

Policy Name: Unmanned Aircraft Systems Policy		
Effective Date: 04/18/2015	Revision Date: 08/01/2017	Department/Area/Division: CERA/AD/FA
Department/ Area Policy #:	Departmental Contact: Marcy Huey, Executive Director for Institutional Compliance	

Purpose:

The operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and relevant state law. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that The University of Alabama (UA) and the UA community acquire and operate UAS efficiently, safely, ethically, and in adherence to applicable laws and regulations.

Policy Statement:

The University of Alabama (UA) is committed to complying with FAA requirements, state law, and any other locally applicable laws or regulations regarding Unmanned Aircraft Systems and has established this policy to ensure compliance with these legal obligations and to reduce risks to safety, security and privacy. This policy applies to:

- University employees and students operating unmanned aircraft systems in any location (on or off campus) as part of their University employment or as part of University activities including classes, groups, research projects; and clubs;
- The operation by any person of unmanned aircraft system or model aircraft on or above University-owned property in any location;
- The purchase of unmanned aircraft systems with funding through UA, including university accounts, grants, or Foundation accounts, and;
- The hiring or contracting for any unmanned aircraft services by any UA unit.

For the purposes of this policy, UAS may include any drone (tethered and untethered), model aircraft, helicopter, or other aerial item and its associated equipment. The operator should be aware that registration, approval criteria, and usage requirements differ depending on the specific UAS, its size, its intended usage, UAS ownership, and the proposed usage location. Therefore, for any specific questions regarding UAS ownership or usage, contact the Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Regulatory Affairs prior to initiating registration.

Policy:

- All operation and use of UAS must comply with FAA regulations and local, state, and federal laws. Any operation or use of UAS that violates such regulations or laws is prohibited. It is the responsibility of the operator of the UAS to ensure that all applicable UA policies and relevant laws and regulations are adhered to during operation of the UAS.
- ***Under current FAA regulations and UA policy, UAS flight is not permitted on or above the campus of The University of Alabama without documented approvals from the FAA, UA, and local Air Traffic Control.***
- Any University employee or student wishing to operate a UAS as part of any University program must register their equipment and obtain permission to operate an UAS from the FAA and UA.

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The FAA requires registration for any UAS greater than 0.55 lbs (250 grams), regardless of use. (<https://registermyuas.faa.gov/>). In addition to FAA registration, all intended usage of any UA-affiliated UAS, regardless of size, location or persons, requires prior approval. The [Application for UAS Usage](#) will be used to coordinate UA approval with FAA registration. If you need assistance with these requirements, contact the Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Regulatory Affairs.

- The University reserves the right to decline requests to operate a UAS for any reason, and may withdraw or modify an approval at any time without disclosing the justification for that action.
- The exact requirements for UAS usage, including usage for academic purposes, may vary according to the UAS being used, the conditions of use, and the ownership of the system.
- All flights of UAS are prohibited on University properties during all outside events, including but not limited to:
 - Any sporting or athletic events, including games, practices, and any other associated outside activities;
 - Game day, game day weekends, or any other game day related events, including A-day;
 - Any group or outside social events, including concerts, ceremonies, Bid Day, and/or events associated with Week of Welcome;
 - University parades on or off campus property;
 - Scheduled group events, including graduation.
- UAS may not be used to monitor or record sensitive or personal information, or to monitor or record in any area where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. These areas include but are not limited to: restrooms, locker rooms, individual residential rooms, changing or dressing rooms, and health treatment rooms. Additionally, UAS shall not be used to monitor or record sensitive institutional or personal information which may be found, for example, on an individual's workspaces, computer or other electronic displays.
- Any incidents, accidents, or injuries associated with the use or flight of a UAS should be reported to UA according to established policies, including:
 - Those involved should submit a General Incident Report using the [General Incident Report](#) form.
 - On the Job Injuries should be submitted using the [On the Job Injury](#) form.
 - Student/Non-Employee Injuries should be submitted using the [Student/Non-Employee Injury Report](#).
 - Any issues that are not addressed under these policies should be reported to The University of Alabama Police Department (348-5454).
 - Notify the Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Regulatory Affairs and provide copies or contact information for all of the above reports.
- The purchase of a University-owned UAS (or the parts to assemble a UAS) requires pre-approval from the Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Regulatory Affairs, regardless of the anticipated payment method or source of funding. Any University employee, student, or unit purchasing a UAS (or the parts to assemble a UAS) should contact the Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Regulatory Affairs to initiate the request and approval process via the [Application for UAS Usage](#). This approval must accompany any official request to purchase UAS, i.e. via University Requisition, or as documentation to support a Procurement Card purchase. *Approval to purchase is not to be construed as approval to fly the UAS.*

