

15.01.01.C0.01 Administration of Research Enhancement Program



Approved: October 20, 1997
Revised: July 23, 2002
Revised: November 27, 2006
Revised: May 8, 2017
Next Scheduled Review: May 8, 2022

Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi participates in the Research Enhancement Program and adheres to the requirements set by the State of Texas.

Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to state the guidelines and processes which will be followed by this university in allocating Research Enhancement Program funds. The University Research Enhancement Committee is responsible for administering these guidelines.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1987, The 70th Texas Legislature established the Research Enhancement Program [V.T.C.A. Education Code Section 141.001 et.seq.]. The program is in effect at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and at other Texas public senior colleges and universities. The Research Enhancement Program is funded by legislative appropriations according to a formula developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The formula allocates funds based on the number of full-time faculty members or their equivalents employed at each eligible institution. The Research Enhancement Program statute requires each participating institution to:

- (a) develop guidelines and processes to use in selecting the research projects to be funded;
- (b) appoint a faculty committee to review research proposals submitted for consideration and to select the projects to be funded according to the guidelines and processes established by that institution;

(c) provide awards on a competitive basis

2. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The University Research Enhancement Committee consists of two (2) representatives elected by each of the colleges to serve for two (2) years with staggered terms. The University Research Enhancement Committee is chaired by the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach who serves as a non-voting member and provides administrative support to the Research Enhancement Program. The committee is responsible for receiving and evaluating grant proposals and recommending grant awards from Research Enhancement Program funds.

3. COLLEGE RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEES

Each of the College Research Enhancement Committees consists of the college's two (2) representatives to the University Research Enhancement Committee and as many other faculty members elected by that college as deemed necessary. Each of these committees is responsible for receiving and evaluating grant proposals and recommending grant awards from the research funds designated for that college in accordance with the college policies on awarding Research Enhancement Program funds. College Research Enhancement Committee policies and award procedures must be consistent with the eligibility and award selection criteria outlined in the statute. A copy of each college policy must be filed with the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach.

4. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

4.1. Annually, money appropriated for the Research Enhancement Program will be allocated in the following manner:

Sixty (60) percent of the Research Enhancement Program funds appropriated by the legislature will be administered at the university level by the University Research Enhancement Committee. The other forty (40) percent of the funds will be distributed to the colleges to fund college-level research enhancement projects. Half of the college level funds will be divided equally among the academic colleges. The other half will be apportioned among the colleges according to the number of tenured and tenure track faculty teaching in each college during the fall semester.

4.2. College-level research grants normally fund small scale projects that usually do not involve release time from instructional duties. University-level research grants normally fund larger scale projects that may involve funded release time from instructional duties.

5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

5.1. The Research Enhancement Program statute defines a faculty member as a “person

who is tenured or in a tenure-track position and is employed by a public senior college or university.” Only members of the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi faculty who meet these criteria at the time of proposal submission are eligible to apply for Research Enhancement Program funds.

- 5.2. Only research projects that meet the criteria set forth for “Scholarship” in University Procedure *12.01.99.C0.04, Descriptions of Teaching, Scholarship and Creative Activity, and Service*, may be supported by Research Enhancement Program funds.
 - 5.3. Grants awarded from these research funds may not duplicate funds awarded from other granting agencies.
 - 5.4. Research Enhancement Program funds may not be used to support the doctoral dissertation research of the principal investigator.
 - 5.5. Funding for the same, or substantially the same, research project may not be received from both University and College Research Enhancement Committees.
 - 5.6. To avoid conflict of interest, no member of the University Research Enhancement Committee may submit a grant proposal at the university level. Likewise, no member of the College Research Enhancement committee may submit a grant proposal at the college level. A committee member who wishes to do so must resign his or her committee position. In addition, any potential conflicts of interest must be addressed prior to the review of the proposals.
 - 5.7. In order to support the research efforts of as many faculty members as possible, an eligible faculty member may submit only one research proposal every two (2) years for consideration at the university level.
 - 5.8. Research Enhancement Program grants are made with the understanding that the grant recipient will continue employment with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi for at least the academic year following the awarding of the grant. Grant recipients who elect to leave employment at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi at the end of the academic year during which they have been awarded a grant will be expected to decline their summer award.
6. **TIMELINE FOR SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF UNIVERSITY-LEVEL RESEARCH PROPOSALS**
- 6.1. **Timeline**
 - December 1 - Request issued for research proposals for the following academic year
 - March 1 - Deadline for submitting university-level research proposals
 - April 15 - University-level proposals recommended for funding are announced

