

**Western Michigan University
Faculty Senate
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 19/08

Creation of the Eligibility to Serve as WMU Principal Investigators on Sponsored Projects Policy

Name of Council(s)/Committee(s):
Research Policies Council

Approval Date:
5 December 2019


Implementation Date:
Upon Administrative Approval

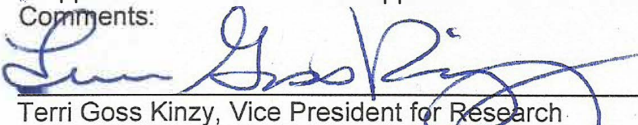
Responsible Office(s) and Responsible Enforcement Official(s):
Office of the Vice President for Research, Associate Director Research Compliance


RECOMMENDATION:


Implement policy created to define the eligibility for who may serve as a Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator on an externally funded sponsored project at WMU.

 11/28/2020
Onur Arugaslan, Chair, Research Policies Council Date

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action
Comments: *amended and approved by the Faculty Senate on 6 February 2020*
 2/6/2020
Richard A. Gershon, WMU Faculty Senate President Date

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action
Comments:  5/2/2020
Terri Goss Kinzy, Vice President for Research Date

☒ X Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action
Comments:  5.10.2020
Jennifer P. Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Date

☒ X Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action
Comments:  5/15/2020
Edward B. Montgomery, WMU President Date

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RECOMMENDATION

Implement policy created to define the eligibility for who may serve as a Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator on an externally funded sponsored project at WMU.

RATIONALE/PURPOSE

When Western Michigan University submits proposals, and accepts awards for externally funded sponsored projects, the University assumes significant financial and legal obligations. While sponsoring agencies fund projects based on the professional expertise of the PI(s) submitting the proposal, the formal award is made to WMU. Under the general oversight and authority of WMU, the PI of a sponsored project bears primary responsibility for technical compliance, completion of programmatic work, fiscal stewardship of sponsor funds, and compliance with administrative requirements of the project, including adhering to all university policies, award terms and conditions and applicable laws and regulations. WMU must ensure that individuals serving as PI have the appropriate technical competence and administrative capabilities to carry out the project, and have a reasonably long-term commitment to the University.

STAKEHOLDERS

All WMU employees who wish to apply for external funding to work on research and sponsored projects.

HISTORY:

- a) Effective date of current version: June 1, 2019
- b) Date first adopted: June 1, 2019
- c) Revision history: N/A
- d) Proposed date of next review: June 1, 2022

PROPOSED POLICY LANGUAGE:

The University has designated individuals in the following categories as being eligible to serve as PI:

- All tenured/tenure track faculty (**traditionally ranked and faculty specialists**) and **contract/grant faculty**.
- ~~All **tenured/tenure track** faculty specialists~~
- ~~Contract/Grant Faculty~~
- Research staff in R1 and R2 positions
- Professional staff on permanent appointment with WMU (who meet the eligibility requirements of the sponsor)
- Emeritus Faculty (see restrictions below)

WMU has designated individuals in the following additional categories as being eligible to serve as co-PI as long as they address any required restrictions as shown below:

- All tenured/tenure track faculty (**traditionally ranked and faculty specialists**) and **contract/grant faculty**.
- ~~All **tenured/tenure track** faculty specialists~~
- ~~Contract/Grant Faculty~~
- Research staff in R1 and R2 positions
- Research staff in R3 positions who serve as Postdoctoral Fellows (See restrictions below)

- Professional staff on permanent appointment with WMU ~~that have appropriate credentials~~ **(who meet the eligibility requirements of the sponsor)**.
- Emeritus Faculty (see restrictions below)