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- Small unmanned aircraft may not operate over any persons not directly participating in the operation, unless the individuals are under a covered structure or inside a covered stationary vehicle.
- For UAS usage required by University departments or programs, the overseeing departments are responsible for ensuring appropriate certification and/or providing training as needed for the use of the aircraft.
- Use of UAS must comply with all other applicable University policies, including the requirement to obtain a [Grounds Use Permit](#) for any flight that will occur on the main campus property.
- Any restrictions described in this policy do not apply to those aircraft authorized by and in contact with air traffic control for operational or safety of flight purposes, i.e., Department of Defense, law enforcement, and air ambulance flight operations, Fire and Rescue, and Emergency Management Agency.

Enforcement and Penalties:

Effective December 21, 2015, anyone who owns a small unmanned aircraft of a certain weight must register with the Federal Aviation Administration's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) registry *before* they fly outdoors. People who do not register could face civil and criminal penalties. The FAA may assess civil penalties up to \$27,500. Criminal penalties include fines of up to \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for up to three years.

Using a UAS to monitor or eavesdrop may lead to criminal charges. Under state law (Ala. Code §13A-11-32(a)), "a person commits the crime of criminal surveillance if he intentionally engages in surveillance while trespassing in a private place." Further, Ala. Code § 13A-11-34 stipulates: "a person commits the crime of criminal possession of an eavesdropping device if he possesses, manufactures, sends or transports any device designed or commonly used for eavesdropping, and: (1) intends to use that device to eavesdrop; or (2) knows that another person intends to use that device to eavesdrop."

Persons who are on campus and/or operating a UAS on or above campus without approval are in violation of University policy and may be dealt with accordingly, including, but not limited to, being removed from campus and receiving an official trespass citation to remain off campus. Contractors and vendors are expected to comply with this policy and contract terms.

Student violations may be addressed in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct as well as other applicable policies and may include sanctions, up to and including expulsion.

Employee violations may be resolved in accordance with employer policies, up to and including termination.

Violators of local, state, and federal laws and regulations may be dealt with by appropriate law enforcement.

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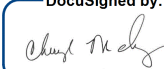
Definitions:

Model Aircraft - Model aircraft are not for business purposes, only for hobby and recreation. Model aircraft must be kept within visual sightline of the operator, and should weigh under 55 pounds unless pre-certified by an aeromodeling community-based organization. Model aircraft must be flown a sufficient distance from populated areas. Note: While model aircraft are considered differently from UAS by the FAA and have different regulations for registration and usage, they are included in this policy for the purposes of UA registration and approval.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) - UAS are also known as, or may be characterized as Drones. According to the FAA, a UAS is defined as the unmanned aircraft and all of the associated support equipment, control station, data links, telemetry, communications and navigation equipment, etc., necessary to operate the unmanned aircraft. UAS may have a variety of names including quadcopter, quadrotor, etc.

University Property – Buildings, grounds, and land that are owned by The University of Alabama or controlled by the University via leases or other formal contractual arrangements to house ongoing UA operations.

Office of the Vice President of Financial Affairs:

Approved by: 
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Date: Aug-10-2017