

University Committee Charter

Committee: Committee on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Research Ethics & Privacy

I. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Committee Background History: The University of North Dakota has been involved in Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) training and research for a number of years, and awards the only fully accredited degree in this discipline. As a leader in UAS research the University has been working with a number of public and private groups to study specific applications for UASs in the national air space. It is clear that some of these applications may raise ethical issues particularly with respect to privacy. As a consequence of the proposed uses at the national level, various groups have issued position statements and the US Congress is set to take up the issue of privacy with respect to UAS usage. As a leader in UAS applications the University has held meetings to develop a plan to address the ethical issues related to UAS research associated with UND. The Committee outlined in this Charter is the University's response. It is based upon similar committees presently functioning under Federal regulations for human subject research, biological materials research, animal studies, and usage of recombinant DNA and is based to a large extent on community values.

Classification/Terms of Charter: The Committee on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Research Ethics & Privacy ("Committee") will be a standing committee of the Division of Research and Economic Development. The Charter will be reviewed at least annually by the Committee in cooperation with the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

Formal Charges: The Committee will review and approve all research using unmanned aircraft systems: 1) Conducted by any members of the University of North Dakota, including faculty, staff, and students; and 2) Conducted under the purview of the Northern Plains Unmanned Systems Authority. Research falls within the scope of the Committee when it involves: 1) flight; or 2) use of existing data collected via UAS. No research may be undertaken without prior approval of the Committee. The Committee will consider the ethical consequences of the proposed research and apply community standards in determining whether a research project may be approved. The Committee will determine whether a proposed research project can be approved as described, needs modification to be approved, or will be denied. If the Committee denies a research project, there is no appeal process. Any research project which the Committee determines needs modification may be approved following completion of the required modifications. Depending upon the potential risk of the proposed research, the research may be reviewed by an exempt, expedited, or full board process. The Vice President for Research and Economic Development may suspend approved research if the research is not in the best interests of the University. An appropriate official or body (e.g., the Director of Safety) may also suspend approved research if the research does not meet defined safety standards.

The Committee will consider the review of other applications that do not meet the criteria defined above on a case-by-case basis.

Reporting Channels/Procedures: The Committee will report to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

Relationship of the Committee to Other University Committees: Research that has been reviewed and approved by the Committee may be subject to review and subsequent approval or disapproval by University officials or other Committees.

II. COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Membership: The Committee will consist of six (6) appointees employed by and representing the University, three (3) appointees representing emergency responders, three (3) appointees representing government, and three-to-five (3-5) appointees representing the community at large. In the event of a vacancy, the Committee will approve the nomination of a new member and forward the name to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development who will cooperate with the Committee Chairperson in the appointment of a replacement as expeditiously as possible. In no event will one or more vacancies prevent the Committee from fulfilling its charge, provided that the University, emergency responders, government, and the community at large are each represented substantially as provided herein.

In addition, the Committee will have three (3) ex-officio, non-voting members including a representative from the Division of Research and Economic Development, a representative from the University Police, and a University legal advisor.

Appointments: The Committee will approve the nomination of new members and forward names to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, who will appoint members in writing.

Membership Terms: Committee members will be appointed for three (3) year terms with the possibility of subsequent reappointment.

Officers: Officers of the Committee will include a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson.

- A. Chairperson: The Committee Chairperson will be a faculty member at the University of North Dakota who is capable of managing the Committee and matters brought before it with fairness and impartiality. The Chairperson must be an experienced member of the Committee with at least six (6) months of service on the Committee. The Chairperson is elected annually from the membership of the Committee to serve a one-year term of office. The number of consecutive terms that a Chairperson may serve is not limited.
- B. Vice Chairperson: The Committee Vice Chairperson must be an experienced member of the Committee with at least six (6) months of service on the Committee. The Vice Chairperson is elected annually from the membership of the Committee to serve a one-year term of office. The number of consecutive terms that a Vice Chairperson may serve is not limited.

Subcommittees: The Committee Chairperson, with the approval of the Committee, may appoint standing subcommittees or ad hoc subcommittees. Each subcommittee shall be composed of at least three (3) members. The Chairperson may appoint non-Committee members to a subcommittee. Each standing or ad hoc subcommittee shall have those powers and that authority stipulated in the motion authorizing the subcommittee. Each standing or ad hoc subcommittee shall serve at the pleasure of the Committee.

III. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS AND OPERATIONS

Frequency of Meetings: The Committee will meet as necessary to complete review in a timely manner of all research projects involving UAS but not less than twice a year.

Research Submission Requirements: Investigators are required to submit a signed paper copy and a signed electronic copy of the application form at least two (2) weeks prior to a scheduled meeting. If the Committee Chairperson or Vice Chairperson determines that the submitted materials are not adequate, investigators may be required to submit additional information. No incomplete submissions will be reviewed by the Committee.

Notice of Meeting/Meeting Agenda and Support Materials: Notice of meetings will occur through announcements in the University Letter and Research Newsletter, and a meeting calendar will be available on the Committee website. Committee members will be notified by the Division of Research and Economic Development and will be sent all necessary supporting information concerning research proposals.

Committee Minutes: Minutes will be of sufficient detail to show attendance at the meeting; actions taken by the Committee; the vote on actions including the number of members voting for, against, and abstaining; and the basis for requiring changes in or disapproving research.

Committee Reports: Committee reports and recommendations will be prepared for and submitted to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

Document Management and Retention: The office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development will retain all records regarding research project applications (regardless of whether it is approved) for at least three (3) years. For all applications that are approved and the research initiated, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development must retain all records regarding that research for at least three (3) years after completion of the research.

Meeting Quorum: A simple majority of voting members will constitute the necessary quorum for conduct of official business. Committee members who recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest cannot be counted towards quorum. If quorum is lost during the meeting, the Committee cannot conduct voting until it is restored.

Voting: A majority of members must vote in favor of an action for the action to be accepted by the Committee. The vote will be recorded in the minutes. Members with a conflict of interest must recuse themselves from the discussion and voting and such will be noted in the minutes.

Amendment of Charter: Should any amendments to this Charter be required, the Committee Chairperson or Vice Chairperson will work with the Committee in developing suitable language. Proposed changes will be submitted to the President for approval in a timely manner.

This University Committee Charter is effective as of April 1, 2019.

Mark Kennedy
President



John Mihelich
Interim Vice President for Research and
Economic Development