Restrictions

- Emeritus (Retired) Faculty as PI: Some faculty members wish to continue research programs after retirement from the University. It may be possible for Emeriti to serve as the PI on a submitted proposal with the approval of the department chair to assure University related considerations are taken into account, including the space and other resources necessary to conduct the project are available.
- Graduate Students: Graduate students may not serve as PIs on grants except for sponsored programs that are designated specifically for this group. On student-specific grants, a student may be designated as the PI in a proposal for the project if the sponsor requires it. The faculty supervisor must serve as at least the co-PI for the granting agency. The WMU project approval form must list the student supervisor as the PI.
- Research Staff in R3 Positions who serve as post-doctoral fellows: Postdoctoral fellows may serve as co-PIs on grant proposal with an eligible WMU PI. Post-doctoral fellows may not serve as PIs on grants except for sponsored programs that are designated specifically for this group. On such proposals, the postdoctoral fellow may be designated as the PI in a proposal for the project if the sponsor requires it. A faculty supervisor must serve as at least the co-PI for the granting agency. The WMU project approval form must list the postdoctoral fellow's supervisor as the PI.
- The following positions may not serve as PI or Co-PI but may be allowed to serve with special request from the department chair and college dean/Unit's vice president with approval by the Vice President for Research.
 - Part-time instructors
 - Term faculty **and term faculty specialists**
 - Professional staff on term appointment with WMU ~~that have appropriate credentials~~ **(who meet the eligibility requirements of the sponsor)**.
- Other
 - Visiting scholars and adjunct faculty are NOT eligible to serve as PI or co-PI.
 - Other requests for persons not included in the above categories will be considered on a case-by-case basis with Dean's written nomination and Vice President for Research approval.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Failure to follow this Policy and any associated procedures may subject WMU employees to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment by the University, consistent with applicable procedures and Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in WMU, where possible, appointing another individual as PI or Co-PI or in the grant or contract not being accepted or administered by WMU.

KEY DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY

- **Principal Investigator (PI)** – the individual(s) designated by WMU and approved by the sponsor who is responsible for conduct of a research, training or service project supported by extramural funding sources. The PI is the primary researcher who must personally participate in the project and will be responsible for project deliverables to the sponsoring agency.
- **Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)** – the individual(s) designated by WMU and approved by the sponsor who is responsible for a portion of the project design, its technical administrative conduct, or reporting of research training, or service project supported by extramural funding sources.

- **Sponsored Project:** An externally-supported research, training, or public service project related to research or scholarly or professional training to be performed with University resources or facilities, funded through a grant, cooperative agreement, or contract.
- **Adjunct faculty** are persons appointed by the Board of Trustees to any of the professorial ranks for which they have the professional qualifications or the equivalent. Adjunct appointments are made for a specified term. Normally, the adjunct faculty's primary professional affiliation, if any, is outside the University, and compensation for services at the University is not a provision of the appointment.
- **Contract/grant Faculty** are ranked bargaining unit faculty, so designated by Western to conduct research and other programs sponsored by external agencies and, in so doing, perform work different from, and additional to, the usual faculty duties and responsibilities.
- **Faculty specialists** are persons appointed as one of six categories of specialized faculty: (1) lecturer; (2) clinical specialist; (3) professional specialist; (4) aviation specialist; (5) language specialist; and (6) counseling specialists.
- **Graduate assistants** are graduate students pursuing a program leading to a graduate degree at the University and receiving payment for services to the University. "Graduate assistants" fall into two broad categories of assignment: (a) those involved in teaching classes that produce credit hours independent of any other faculty member or instructor, and (b) those involved in assisting with classes, research, and/or administrative responsibilities.
- **Part-time faculty** are persons appointed on a semester-by-semester or session-by-session basis, without Board approval, to teach (or to assist with the teaching of) specific classes or to assume other appropriate instructional responsibilities.
- **Term faculty/staff** are individuals employed for a specific period, with a separation date specified at the time of appointment. All term faculty appointments are made by the Board of Trustees.
- **Visiting professors** are persons appointed by the Board of Trustees for a specified term at the University while on leave from another institution or organization.
- **Emeritus faculty** are faculty members who were tenured and have retired from the University.
- **Professional Staff** are individuals hired under the WMU Staff-compensation system or into executive positions.
- **Research Staff:**
 - Principal research associate (R1): Grant-supported staff members who design, develop and execute/direct empirical research projects, including the design and development of the appropriate research protocols and selection of appropriate analytical and statistical techniques for analysis and evaluation of research outcomes.
 - Senior research associate (R2): Grant-supported staff members who design, administer, implement and evaluate research projects as specified in the grant or contract proposal.
 - Research associate (R3): A research associate staff member is by its nature a training position. Individuals appointed into R3 positions as research associates will have had limited or no professional employment prior to the appointment. It is expected that a research associate will not be appointed for a period that exceeds three years either in a single appointment or by three consecutive one-year appointments.