Standard Operating Procedures for Non-Faculty at UNT
to Gain Authorization to Serve as Principal Investigator for a Research Grant
(Revision of 11-05-14)

For the purpose of applying for extramural grants and sponsored projects, a principal investigator (PI) at UNT is the person responsible for executing and financially managing the grant or project and a co-principal investigator (Co-PI) shares the duties of the PI. The PI and Co-PI are most often full-time, permanent employees, whose official job roles and responsibilities include serving as a PI or Co-PI on extramural grants or sponsored projects. Since a proposal and subsequent award commit UNT in many ways, it is important to establish the qualifications and ability of PI's and Co-PI's to carry out the work on externally funded grants and sponsored projects.

A person holding any of the following academic ranks can serve as a PI or Co-PI: professor, associate professor, assistant professor, librarian, associate librarian, research professor, research associate professor, research assistant professor, research scientist IV, research scientist III, or research scientist II.

Others may request approval to serve as a PI or Co-PI, holding the positions of assistant librarian, postdoctoral research associate, research scientist I, director, lecturer, visiting professor, or adjunct professor. For persons with these job titles, PI or Co-PI status may be requested by submitting the following to the Office of Research and Economic Development:

(i)   A memorandum addressed to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development providing justification for the request and summarizing the requestor's qualifications, co-signed by the requestor's unit head (for example, within an academic department, the Department Chair).

(ii)   The requestor's curriculum vitae.

(iii)   A memorandum from a faculty member (who is a qualified PI or Co-PI as defined here) who will commit to assuming the PI or Co-PI responsibilities should the requestor leave UNT.

Such a request must be made for each proposal submission and will be approved or denied by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, the Associate Vice President, or their designee. Approval must be obtained before submitting the proposal package to the Office of Grants and Contracts Administration.

Important notes regarding the request for PI or Co-PI qualification approval:

1) The backup PI or Co-PI should be someone both capable and committed to carrying on the work of the grant or sponsored project should the PI or Co-PI leave the University. Persons qualified to sign this letter include (a) (if the requestor is in an academic unit) a regular faculty member in the requestor's unit who is otherwise qualified (as defined here) to be a PI or Co-PI and is qualified to manage the project and continue its work, and (b) (if the requestor is in an administrative / non-academic unit) a UNT administrator at the level of Assistant Vice President or above who is qualified to manage the project.

2) The backup PI or Co-PI memorandum must be dated and contain the printed name and signature of the person designated to be the "Backup PI" or "Backup Co-PI". The backup PI or Co-PI memorandum must be a separate document, preferably on unit stationery. Suggested wording is given below. Please select PI or Co-PI where indicated.

   I am aware that has requested permission to serve as Principal Investigator [Co-Principal Investigator] on the project entitled, I support this request and agree to assume responsibility for the project (to the extent allowable by the funder) in the event that the PI [Co-PI] leaves UNT or is otherwise unable to complete it, if the funding is to remain at UNT. Should my assumption of responsibility be impossible (e.g., if I have left UNT prior to the PI [Co-PI] becoming unable to complete the project), this responsibility will fall to (1) the administrator who assumes my position (if an administrative official) or (2) the chair of my academic unit (if a faculty PI [Co-PI]).