

UAB IRB and Trainee Investigator Roles

UAB Position Statement:

In order to assure excellence in the protection of human research participants, the submission and review process, and training and mentorship in the conduct of research, UAB requires an experienced employee (e.g., faculty member) to serve as the UAB Principal Investigator on IRB protocols. Individuals classified as Trainees are not permitted to serve as a Principal Investigator on submissions for IRB approval effective April 1, 2025.

Trainees include all students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional), residents, interns, postdoctoral trainees, and medical fellows. Trainees who will be engaged in human subjects research must generally be listed as a Subinvestigator or Other Personnel on the IRB submission.

Extramural funding and Trainees as Co-PI:

When an extramural sponsor identifies a UAB Trainee (including a postdoctoral trainee (UAB status 20) as the Principal Investigator, UAB recognizes the Trainee as the external entity designated Principal Investigator. The UAB faculty advisor/mentor who will supervise the training and research and who is specifically named on the grant or contract application serves as the UAB Principal Investigator.

In the following limited circumstances, a Trainee may serve as Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI):

1. An extramural sponsor recognizes the UAB Trainee as the PI,
2. The project is no greater than minimal risk as designated by the IRB,
3. The project is conducted in support of the Trainee's degree program, and
4. The Trainee is supervised by a faculty advisor/mentor that is designated as the UAB Principal Investigator of the study who meets criteria defined in UAB policy "Definition of a Principal Investigator" (<https://secure4.compliancebridge.com/uab/portal/getdoc.php?file=275>).

Oversight and mentorship of Trainees engaged in human subjects research:

The faculty advisor/mentor who serves as the UAB Principal Investigator is responsible for the overall oversight, management, and conduct of the research, including the protection of human subjects, regardless of the role(s) of Trainees on the project.

For all research in which Trainees will be engaged, the supervising administrator (chair, dean, vice president, or provost, as applicable) must assure that the UAB Principal Investigator and the Trainee (with the UAB Principal Investigator's oversight) have access to adequate facilities and can provide the scientific, technical, administrative, and financial leadership required for the proper conduct of the project or program.



Christopher S. Brown, PhD
Vice President for Research

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Date