

Pacific Lutheran University

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones and Model Aircraft) Policy

Policy Statement and Purpose:

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and relevant state law regulate the operation of unmanned aircraft systems, including drones and model aircraft. Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) seeks to permit UAS to be utilized productively in a manner that fully meets institutional, legal, public safety and ethical responsibilities. Operation of a UAS on or over PLU property, and the use of UAS by university departments and/or employees, must comply with this policy.

Policy Definitions:

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS): Any remotely operated or controlled aircraft intended to fly within the National Airspace System. Includes devices commonly referred to as drones. FAA regulations apply to all types of UAS regardless of weight or size.

University Property: Buildings, grounds, and land that are owned by Pacific Lutheran University, or controlled by PLU via lease or other contractual agreement.

Model Aircraft: An unmanned aircraft system that is 1) flown for hobby or recreational purposes as defined in Section 336 of Public Law 112-95; 2) capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere; and 3) flown within visual line of sight of the operator.

Operator: Pilot or individual who is controlling, maneuvering, or commanding a UAS.

Remote Pilot – Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Airman Certification: FAA certification required to pilot UAS as defined in U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Flight Standards Service document FAA-S-ACS-10.

Policy Scope:

This policy applies to:

1. Employees and students operating UAS in any location as part of their university employment or as part of university academic/research program;
2. The operation by any person of UAS on or above PLU property;
3. The purchase and operation of UAS with funding through the university, including grants; and
4. The hiring or contracting for any UAS services with an outside vendor.

Policy:

1. UAS use for the purpose of this policy will fall into one of three categories as defined by the FAA: Commercial Use (contracted vendor); Private/Hobbyist use for educational purposes; and Private/Hobbyist use for personal use (on or above university property). Each category requires the UAS operator to follow different procedures before UAS use. The following requirements govern the use of UAS within the scope identified in this policy.

2. Any individual or group, including employees, students and contracted vendors, seeking to operate a UAS on university property, or anywhere on behalf of PLU, is responsible for obtaining all required documentation and approvals for compliance with FAA regulations to include Small UAS Rule (Part 107), federal and state laws, and university policies. All requests for UAS use on PLU property or on behalf of PLU must be submitted in accordance with PLU's UAS (Drone) Use Approval Process.
3. The university's department of Risk Services, in conjunction with the Marketing and Communications Division and Campus Safety Department, shall be responsible for university policy, approvals, and instructions regarding UAS use on or above university property, and for UAS use pursuant to university employment and academic/research programs.
4. Private/Hobbyist use for educational purposes on or above university property, or elsewhere on behalf of the university, must be approved in advance through the department of Risk Services to ensure compliance and insurance coverage.
5. Private/Hobbyist use of UAS and model aircraft for personal use on or above university property is not permitted.
6. Commercial use on or above university property, or elsewhere on behalf of the university, must be approved in advance through the department of Risk Services to ensure compliance and insurance coverage.
7. UAS shall be operated in a responsible manner and shall not create a hazard to university property, the university community, or the public at any time.
8. In operating a UAS for purposes of recording or transmitting visual images, operators must follow the university privacy policy.

Violation and accountability:

Individuals that violate this policy will be subject to corrective action procedures as defined in the personnel manual, faculty handbook, student code of conduct, federal, state and local laws.

Policy Reviewed and Approved June 28, 2017.