

Research Policy

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Overview

Fahad Bin Sultan University identifies research as a key result area (KRA) of its overall institutional performance as declared in its mission statement. Hence, this policy is developed in alignment with the standards of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) and reflects FBSU's commitment to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Research is an integral part of the educational process, a pathway to address the needs of the local community, and a pivotal contributor to the development of the local knowledge-based economy through innovation, research excellence, and community engagement. Research is also regarded as a potential source of income for the University.

Purpose

This research policy provides a broad course of action for the development and implementation and management of research activity across the university.

Scope

Institution-wide

Definitions:

Unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply for purposes of this policy:

- **Research:** the conduct of systematic inquiry, experimentation, and knowledge sharing undertaken by faculty members and students.
- **Funding:** The financial and material support provided by the university to enable the conduct of research projects.
- **Research Grants Bylaws:** A set of rules and procedures codified by the university to guide and regulate the internal funding processes of research projects and stipulate their expected deliverables.
- **Book-Authoring and Book-Translation Grants Bylaws:** A set of rules and procedures codified by the university to guide and regulate the internal funding process for book-authoring and book-translation projects.
- **College Research Committee (CRC):** A committee chaired by the college dean and members representatives from all colleges to take charge of processing all research activities within the college.
- **Research Labs Bylaws:** A set of rules and procedures codified by the university to govern the creation, funding, and operation of research laboratories, outlining their structure, objectives, and expected deliverables.
- **Research Lab:** A collaborative group of researchers from diverse and integrated academic disciplines, who have sufficient research capabilities and experience to ensure high-quality research production, knowledge transfer, and commercialization opportunities.
- **Research Group:** A formally recognized team of researchers dedicated to conducting collaborative research projects in a certain field of inquiry.
- **Distinguished Research Incentives:** Monetary rewards for faculty members who publish research papers in high-impact journals.
- **Principal Investigator:** A university faculty member who heads a research project team and is responsible for managing the project's execution and budget.
- **Co-Investigator:** A faculty member, or an expert, who works with others on a research project under the leadership of a principal investigator.
- **Research Assistant:** A person who supports specific functions within a research project without contributing intellectually to its conceptual or analytical aspects.
- **Consultant:** An expert who provides technical advice on specific aspects of a research project.

- **Reviewer:** An expert in the relevant research area assigned to provide critical appraisal of a proposed or completed research project assessing its quality, validity, and compliance with academic or ethical standards.
- **Institutional Review Board:** FBSU's internal research ethics committee responsible for ensuring that any FBSU-affiliated research involving human or animal subjects adheres to local and international codes and regulatory ethics protocols.
- **Royalty Income:** Revenue generated from the licensing, commercialization, or use of intellectual property developed through university-affiliated research. This includes income from patents, copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary technologies and is distributed according to the university's commercialization policy.
- **Misconduct:** Any unethical or dishonest behavior in the conduct of research, including but not limited to fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, improper authorship, failure to disclose conflicts of interest, or violations of research ethics. Misconduct undermines the integrity of research and is subject to investigation and disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.
- **Intellectual Property (IP):** Any idea, invention, design, or creative work developed through research, such as software, products, publications, or discoveries. At FBSU, intellectual property developed by faculty, staff, or students using university resources - whether fully or partially - is subject to the university's intellectual property policy, which governs ownership rights, protection, disclosure, and commercialization.

Policy

Research Projects:

One of the major goals of Fahad Bin Sultan University is to promote academic research across applied, technical, and theoretical domains of knowledge. The College invites proposals from its faculty members and passes them through a process by the College Research Committee (CRC). Proposals deemed feasible and of significant scientific merit are awarded the necessary funds and subjected to a follow-up process. The process is guided by the Research Grants Bylaws. Faculty members are also encouraged to seek external funding opportunities to broaden the scope and impact of their research.

Research Groups:

To strengthen the university's research capabilities in specific fields, FBSU supports the establishment of focused research groups. A proposal for the creation of a research group is submitted by faculty members to the concerned CRC and subsequently reviewed by the college

council. The council's recommendation is submitted to the SRC for final approval. Once approved, the research group receives initial seed funding and appropriate physical space. The research group's output and feasibility will be periodically assessed. Groups showing sustained productivity and growth potential may be upgraded to research centers, centers of excellence, or spin-off commercial entities.

Research Labs:

The university also encourages the establishment of specialized research laboratories to support focused research initiatives. Proposals for the creation of research labs follow a process similar to that of research groups: initial submission to the CRC, review by the college council, and final approval by the Scientific Research Committee (SRC). Approved labs are provided with seed funding and designated facilities. Their performance is periodically evaluated. Labs that exhibit strong research output and long-term potential may be developed into research centers, centers of excellence, or commercial spin-offs.

Research Expectations:

All faculty members who hold a doctoral degree are expected to engage in research activities and publish scholarly work. Research output constitutes a significant component of their annual performance evaluation. Faculty members without a doctorate are also encouraged to engage in research and publication activities. Publishing in high-impact journals enhances faculty members' retention prospects and qualifies them for *Research Incentives*.

Research Ethics:

FBSU mandates that all research involving human or animal subjects adhere to both local and international ethical standards and protocols. Accordingly, any research proposals involving such subjects must be submitted for review and approval to FBSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is officially registered with the National Committee of Medical and Bioethics. For detailed procedures and requirements, refer to the FBSU Research Ethics Guidelines.

Research Activities:

FBSU is committed to fostering an active research-conducive environment and enhancing the research skills of students and junior researchers. To support this goal, FBSU organizes a number of annual research forums, which may be discipline-specific or interdisciplinary in nature. These forums and international symposiums are designed by the Colleges specifically to encourage undergraduate students to engage in research by writing research papers or preparing research posters and presenting their work to peers and faculty members. Additionally, FBSU hosts international symposiums to further promote academic exchange and research development.

Research Commercialization:

In alignment with the University's mission to advance research and serve the community, FBSU actively supports and encourages the commercialization of university research for the broader benefit of society and the KSA. FBSU promotes the development and application of research outcomes while ensuring the protection of both university and individual rights.

The commercialization program covers research conducted by faculty members during their affiliation with FBSU, as well as any work utilizing FBSU resources, whether partially or fully. Under this policy, the inventor should receive forty percent (40 %) of the net royalty income. Joint inventors share in the 40% equally. Such shares will continue to be paid to the inventor even if his/her association with the university has ended. In case of death of the inventor, the royalty shares will be paid to the lawful heirs according to Saudi laws.

Research Integrity and Misconduct

FBSU upholds the highest standards of research integrity and expects all researchers to conduct their work with honesty, transparency, and accountability. Any form of research misconduct - including fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or unethical authorship - is strictly prohibited. Allegations of misconduct will be investigated by an independent committee in accordance with the university's Research Misconduct Policy. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken where necessary.

Capacity Building and Continuous Faculty Development

FBSU is committed to developing the research capabilities of its academic staff. The university shall organize regular training workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs on research methodology, grant writing, publication strategies, and research ethics. Faculty members are encouraged to participate in national and international research networks and collaborative initiatives.