Research Office Policies and Procedures

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1. Research Office
Policies and Procedures

1.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Adventist University of Health Sciences (AHU) Research Office (RO) is to manage the AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process linking Scientific Review Committee (SRC), Institutional Review Board (IRB), External Funding Steering Committee (EFSC) and Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) reviews and approvals with notification to the investigators.

1.2 Goals

- To keep all policies and procedures regarding to the committees and offices involved in the research process.
- To manage and provide support to students, faculty and staff on AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process.
- To manage the registration of the research projects submitted and decisions on applications.
- To provide letters of notification of the reviews.
- Manage rights and duties regarding research project submission, including the required reports.
- Recommend the reading documents and information around the scientific knowledge.
- To support and advance excellence in AHU research projects endeavors and curricula.

- To provide continuing support to investigators for the successful completion of their projects, including, but not limited to:
    - Literature review
    - Study design
    - Data analyses
    - Interpretation of findings
    - Dissemination

1.3 Resources:

In order to manage the University's endeavors in research projects, the following resources have been established with their distinct purposes:

1. Research Office (RO): to manage applications for registration of research projects, submit application forms for approvals from appropriate committees, and serve as a resource to investigators and other interested individuals.
2. Scientific Review Committee (SRC): to grant approvals on the scientific merits of proposed studies.
3. Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS): to assure environmental protection, fire and life safety, emergency management, laboratory, chemical, biological and radiation health and safety.
4. Institutional Review Board (IRB): to grant approvals on the ethical merits of projects involving human subjects.
5. External Funding Steering Committee (EFSC): to grant approvals for requested funds deemed necessary for study completion.

2. AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process and Timeline

2.1 Submission Timeline:

The AHU Research Office (RO) manages the AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process linking Scientific Review Committee (SRC), Institutional Review Board (IRB), External Funding Steering Committee (EFSC), and Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) committee's reviews and approvals, with notifications to investigators.

There is an open submission system which means that any investigator may submit an application at any time.
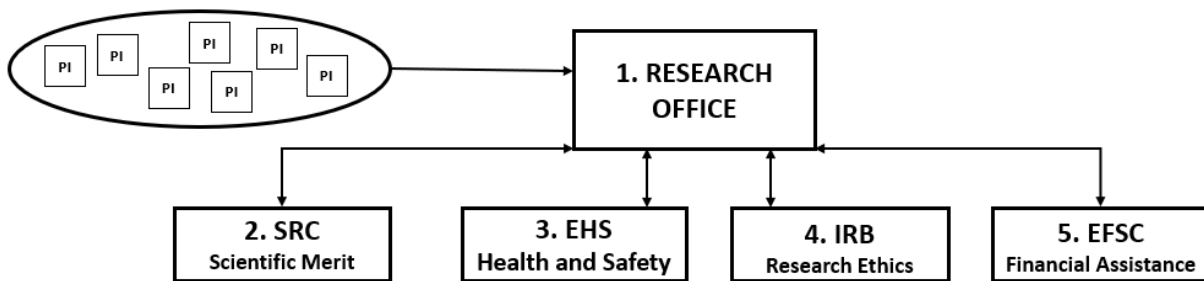
- Applications for SRC, IRB, and EFSC review must be submitted to RO through the AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process posted at https://my.ahu.edu/academics/university-research/research-project-submissions

- The RO will notify all investigators involved in the study about the requirements, including the confirmation of the need of approval from all the appropriate resources as SRC, IRB, EHS, EFSC, and CITI Certification.

- RO will be responsible to submit the study proposal to SRC and EHS office if necessary within five working days after submission.

- RO will notify the investigators about the summary of the SRC and EHS reviews within 13 working days.

- Following the SRC review, RO will be responsible to submit the study proposal to IRB and will notify the investigators about the summary of the IRB review within 18 working days.

- Following IRB, if Graduate Research Student Grant or Faculty Research Seed Grant submission had been selected during the completion of the application, the RO will be responsible to submit the study proposal to EFSC and will notify all investigators about the summary of the EFSC review within 18 working days.

The total time to complete the "AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process" with Scientific Review Committee (SRC) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals is 36 working days.

If the submission includes grant requests, the total time to receive the approvals from the three committees is 54 working days.

2.2 Research Project Criteria

For a project to be considered as research, the following criteria must be met:

1. There is a problem statement providing the background conditions that propel and justify the project.

2. Literature review is conducted by summarizing a review of scientific articles, books and other sources (dissertations, conferences, etc.) to provide evidence-based context for the project.

3. There is a hypothesis or study question expressing the anticipated outcome or problem to be addressed by the study.

4. A description of the methodology or study design describing how the study will be conducted.

5. The critical integration and analyses of compiled information or data gathered by using appropriate methodology.

6. Results and findings are reported, including their significance, if appropriate, to support study conclusions.

7. Implications of findings are disseminated so that others may provide feedback, benefit from the results, as well as stimulate further ideas for future studies or projects. The findings are

disseminated upon each program's discretion and approval. (Adapted from: AHU Faculty Handbook, Appendix F)

2.3 Professional Project Criteria

For any project that does not meet all of the research project criteria listed above, it should be considered a Professional project. However, the criteria for a Professional Project are determined at the discretion of each academic program. It may adopt some of the criteria for a research project or it could require other criteria more pertinent to the educational goals of the program. It will be generally understood that a Professional Project seeks to use critical thinking skills by integrating theory or classroom learning and apply to a real life situation or solution.

3. Requirements for Research Projects and Professional Projects

The table below seeks to differentiate the requirements for both types of projects.

Research Projects	Professional Projects
The criteria of what constitute a Research Project are listed above. Students and faculty will incorporate the seven criteria into their project.	The criteria of what constitute a Professional Project criteria will be determined by the graduate program.
Must be submitted through the AHU Web-based Research Project Submission Process to RO.	Each department will track their Professional Projects in electronic format and make this information available to RO as needed.
A faculty will guide and mentor students throughout the project. A faculty supervisor is required when the PI is a student.	A faculty will guide and mentor students throughout the project.
SRC approval is required.	SRC approval is not required.
IRB approval and CITI Certification are required when the project involves human subjects, drugs, biological products, medical devices, food supply, cosmetics, or radiation.	IRB approval and CITI Certification are not required.

Projects that involve blood, tissues, bodily fluids, chemical, biological products or other potentially infectious materials or risk assessment must receive approval from the Environmental Health and Safety Office.	The Program Department determines the need for review from Environmental Health and Safety Office.
It is eligible for Graduate Student Grants or Faculty Research Seed Grants.	It is eligible for Graduate Research Student Grants as a second priority to Research Projects. It is not eligible for Faculty Research Seed Grants. They may be eligible for other types of available grants.

4. Withdraw of a Research Project

Research Office (RO) has the authority to withdraw a research project submission after 30 days of not receiving information or document required directly by the RO or any other committee involved in the approval process (SRC, IRB, EHS, and EFSC). The investigators have up to 14 days to claim for reconsideration. The RO has 10 working days to review the request and issue a response.

5. Research Office Contact

For SRC, IRB, Grant submissions, CITI Certification, or any other research questions, please contact the Research Office:

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