

**Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
California State University, Los Angeles
September 29, 2006**

Definition and Responsibilities of Principal Investigators

The privilege of serving in the role of Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator on a sponsored project at Cal State L.A. is granted to certain individuals associated with the University, and it carries with it important responsibilities. Because of the oversight obligations implicit in the University's acceptance of outside funds for a project, the University must be in a position of authority over the principal investigator's actions. Therefore, an individual's participation in funded research at Cal State L.A. is dependent upon that individual's relationship with the institution. The requirement of this institutional relationship is consistent with federal agency policies, as illustrated in the following NIH Grant Policy Statement issued in 2003.

The PI is the individual, designated by the [University], responsible for the scientific or technical aspects of the grant and for day-to-day management of the project or program. The PI is not required to be an employee of the [University]. However, because the grant, if awarded, is made to the [University], the [University] must have a formal written agreement with the PI that specifies an official relationship between the parties even if the relationship does not involve a salary or other form of remuneration.

To that end, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research has set out the following requirements that must be met prior to the granting of status as Principal Investigator to any individual.

Who may serve as Principal Investigator at Cal State L.A.?

Only individuals who are currently affiliated with the University in one of the following ways may serve as PI or co-PI on a sponsored project. They include:

- A. MPP employees of the University, subject to approval by their respective vice president.
- B. An individual appointed to a faculty position in an academic department. This may include tenured/tenure-track faculty, temporary faculty, and faculty on FERP status.
- C. Visiting Professors, emeritus faculty, and post-doctoral fellows who have a formal relationship with a University department, subject to approval by the Provost.

In the event that an individual vacates one of the above categories, any continuing award would be reassigned to an individual who qualifies to serve as PI, but only after approvals are obtained from the Provost and the funding agency.

Responsibilities of Principal Investigators at Cal State L.A.

The principal investigator is the individual designated by the University to assume primary responsibility for all essential aspects of the work being carried out in the sponsored project, including scientific or technical aspects of the grant, the day-to-day management of the project or program, completion of all aspects of the funded project's statement of work, compliance with government (OMB A-110 and OMB A-133), sponsor, CSU policies and regulations (including Executive Order 890, Administration of Grants and Contracts in Support of Sponsored Programs), and University policies and regulations, fiscal stewardship of sponsored funds (OMB A-21), and all administrative requirements of the project. The following statement, also excerpted from the 2003 NIH Grant Policy Statement, illustrates the extent of the PI's responsibilities that federal agencies assume will be followed.

The PI is a member of the [University] team responsible for ensuring compliance with the financial and administrative aspects of the award. This individual works closely with designated officials within the [University] to create and maintain necessary documentation, including both technical and administrative reports; prepare justifications; appropriately acknowledge Federal support of research findings in publications, announcements, news programs, and other media; and ensure compliance with other Federal and organizations requirements.

Specifically, a PI:

1. Is responsible for complying with all applicable research and sponsored programs policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, policies dealing with animal care and use protocols, human subject protection, conflict of interest, and intellectual property.
2. Assumes responsibility for complying with all conditions associated with the financial and administrative policies of the sponsored project, including adhering to explicit and implicit deadlines, preparing and submitting all required deliverables to ORSP for transmittal to the agency, exercising fiscally sound management of sponsored project dollars, and successfully completing the scope of work.
3. Is responsible for advising the University of any change in status of licensure, credentialing, privileging, status of relationship with the University or any pertinent information initially provided as a condition of assignment of the status of PI.
4. In the event of a change in status, is responsible for initiating a transition plan to transfer PI status to another approved PI at Cal State L.A., including responsibility for working through ORSP to secure approval by the granting agency.