

Research Compliance & Regulation

Frequently Asked Questions

Getting Started the Right Way on your Grant or Contract Project

Federal and state-governments have a number of health, safety, legal, and administrative laws and regulations that directly impact faculty who wish to do externally funded research or service projects. The University is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all faculty members comply with these rules, hence the general term 'Research Compliance & Regulation'. Below is a listing of these major areas of regulation and compliance and the usual questions that faculty have about these rules.

University Approvals of Grant and Contract Proposals

Why do I need university approvals for grant and contract proposals before submission? *University Policy:* All proposals for grants and contracts must be approved by chairs, deans and the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) before submission to potential sponsors. This approval tells the sponsor that the university supports the proposal and is willing to become stewards of any funds that may be awarded. For more information see <http://www.ecu.edu/osp/>.

Post-Award Accounting of External Funds

Who takes care of the accounting of grant and contract funds and why can't I do it myself? Nearly all sponsors award grants and contracts to the University on behalf of the program director/principal investigator. Sponsors want an institution to be the stewards (fiscal agent) for the awarded funds and to report to them on the use of the funds. The federal government, in particular, has many rules about how its funds can or cannot be used. At ECU the Office of Grants and Contracts Administration is primarily responsible for the accounting of grant and contract funds. For more information you can contact them at 328-9530 or see http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/financial_serv/index-grantsandcontracts.cfm.

Time and Effort

Why do I need to report monthly on my time and effort on my grant or contract project? The federal government requires ECU to have such records. Other universities have had to re-pay the sponsors millions of dollars due to inadequate time & effort record keeping. You will need to report your effort on the project even if the sponsor is not paying ECU for your time. We have a simple, Web-based system for reporting time & effort located at <https://ers.ecu.edu/GenericERS/custom/index.jsp>. Contact: 328-9533 for more information.

Human Subjects in Research

I want to do research with human subjects. What hoops do I need to jump through?

University Policies: 1) All research using human subjects, including social, behavioral and educational research, must either be reviewed and approved by the appropriate University's institutional review board, the UMCIRB's biomedical or behavioral/social board; or judged to be exempt from such review by the UMCIRB; 2) There is a federal mandatory training requirement for all individuals working in human research. You must take the training before you can do research projects with humans. For more information, see Web site <http://www.ecu.edu/irb/>

Animal Welfare

I need animals for my research. What hoops do I need to jump through?

University Policies: 1) All research using animals must have the approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). 2) Mandatory training is required for all individuals working with animals. For more information telephone 744-2436 or see Web site: <http://www.ecu.edu/iacuc/>.

Radioactive Materials and Radiation Producing Machines

How do I order radioactive materials or radiation producing instruments for my research? *University Policy:* All non-clinical use of radioactive material and radiation producing instruments must be approved by the ECU Radiation Safety Committee prior to use. All purchases of radioactive materials or instruments must be done through the ECU Radiation Safety Office after their use has been approved. For more information Contact the ECU radiation safety officer for basic research, Marcus Jeannette, Tel# 744-2418, or see <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/prospectivehealth/radiation.cfm>.

Biohazards: Infectious Agents, Recombinant DNA, and Biowarfare Agents (Select Agents)

What are the rules regarding Potential Biowarfare/Terrorism Agents and other Biohazards? All research applications using infectious or recombinant agents or molecules, or biohazardous substances must be approved by the ECU Biological Safety Committee before project initiation. When using blood or other bodily fluids or tissues, specialized training is required. New Federal Laws now require the registration of laboratories working with select biological agents with the CDC and background checks for all individuals working with these agents. Contact the Biological Safety Officer, John Williams for more information: Tel 744-2237 or see <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/prospectivehealth/biosafety.cfm>.

Chemical Hygiene and Lab Safety

My research will involve the use of chemicals. What am I required to do? *University Policies:* Research involving chemicals must comply with federal regulations (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1450 and EPA 40CFR Part 260). Researchers must 1) adhere to the standard operating procedures listed in the University's Chemical Hygiene Plan, 2) develop lab safety plans to identify specific safety equipment and procedures to protect lab workers and the environment, and 3) have all lab personnel attend mandatory Chemical Hygiene training upon initial employment and then every 3 years as a refresher. Policy also requires that all grant proposals involving the use of chemicals in research be reviewed by an institutional review committee or their designee prior to initiation. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) serves as the review committee for the University. The researcher must submit a completed Hazardous Chemical Use Review Form to EH&S for review and approval (go to <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/oehs/ih/grantreview.cfm> for additional information and to access form). EH&S conducts periodic inspections of all laboratories and is also available for general consultations. For more information contact the Chemical Hygiene Officer at 328-6166 or visit the EH&S website at <http://www.ecu.edu/oehs>.

Conflict of Interest and Commitment

I want to consult with a profit making company and also receive research grant funds from this company. I have been told to avoid Conflicts of Interest and Commitment. What are these conflicts and how can I avoid them? Conflicts of interest and commitment are defined in the ECU policy referenced below. Please note: many apparent conflicts of interest need not be avoided. They can be managed to assure that faculty member's professional and academic standards are maintained. The university can help you here. The first step is a disclosure to the university. University policy requires that all faculty members disclose possible conflict situations at least annually. A simple disclosure form will be sent to you in the Spring of each year by your unit. For the definition of conflicts of interest and commitment see policy statement: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/facultymanual/appendixi/appendixi.htm>.

Research Misconduct

If I see or suspect plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, or other unseemly research activities (possible research misconduct activities), what should I do? The first step is to look at the ECU policy on Research Ethics and follow its guidance: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/facultymanual/part7/76.htm>. Usually you should next contact your department head, or the next higher supervisor, if the department head is involved in the problem. You may also contact the Office of Research Compliance Administration, at 328-9473, if you have questions.

Export Controls

I want to share some software I developed with a colleague in North Korea. I have been told that U.S. export controls may prevent me from doing this. What are export controls? The sharing of certain types of equipment, software, data or other intellectual property with foreign nationals either inside or outside the U.S. is now subject to federal controls. Contact the Office of Research Compliance Administration, at 328-9473 if you plan to ship internationally or if you have questions.

ECU Research Policies

Where can I find copies of the ECU Policies relevant to Research and Sponsored Programs?

See the Research Related Policies web site: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/rgs/Research-Policies.cfm>.