to recipients

Note: In years when the legislature is in session, the final Research Enhancement Program funding level will not be known until after the legislature has completed its work. Specific funding allocations will be made as soon as possible after the actual appropriations are known.

- 6.2. The research enhancement committees may consider grant applications submitted after the official deadline and petitions to fund grant cost overruns. Such consideration, however, is contingent on available funds and will be given lower priority than applications filed by the deadline.
- 6.3. Official notification of university-level grant awards will be made in writing by the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach. Official notification of college-level grant awards will be made in writing by the dean of the college.

7. GRANT APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- 7.1. Faculty members who wish to submit proposals for university-level grants may obtain an application from the Office of the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach. Copies of previously funded university-level projects are available for inspection by those who wish to review them as examples, after permission has been requested from the principal investigator.
- 7.2. When submitting a Research Enhancement Program grant proposal to the University Research Enhancement Committee, the applicant should remember that it will be reviewed and evaluated by knowledgeable colleagues outside the applicant's own field of specialization. Therefore, the applicant should avoid unnecessary jargon and strive for clarity in presentation.
- 7.3. The grant application includes the following information:
 - (a) A title page including project title, name of the principal investigator (and co-investigators, if any);
 - (b) A statement by the appropriate department chair and dean indicating that if the project is funded, proposed release time from instructional duties will be granted;
 - (c) If the research project involves human subjects, indication that appropriate review has been requested from the Institutional Review Board to ensure that adequate precautions are included in the project to protect the human subjects from physical, emotional, or social risks;
 - (d) A statement of the research objective(s) and/or hypotheses;

- (e) A discussion of the significance of the project to the advancement of knowledge in the field;
- (f) A work plan including discussion of research methodology and expected time line;
- (g) All expected research products (scholarly meeting presentations, articles, exhibitions, etc.) including plans to present results to the external scholarly community as well as plans to seek additional external funding, where appropriate;
- (h) A project budget;
- (i) A two-page curriculum vitae of the principal investigator and any co-investigators, including the titles of any previous University Research Enhancement grants awarded; and
- (j) If applicable, evidence of prior funding results from the College and University Research Enhancement Fund or external funding should be provided. Examples might include articles, presentations, or posters.

7.4. In the case of university-level grants, an electronic copy in .docx or .pdf format of the proposal must be submitted to the University Research Enhancement Committee. The project description (items d-g above) should be single-spaced, font size 12, 1 inch margins, and should not exceed three (3) pages in length. When applying for college-level grants, an appropriate number of copies as specified by the appropriate College Research Enhancement Rule should be submitted.

8. GRANT PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

When evaluating Research Enhancement Program grant applications, the University Research Enhancement Committee considers both the scholarly merit and feasibility of the project. Included in such consideration are such issues as:

- a. the project's adherence to the criteria for "scholarship" in University Procedure *12.01.99.C0.04, Descriptions of Teaching, Scholarship and Creative Activity, and Service*;
- b. overall clarity of the research proposal;
- c. soundness of the research methodology;
- d. indication that the project will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field;

- e. potential that the project will result in a research product that will be presented to the external scholarly community in the field;
- f. reasonableness of the work plan;
- g. appropriateness of the proposed budget in terms of the work plan and anticipated outcomes; and
- h. the record of previous project completion and budget management in the case of applicants who have previously been awarded Research Enhancement Program grants.

In addition, priority will be given to new and early-career faculty members and to faculty members who are conducting work in new areas.

9. ACTIONS BY THE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEES

9.1. The following actions may be taken by the University and College Research Enhancement Committees:

- a. The proposal may be funded as presented.
- b. The proposal may be partially funded.
- c. The proposal may be funded contingent upon changes by the investigator.
- d. The proposal may not be funded.

