

On Research...

Blogging about research issues at Ohio State University



[Home](#) [About us](#) [Research Communications Staff](#)

Observing the Line . . .

Posted on June 2nd, 2008 by earle holland

The [front page story](#) in the *New York Times* last week, and later in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, is a strong reminder of how the public expects universities – and their researchers – to behave.

The headline, "*At One University, Tobacco Money Is A Secret*," conjured up memories of how for years, the tobacco industry misled the country and created one of America's great health challenges.

Secretly pairing tobacco money with university research is seen as betrayal.

The story said [Virginia Commonwealth University](#) had ignored its own institutional guidelines and accepted a grant from Philip Morris USA that prohibited researchers from publishing their work, or even from acknowledging the project.

In today's climate, accepting any support from tobacco companies is viewed skeptically, and most institutions that consider such grants do so with a clear set of conditions in mind.

While this seems obvious, the ongoing pressure on institutions and individual researchers to secure support for their studies grows daily and it's understandably human to wonder exactly where the line is that shouldn't be crossed.

For Bob Killoren, head of [Ohio State's Research Foundation](#) and arguably the guy most focused on research funding, the answers are pretty clear:

"There is a dividing line out there that we have to watch and sometimes it can be pretty narrow."

On one hand, he says, as a land-grant public institution, our heritage includes taking the new knowledge we find to companies out in the business world.

"The question is how do we actually work with those companies?"

Setting aside issues of "intellectual property," Killoren says that there are a handful of "non-negotiables" that the university requires of any research grant:

- An agreement can't exclude a researcher from continuing their work on a project because of any licensing agreement or such;
- If graduate students are involved in the research, they have to be able to publish their findings as part of their thesis or dissertation requirements;
- No agreement can give a sponsor approval over what the university can say about the research, nor can they censor the researchers in

NAVIGATION

- * [Home](#)
- * [About us](#)
- * [Research Communications Staff](#)

RECENT POSTS

- * [A graphic misrepresentation . . .](#)
- * [Of ghoulies and ghosties and long-leggedy beasties . . .](#)
- * [A cascade of lemmings . . .](#)
- * [Not what Ben meant . . .](#)
- * [Of science, baseball, and cricket . . .](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

- * [OSU Research News on the Web](#)
- * [Research News on Facebook](#)
- * [Research News on YouTube](#)
- * [StumbleUpon](#)

WHAT WE READ

- * [Dot Earth — Andrew Revkin/New York Times](#)
- * [Framing Science](#)
- * [Health News Review](#)
- * [Knight Science Journalism Tracker](#)
- * [Real Climate](#)
- * [Science News](#)
- * [Speaking of Research](#)
- * [The Great Beyond](#)
- * [The Panda's Thumb](#)
- * [The Plainspoken Scientist](#)
- * [TierneyLab](#)
- * [WiredScience](#)



CATEGORIES

- * [Climate change](#)
- * [Environment](#)
- * [Physics](#)
- * [Researchers](#)
- * [Science Communication](#)
- * [Science policy](#)
- * [Space](#)
- * [Uncategorized](#)

ARCHIVES

- * [February 2012](#)
- * [January 2012](#)
- * [October 2011](#)
- * [September 2011](#)
- * [August 2011](#)
- * [July 2011](#)
- * [May 2011](#)
- * [April 2011](#)
- * [March 2011](#)
- * [December 2010](#)
- * [October 2010](#)
- * [September 2010](#)
- * [August 2010](#)
- * [July 2010](#)
- * [June 2010](#)
- * [May 2010](#)
- * [April 2010](#)
- * [March 2010](#)
- * [February 2010](#)
- * [January 2010](#)
- * [December 2009](#)
- * [November 2009](#)
- * [October 2009](#)
- * [September 2009](#)
- * [August 2009](#)
- * [July 2009](#)
- * [June 2009](#)
- * [May 2009](#)

any way;

- And researchers must be able to incorporate the research into what they teach students.

Guidelines like these are common and make good sense for public institutions. Problems only arise when universities or businesses forget the rules. *—Earle Holland*

#



Powered by [Bookmarkify™](#)

Tags: [Science policy](#), [Uncategorized](#) //

[Add Comment](#) »

Discussion Area - Leave a Comment

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

- * [April 2009](#)
- * [March 2009](#)
- * [February 2009](#)
- * [January 2009](#)
- * [December 2008](#)
- * [November 2008](#)
- * [October 2008](#)
- * [September 2008](#)
- * [August 2008](#)
- * [July 2008](#)
- * [June 2008](#)
- * [May 2008](#)

META

- * [Log in](#)
- * [Entries RSS](#)
- * [Comments RSS](#)
- * [WordPress.org](#)

RESEARCH NEWS WEBSITE



« [Data versus Dinner . . . Astronomy, version 2.0](#) »

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY ■ [WWW.OSU.EDU](#)

© 2006, The Ohio State University | Enarson Hall 154 W 12th Avenue | Columbus, Ohio 43210 | 614-292-OHIO

This page is maintained by: [University Relations](#). [About this site](#).

[Contact](#)

If you have trouble accessing this page and need to request an alternate format, contact webmaster@osu.edu.