

Principles and Practices of Conducting Research and Services in the College of Engineering and Computer Science (Revised August 2005)

1. Preamble

This document supplements existing CSUN policies and procedures. Examples of such documents are the “Joint Statement of Policies and Procedures for Administrating Grants and Contracts” and “Research and Sponsored Projects: Mini-Guide” and other documents governing human resources matters such as “Student assistant/Work Study student Salary Schedule.” Definition of research is as described in the “Joint Statement of Policies and Procedures for Administrating Grants and Contracts.”

2. Objectives

The objectives of conducting research and services in the College of Engineering and Computer Science are to support the missions of the California State University, Northridge. Specifically, research and services are to benefit (a) student learning, (b) the industrial and technological community we serve, (c) faculty currency and continuous development, and (d) the scientific and technological community at large.

3. Externally Funded Research and Services

A. Research.

Whenever a research project is sponsored by an external source with funding, a faculty member shall serve as the project’s principle investigator or project director. Guidelines on budget construction and approval and the responsibilities of the principle investigator or project director are described in the “Research and Sponsored Projects: Mini-Guide” and the “Joint Statement of Policies and Procedures for Administrating Grants and Contracts.”

B. Services

When a situation arises that an external entity, public or private, wishes to have certain services provided by any component of the College, and the entity is to pay for such services, the following guidelines apply:

- a. As part of a State organization, we must not engage in services that are in direct competition with private providers in this region. The charge of the service must not be lower than that of any private establishment.
- b. The Unit responsible for the service is a Department or a support unit of the

College. A faculty member or a staff shall serve as the project manager and be in charge of delivering the service. The content of the service, including cost, must be developed by the project manager in the form of an MOU/contract with the external party and approved by the Department chair, College dean and the Office of University Controller. Before any service is rendered to the external party, the MOU/Contract must be signed by the external party and the department chair. A budget on how the funds of the project are to be spent must be approved by the Department Chair and College Dean.

- c. The cost of the service as detailed in the MOU/contract is to be paid by the external party according to the agreement in the MOU/contract. Funds generated from the service shall be deposited in a Department State Trust account. The chair of the Department has the responsibility of making certain all rules governing State Trust accounts are followed in charging costs to the account.
- d. The funds generated by such services must be sufficient to cover all direct costs of the service. Any remainder funds for such a service should be managed by the department chair. Spending of such remainder funds are subject to university guidelines on the use of indirect cost funds.

C. Design Clinic

A well established unique practice in the College is a “Design Clinic.” A Design Clinic could be a research and/or development project, funded by an external entity. It is a virtual clinic involving (i) several students, (ii) at least one faculty supervisor (project director), and (iii) at least one external sponsor who provides funding and a real world problem. The faculty supervisor (project director) shall develop a project plan, including budget, expected outcomes and how the project directly involves and benefits students, to be approved by the Department chair, the College dean, and the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. The guidelines for the development of a budget are published separately. The financial management of a Design Clinic follows the same rules as those of a research project. The faculty supervisor (project director) has the same responsibilities as those of the principle investigator or project director of a research project. At the end of a Design Clinic, the faculty supervisor is to produce a report to the Department Chair specifically on student involvements and benefits.

4. Externally Sponsored Research and Services without Funding

When a situation arises that an entity, public or private, wishes to have certain research or services provided by any component of the College, and the entity does not pay for such research or services, the following guidelines apply:

- a. We must not provide research or services for free if such research or services are routinely charged for by private providers.
- b. A faculty-in-charge must be willing to provide such research or services without monetary compensation.

- c. If students are involved, they must be informed in advance that no monetary compensation is to be expected. The faculty-in-charge must also inform all participating students that he/she has no vested interest in the sponsoring entity as defined by the “Conflict of Interest” guidelines of the University.
- d. No services can be provided without an identified faculty-in-charge and the prior approval of the department chair.