when to raise questions and alert the University to a possible export controls issue. The materials on the Office of Research web site have been developed for that purpose, and the University is conducting additional educational sessions on export controls to provide information for those who need it.

For questions about the application of export controls to any stage of a specific research project, contact the Export Control Officer listed at <http://research.utk.edu/exportcontrol>.