

Item No. 5 - ACADEMIC MATTERS :

(iii) 5: 1- Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations & Rules.
Regulation for external Research Project

Prof. A.C. Mohapatra, Dean, School of Human and Environmental Science vide letter enclosed at Annexure A pointed out the problems which arises on the earlier Regulation for External Research Projects approved by the Academic Council/Executive Council in its meeting held during 1989. For this purpose, the Dean gives his opinion that the earlier Regulation placed at Annexure 'B' needs to be amended and suggested to constitute a committee consisting of the Registrar, Finance Officer, two Chief Investigators, two Head Departments, two Deans and two External Financial and Administrative experts to look into the problems pointed out by him at Annexure 'A' for relevant amendments or propose a new Regulation, which may also assess the asset records after implementation of the Regulation.

In this connection the views of Finance was sought for, and their views is reproduced below:

The Finance has recently issued a Circular under No.FA 2/Office Order/96-1 dated 20.4.96 at Annexure-'C' with an intention to further streamline the financial discipline and other related matters as far as external Research projects are concerned, which is in line with Regulations in RC-I. Some teachers are not inclined to abide by the instructions contained in the above circular in view of the fact that the EC has already passed a Resolution on this account vide No.EC: 64: 88: 5: 01(iv). However, the vital points that need to be reviewed are as follows:-

1. The inconsistency in the Provisions of the Regulations in RC-I with those of the EC Resolutions aforesaid above.
2. Whether the Equipments/instruments/materials etc. purchased out of project funds are to be recorded/entered in the Central Stock ledger/Register maintained by the Department concerned or not.
3. Whether the Principal Investigator/Co-Ordinator can countersign his own TA/DA bill if the journey is performed out of station for Research project works.

The matter is placed before the Executive Council for consideration and necessary order.

NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY, ANNEXURE-'A'
SHILLONGDr. A.C. Mohapatra,
Professor & Dean.School of Hu, & Env. Science,
Tel: 0364-227763No. SAES/VC/1-96/41
Dated May 11, 1996.The Vice-Chancellor,
NEHU, Shillong.Sub :- E:C:Res.EC:64:88:5:01(iv) dt. 5.1.89 (Regulations on External
Research Projects).

Sir,

This is to draw your kind attention to the regulation as above. To bring in efficiency in implementation of externally funded research projects the above regulation was made by a committee of research investigators of projects and duly approved by the academic council & the E.C. of the University. With all deference to these august bodies I am dismayed that the regulations were hurried through which may flout the Government of India general financial and administrative rules and also the Statutes & Ordinances of this University resulting in Financial and Administrative mismanagement and thus, needs to be relooked afresh by the appropriate bodies. I am citing below the problems that may arise and therefore, needs to be re-evaluated in amending the above regulation.

1. The creation of regulation has to be under the existing provisions of Act, Statutes and Ordinances on appropriate precedence. In case of the above regulation, the regulation itself does not cite under what provision of the Act, Statutes and Ordinances that it has been created. Therefore, its legal standing is questionable. However, I may point out that Ordinance OB-1-2(d) of the University talks about Research Projects, proposals of which shall be vetted by the "Department" and then only forwarded by the HOD through the University to appropriate funding agencies.

(i) The Regulation first has to take cognisance of its genesis from the above Ordinance, before further elaborating the procedures. The Ordinance therefore, recognises the corporate basis of researches carried out by individual faculty members in the departments of the University.

(ii) The existing regulation contradicts the above Ordinance in Prov. 4, that it will be forwarded by the HOD without being vetted by the department, which has become the practice now after this regulation has come into effect. This needs to be rectified.

2. The Prov.10 of the above regulations says that the Chief-Investigators of the projects have full powers of finance, administration and academic. This contradicts the Government of India Finance Rules and the Statutes and Ordinances of the University in regards to powers of the Chief Executive of the University (The Vice-Chancellor), the Finance Officer and other statutory officers like the Deans of Schools and the Heads of Departments. As a results travel plans concerning the projects are not vetted by any body, neither the funding agency, nor any of the statutory officers. The T.A. bills are not countersigned by any controlling officer which is irregular as per GOI FR. The problem arises not interference in the efficiency in functioning of the research projects, but creation of "independent power centres" in the departments in ~~xxxxx~~ undermining the authority of the administrative heads. This can have disastrous consequences in functioning of the departments, in running their core programmes. Moreover, the only self sanctioning authority in the University has been assigned to the Vice-Chancellor by the Act & Statutes. This needs to be rectified.

