Research at UTSA

Vice President for Research

The Office of the Vice President for Research (http://research.utsa.edu/ora) supports the research community by facilitating growth, enabling productivity, and pursuing excellence. The UTSA Research Office comprises the Vice President’s office, which includes the central finance and communications functions, and four subunits: Sponsored Project Administration (OSPA), Research Support (ORS), Research Integrity (ORI), and Commercialization and Innovation (OCI). The VPR serves as the Institutional Official for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Institutional Committee on the Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

Office of Sponsored Project Administration

The Office of Sponsored Project Administration (http://research.utsa.edu/texas-university-research/utsa-research/research-grants) (OSPA) promotes, supports, and administers sponsored program awards and provides the highest quality Pre- and Post-Award services in generating and administering external awards in the pursuit of research, scholarly activities and public service. OSPA ensures that the administration of sponsored programs from proposal submission to award close-out is consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies. OSPA operates six Research Service Centers (RSCs) designed to provide direct service to faculty and staff in all areas of research administration. The six RSCs are in the following areas: Engineering; Sciences; Liberal and Fine Arts, Business and Honors College; Education; Institute for Economic Development; and UTSA’s Downtown Campus.

In addition to the RSCs, OSPA includes an Information Systems and Technology group, which oversees upgrades, maintenance, and development of all research-support software platforms, an Audits unit, and a Contracts and Industry Agreements team to facilitate and support UTSA-sponsored projects and research enterprise by drafting, negotiating, and executing a variety of contracts and agreements.

Office of Research Support

The Office of Research Support (http://research.utsa.edu/ors) (ORS) provides a variety of services and support programs for research-engaged faculty and students to develop and successfully manage their respective research programs.

Undergraduate Research

The mission of the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) is to sustain a collaborative network of programs to engage and support undergraduate students’ participation in research and scholarly activities in all areas of academic inquiry. This includes facilitating relationships between exploratory students and faculty members performing research, as well as progressively more competitive experience opportunities such as comprehensive undergraduate research projects.

Research Faculty Development

ORS, in partnership with UTSA Libraries and the Vice Provost’s Office of Academic and Faculty Support offers a comprehensive program in professional development for faculty in the areas of scholarly and research skills development through “The Faculty Center at UTSA”. Research-based professional development opportunities are offered continuously through each semester, ranging from grant writing and proposal development topics to research-specific seminars and conferences. ORS provides faculty development funding to UTSA researchers through institutional seed grant programs and builds strategic partnerships with research-based organizations and institutions at the local, regional and national level.

Research Faculty Support

ORS serves as a catalyst for interdisciplinary research through the promotion of innovative scholarly research and artistic activities that cross college and departmental boundaries and reach externally to industry and academic partners. To further expand UTSA’s research potential, ORS also develops strategies and infrastructure for ongoing research activities by establishing a unified framework to improve institutional interdisciplinary programs that are nationally competitive. To successfully increase funding opportunities available to UTSA, the ORS manages an internal selection process to assist with limited submission opportunities, and provides customized proposal development support to research faculty engaged in the pursuit of large, multidisciplinary funding programs.

Research Centers and Institutes

ORS provides support and administrative guidance to research centers and institutes. Centers and institutes are dedicated to addressing a wide variety of challenges and opportunities that exist globally, regionally and even locally. They facilitate research work at UTSA, support learning and teaching and facilitate outreach and engagement with the community. ORS is also responsible for conducting strategic reviews for centers and institutes to ensure they meet UT system and UTSA regulations and policies and to ensure fiscal responsibility and programmatic growth and success.

Core Research Facilities

ORS provides strategic guidance and support of core research facilities at UTSA. Core research facilities offer both advanced technologies and equipment with a goal to make instrumentation and expertise available to UTSA research faculty, their staff and students, who all benefit from the shared cost of these resources.

Office of Research Integrity

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) supports the UTSA research community in its commitment to high research standards of research integrity and scholarly excellence. The Office promotes ethical behavior and best practices by anticipating risk and communicating research compliance standards for meeting research goals. ORI promotes the ethical conduct of research in the following areas: use of humans and animals in research, biosafety, chemical safety, radiation and laser safety, conflict of interest in research and intellectual property, export control, BSL3 facilities, and the responsible conduct of research training. The Assistant Vice President of Research Integrity serves as the Research Integrity Officer related to research misconduct allegations.

Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board (http://vpr.utsa.edu/oric/irb) (IRB) for the protection of human subjects is the university committee that reviews and approves human subject research for the purpose of protecting the rights and welfare of those subjects. The IRB advises and educates researchers, staff and students on research with human subjects and promotes best practices for the ethical conduct of research with these individuals.
Institutional Animal Care and Use
The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (http://vpr.utsa.edu/oric/iacuc) (IACUC) assures the well-being and proper care of all vertebrate animals used for research and educational purposes at UTSA and serves the public by ensuring institutional compliance with all legal and ethical standards regarding the use of animals in research.

Laboratory Animal Resources Center
The Laboratory Animal Resources Center (http://research.utsa.edu/larc) (LARC) advises and educates researchers, staff and students on animal experimentation issues and promotes best practices for the responsible use of animals. LARC provides high-quality, cost-effective research animal resources, veterinary and personnel training, and expertise in laboratory animal technology and medicine.

BSL3 Laboratory Facilities
Under the direction of the Laboratory Compliance Manager and in close partnership with the Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management, UTSA’s BSL3 facilities are managed in support of faculty research in a variety of research areas.

Biosafety, Radiation & Laser Safety, and Chemical Safety
Committees are in place to support all faculty and staff whose research involves biosafety, radiation and lasers, and chemicals. These committees operate in close partnership with staff in the Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management.

Conflict of Interest in Research and Intellectual Property
The Committee for Conflict of Interest in Research and Intellectual Property assures that a high level of objectivity in the development and reporting of research results will be implemented and maintained at UTSA.

Export Control
Following federal criteria, ORI assures international partnerships and exchanges and research with non-U.S. persons while protecting the export of certain controlled technologies. These efforts restrict access to goods and technology in order to advance U.S. foreign policy goals, prevent terrorism, protect the economy, promote trade goals, and prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, biological, chemical).

Office of Commercialization and Innovation
The Office of Commercialization and Innovation (http://research.utsa.edu/commercialization) (OCI) promotes the creation and commercialization of intellectual property at UTSA by students, faculty, and staff. The OCI manages the university portfolio of intellectual property, engages companies in research and commercialization partnerships, and provides intellectual property education and training to students, faculty and staff. The UTSA New Venture Incubator (NVI) enables university start-ups and partner companies to be collocated on campus and participate in the growth of UTSA’s research and commercialization activities. The OCI also operates a proof-of-principle fund to help bridge the gap between basic research and applied innovations. The OCI strives to maximize the translation of UTSA discoveries into the hands of commercial partners that create new products and services.