**Principal Investigator Eligibility**

Issuing Officer: Chief Academic Officer  
Responsible Dept: Office of the Chief Academic Officer  
Effective Date: 2/1/2012 (target)  
Supersedes: n/a

I. PURPOSE  
This Policy is intended to set forth the eligibility requirements and the duties and responsibilities of a Principal Investigator (PI) at Loyola Marymount University (LMU). This Policy also describes the processes for requesting and approving exceptions to the PI eligibility requirements.

II. DEFINITIONS  
**Principal Investigator** is an employee of LMU (normally with an academic appointment) who is or becomes eligible under this policy to submit a proposal for extramural support for a research, training, or public service project, who personally participates in the project to a significant degree, and who has primary responsibility for the scientific, technical, and administrative conduct and reporting of the project, including financial matters. A Principal Investigator who is the head of a training or public service project may be known as a Project Director or Project Administrator. For the purposes of this policy, the terms shall be considered equivalent.

**Co-Principal Investigator** is an investigator who will share responsibility for the scientific, technical, and administrative conduct and reporting of a project with the Principal Investigator. Each individual named as a Co-Principal Investigator at LMU must meet the same eligibility requirements as a Principal Investigator. There may be more than one Co-Principal Investigator.

**Multiple Principal Investigator** is one of several Principal Investigators who is expected to equally share responsibility for leadership of multidisciplinary and other types of “team science” projects that are not optimally served by the single Principal Investigator model.

III. STATEMENT  
A. Eligibility and Administrative Duties  
Eligibility to serve as a Principal Investigator, a Co-Principal Investigator (PI) or one of several Multiple Principal Investigators (PI) is contingent upon continuation of the employment or other status under which eligibility was initially determined; and compliance with all applicable policies of the University and the funding agency. In the event of an apparent conflict between policies of the University and the funding agency, the more restrictive policy shall be followed. Most funding agencies recognize only one Principal Investigator. In those instances where several names are listed in the proposal, the agency assumes that the first name listed is *primus inter pares* (first between equals).

Whenever the funding agency recognizes only one Principal Investigator, the University will follow suit and direct all administrative correspondence to the first person listed, and that individual shall be identified as Principal Investigator. Additionally, when subcontracts or subgrants are anticipated under a proposed project, the Principal Investigator for the subrecipient institution may be named a Co-Principal Investigator on the LMU proposal.
On certain kinds of collaborative research some funding agencies will recognize Multiple PIs. When this is the case, and in those instances when Multiple PIs are named in a proposal for research support, sponsors require incorporation of a project leadership plan into the proposal. Additionally one of the Multiple PIs must be designated the Contact Principal Investigator (PI). The Contact PI is the person responsible for relaying communications between the investigators and the funding agency, and for receiving and coordinating all communications with LMU administrative offices and sponsors. The Contact PI is also responsible for ensuring that all internal approvals between administrative offices and the sponsors are procured. The Contact PI will be responsible for: identifying those other investigators who should disclose financial interests; all internal financial and personnel matters; and initiating and signing any correspondence with the funding agency.

B. Eligible LMU Employees
The following categories of LMU employees are eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-PI or Multiple PI as specified:

1. A Full Time Faculty member as defined in the Faculty Handbook may serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-PI or Multiple PI on any extramurally funded project. This category includes: Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Clinical Faculty, Research Faculty, Instructor/Senior Instructor, and Visiting Professor.

2. Incumbents holding the position of Director may serve as a Principal Investigator (or Project Director or Project Administrator), Co-PI or Multiple PI on extramurally funded projects conducted under the purview of their respective organizational units.

3. Other academic appointees, but in rare instances also non-academic personnel, may serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-PI or Multiple PI on an exception basis with the written approval of the appropriate campus official, as noted in III.C.1, below.

4. Postdoctoral trainees and “fellows” may not normally serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-PI or Multiple PI, although, exceptions may be made for postdoctoral trainees who are applying for support for research training and mentored training grants intended to enhance their professional skills and to prepare them for research independence. In no case should the duration of such a proposed grant exceed the period of the traineeship. Faculty advisors or mentors will typically be designated as Principal Investigators for graduate student fellowships awarded as grants. Typically, postdoctoral trainees and “fellows” should not apply for research support intended for independent investigators.

C. Exceptions
Exceptions to the Principal Investigator eligibility requirements for submitting a contract proposal or a grant application may be granted by the appropriate campus officials.

1. Authority to Approve Exceptions
The following campus officials with administrative responsibility for the unit which will administer the award may approve, by exception, the submission of a contract or grant proposal by appointees in positions other than those noted above in section III.B:

   • Senior Vice Presidents
   • Vice Presidents
   • Deans

2. Requests for Exception
Exceptions to the general eligibility requirements will be considered upon submission of a written request to the appropriate campus official noted in C.1, above. The written request must justify the exception in terms of the following criteria:
• That such action is clearly in the best interests of the University;
• That space and facilities can be arranged without detriment to the regular instructional research responsibilities of LMU; and
• That the applicant is an LMU employee, usually appointed at more than 50 percent time, who is able to carry out the responsibilities incumbent upon a Principal Investigator.

The request must be signed by the appropriate Department Chair or Supervisor, and should contain information sufficient for the assessment of the request. Upon approval, a copy of the request signed by a campus official with authority to approve the exception, shall accompany the application for funding when the proposal materials are forwarded to the Office for Research and Sponsored Projects.