3. It is cited (Prov.-15) that the projects are run as per the guidelines of the funding agencies. While nobody can deny the conditionalities imposed by the funding agencies, the administrative and financial controls are entrusted to the Grantee Institution and no funding agency could ask the University to depart from its administrative and financial rules and practices, the University being an autonomous body by creation by an Act of the Parliament. In such cases, the University may not even forward or accept such conditionalities which impinges on its autonomy. Moreover, the nature or administrative and financial probity is entrusted to the auditing authority which is the University, since most of the research projects are public funded and therefore, the FR of GOI is applicable. This is a serious matter and needs to be looked into.

4. The assets created through such research projects, no records are kept in the departments, nor at the University level. Not even a separate file is being maintained in the departments on individual research projects. The equipments and other materials are not being returned to the departments after the completion of the research projects. The Chief-Investigators, in most cases maintain a separate ledger on their own, the departments not being privy to it. As a result after the completion of the research projects, there are apprehensions that these materials could be very easily usurped by imprudent CI. The circular of the Finance Officer, NEHU, No.FA-2/Office Order/96 dt. April 20, 1996 is extremely relevant here and I fully agree with it. Item 5 of the circular states that the purchases of assets are to be entered in the central ledger of the department and then issued to the concerned research project for the duration of the project after which the assets either become the property of the University or in exceptional circumstances, the FA may take them back, reassign to another project in the University or even may sell it. This needs to be looked into also.

I suggest a committee constituting the Registrar, F.O., two CI, two HODs, two Deans and two external Financial and Administrative experts may look into the problems pointed out and propose relevant amendments or propose a wholly new regulation to effect to the appropriate bodies for their consideration.

I may also suggest that the above committee may also assess the asset records after implementation of the above regulation, because there are genuine doubts about their whereabouts.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

A.C. Mohapatra.

Copy to :-

The Finance Officer, NEHU, for information.

A.C. Mohapatra

Encl : The relevant regulation.

Regulations on External Research Projects.

1. Various national and international funding agencies provide attractive research grants to the faculty solely on the scientific standing of the investigator and the merit of the project.
2. Each project proposal is thoroughly referred by experts in respective fields and sanctions are made on the basis of recommendation of the experts.
3. Once the project is sanctioned, the Director/investigator-in-charge is solely responsible for its successful completion. He is referred to submit periodical progress reports and a final report which are referred by a panel of experts.
4. In view of the academic as well as financial responsibilities associated with the Director/investigator-in-charge, the following regulations are framed for smooth implementation and execution of the project:-
 1. These regulations may be called 'Regulations on External Research projects'.
 2. All research projects which may be funded by organisations other than the North-Eastern Hill University shall be called "External Research Projects".
 3. A teacher desirous of seeking financial support from an external financial agency will prepare the project proposal as per the requirements of the funding agency.
 4. The project proposal duly forwarded by the Head of the Department/Institution will be sent to the funding agency.
 5. Action on the project may be initiated by the Director/Investigator-in-charge in Advance, if necessary, with the prior approval of the Vice-Chancellor soon after the receipt of sanction without waiting for the release of funds.
 6. The funds received will be deposited in the "External Research Projects Fund" of the University and a separate ledger maintained in the Finance Branch in respect of each project. The University may support the research work of the project until the funds are received by the funding agency.

Provided that the Director/Investigator-in-charge may be allowed to open and operate an account in a Scheduled Bank for drawal of the Contingency Fund upto the extent of 50% of the fund to be decided by him.
7. Requisition for the selection of the sanctioned staff/research scholar will be sent to the Registrar by the Director/Investigator-in-charge with intimation to the Head of the Department. The sanctioned posts will be advertised by the Registrar within two weeks.
8. In the absence of any specific procedure laid down by the funding agency, the Director/Investigator-in-charge will constitute a selection committee comprising not less than three members, including the co-investigators if any, and Head of the Department with the Director/Investigator-in-charge as the chairman. The selected staff/research scholar will be allowed all the usual facilities of the University at par with those enjoyed by other regular University staff.
9. All the infrastructural facilities shall be provided by the University for smooth running of the Projects.
10. The Investigator-in-charge shall be the controlling and sanctioning officer for all the financial, administrative and academic matters related to the project. In the absence of Director/Investigator-in-charge and/or any co-investigator, the faculty member nominated by the Director/Investigator-in-charge shall look after the matters related to the project.

11. Purchase of equipment costing up to Rs. 5,000/- shall be made by the Director/Investigator-in-charge as per the requirements of the project. He will draw advance for such purchase in his name.
12. Purchase of chemicals, glasswares and other consumables will be made by Director/Investigator-in-charge from the advance drawn by him in his name after observing codal formalities.
13. Expenditure on analytical services, computer charges, books, secretarial assistance, travel, maintenance of equipment, postage and such of the services related to the project will be incurred by the Director/Investigator-in-charge from the advance drawn by him in his/her name.
14. Utilisation certificates on the project expenditure shall be submitted by the Director/Investigator-in-charge to the University to be forwarded within one month to the funding agency.
15. All the administrative, academic and financial matters in relation to the projects shall be governed by the provisions of these regulations and/or the terms and conditions of the concerned funding agency.