9.2. In the course of review and deliberation, the research committees may request additional information or clarification from the principal investigator and may consult with specialists in the field.

9.3. The committees are strongly encouraged to provide constructive feedback to all applicants addressing the strengths and weaknesses of their proposals. Written reviews should advise on how to strengthen the proposed work and its impact.

9.4. At both the university and college level, whenever possible, at least two (2) additional meritorious proposals of those not funded should be ranked for possible funding in the event that such funding becomes available at a later date.

10. INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS

10.1. All grants are subject to normal regulations governing the use of state funds except that the statute provides that supplies, materials, services and equipment purchased under the Research Enhancement Program are not subject to the authority of the

State Purchasing and General Services Commission.

- 10.2. Administrative Support: Administrative support and budget tracking are provided to university-level grant recipients by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach. Similar services are provided to college-level grant recipients by the college budget offices.
- 10.3. Expenditure Deadlines: In compliance with university fiscal procedures, all expenditures will be encumbered in accordance with the university expenditure deadlines. Research Enhancement Program funds are an annual appropriation and may not be carried over past the end of the fiscal year (August 31) for which the grant was awarded.
- 10.4. Equipment: When a faculty research grant has been completed or terminated, any equipment purchased by the grant remains the property of the university. Books or similar research materials purchased by a research enhancement grant will revert to the university library upon completion of the project. The recipient of the grant, however, will retain rights to use the equipment until s/he leaves the university or no longer needs the equipment.
- 10.5. Travel: Any travel permitted with these funds must comply with university guidelines regarding travel.
- 10.6. Research Assistants: In accordance with the provisions of the grant as approved by the Research Committee, the grant holder may employ students and others as research assistants. Administrative support in employment and payroll matters is provided by the college budget office for college-level grants and by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach for university-level grants.
- 10.7. Progress Reports: A written progress report may be required as determined by the University Research and College Research Enhancement Committees. These reports, along with any other relevant materials, will become a part of the permanent record of the research project.
- 10.8. Final Report: A formal written report is required upon completion of each funded research project. This report includes a summary of the project's (a) design, (b) findings, (c) conclusions, (d) expenditures, and (e) any scholarly manuscripts, presentations or publications produced. Two (2) copies will be filed with the chairperson of the University Research Enhancement Committee. This report should include an appropriate title page and be bound in a manner durable enough for permanent filing and easy retrieval. The value of the final report cannot be overemphasized since it is an integral part of the permanent record of the project. It is available to accrediting and other supervisory agents, and the University or College Research Enhancement Committees in determining the grantee's capabilities for subsequent grants.

The final report is due October 1 following completion of the funding period. If the report cannot be submitted by this date, the principal investigator may request an extension from the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach. The request for extension must state the reasons for the delay, and when the report will be submitted.

- 10.9. **Publicity:** The responsibility for publicity relating to faculty research grants approved, or in progress, rests with the Office of Public Affairs.
- 10.10. **Acknowledgment of Support:** Recipients of faculty research grants are encouraged to submit their research findings for publication. Acknowledgment should be included in the publication stating that the project received financial support through a Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Research Enhancement Program Grant. Researchers should supply a copy of the published materials to the chairperson of the University Research Enhancement Committee where it will become a part of the project record, and can be made available to members of the University and College Research Enhancement Committees.
- 10.11. **Intellectual Property:** Any copyrights, patents, or royalties resulting from research done under a faculty research grant are subject to the university rules and procedures and the Texas A&M University System policies and regulations regarding intellectual property.

Related Statutes, Policies or Requirements

System Policy [*15.01, Research Agreements*](#)

System Regulation [*15.01.01, Sponsored Agreements – Research and Other*](#)

University Procedure [*12.01.99.C0.04, Descriptions of Teaching, Scholarship and Creative Activity, and Service*](#)

University Procedure [*15.01.01.C0.02, Administration of Sponsored Agreements*](#)

Contact Office

Contact for clarification and interpretation: Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach
(361) 825-3881