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NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY
PERMANENT CAMPUS: SHILLONG - 22.

NO.FA-2/Office Order/96/1

Dated Shillong the
20th April, 1996.C I R C U L A R

It has of late been observed that the Principal Investigators, Co-ordinators or Incharge of Schemes and Projects have not accordingly followed the required normal procedure while moving Finance Deptt. for payment of Advances or the supplier bills out of the fund sanctioned/released by the Govt. of India Agencies/Depts. and other Organisations in connection with the implementation of the Research Schemes and Projects etc. In order to achieve financial discipline and smooth functioning of the working system it is felt necessary that the following conditions are followed here after:-

- 1) Payment of any advance amount either for purchase of chemicals or equipments etc. in the name of the Principal Investigator will be restricted to a maximum of Rs.20,000/- depending upon the size and the financial quantum of the particular Project or Scheme. Second advance will not be entertained unless the accounts for the first advance are submitted to Finance Deptt. for adjustment of the same.
- 2) All purchases made out of the Project funds should be in accordance with the existing University Procedure.
- 3) The TA bills of the Principal Investigators/ Co-Ordinators etc. should be countersigned by the Head of the Deptt./Deans of Schools or the Vice-Chancellor in case the Head of the Deptt. or the Dean of School is the Principal Investigator or Co-Ordinator of that Project.
- 4) The final statement of accounts alongwith Utilisation Certificate should be submitted to Finance Deptt. immediately after the termination of the Project. However, interim statement of accounts or Utilisation Certificate may be submitted as and when the fund is due to be released for the Project or after utilisation of the grant released by the agencies concerned.

- 5) The Principal Investigators or Co-Ordinators are requested to submit the up-to-date lists of assets particularly equipments materials & books acquired out of the Project funds to Finance Deptt. for record. Further the Equipments/Books/Materials purchased out of project/schemes funds may be entered in the Central Stock Ledger maintained by the Deptt. Concerned.

All concerned are requested to co-operate with the Finance Department in the interest of the University.

(L. NAMPUT)
Finance Officer.

Copy to:

1. All Section Officers of the Finance Deptt. NEHU, Shillong. They are directed to note that all advance amounts paid out of University fund including Projects and Schemes funds which are found un-adjusted during the proceeding year should be carried over to the next financial year in the bill register concerned at the very beginning of the year itself. This practice will come into force with immediate effect. Further, any employee having any outstanding advance/advances should be communicated immediately. The Branch Officer concerned/Finance Officer should be intimated periodically of all such cases.
2. All the Deans/ Heads of the Deptts (Administration/Academic) for information and necessary action.
3. P.S. to V.C.
4. SPA to Registrar.
5. S.P.A. to Controller of Examinations.

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Finance Officer.
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- (ii) Revised Ordinances on OB-6 and OB-7 i.e. Affiliation of Colleges and College Development Council respectively. Ordinances on Management of Colleges/Institutions maintained by the University and Management of Colleges/Institutions admitted to the privileges of the University.

No: EC: 90: 96: 5: 1: (ii): The Council considered the amendment of the existing Ordinances OB-6 and OB-7 and the regulations thereto and RESOLVED to approve the same. The Council further considered the Ordinances framed on the Management of Colleges/Institutions maintained by the University and on the Management of Colleges/Institutions admitted to the privileges of the University and RESOLVED that these two Ordinances may be referred back to the Academic Council for review. The Council further RESOLVED that the Chairman may constitute a Committee to go through these Ordinances before placing them before the Academic Council for review.

- (iii) Regulation for external Research Project-

No: EC: 90: 96: 5: 1: (iii): The Council considered the issues raised by the Dean, School of Human and Environmental Sciences and also the Finance Department on the regulation for external Research Projects and RESOLVED that a Committee consisting of all Deans, with the Senior most Dean as Chairman and the Finance Officer as Convener may be constituted to look into the matter and till such time the issue is resolved the procedure laid down in the Regulations will prevail.

5: 3 RESEARCH :

- (i) Regulations on the conduct of Pre-Submission Seminar and also the regulation on preparation of M.Phil/Ph.D

No: EC: 90: 96: 5: 3: (i): The Council considered the regulation on the conduct of Pre-Submission Seminar and also the regulation on preparation of M.Phil/Ph.D as recommended by the Academic Council and RESOLVED to approve the same.

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