# UNCREWED/AIRCRAFT SYSTEM / DRONE POLICY

SLT 6.20

**Date of Last Update:**
March 12, 2026

**Approved By:**

- Senior Leadership Team

**Responsible Office:**
Public Safety

## POLICY STATEMENT

Operation of an Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) or Model Aircraft (MA) is prohibited over University Property by students, employees, vendors, contractors and other members of the public except with prior written approval from the Vice President for Finance and Administration of the University.

Permission to operate a UAS/MA over University Property will only be granted to University departments needing to operate a UAS/MA for educational or research purposes that benefit the University.

Purchasing of UAS or MA, also requires prior written approval from the Vice President for Finance and Administration. Potential purchasers may be employees, students or departments using University funds being disbursed through a University account, including grant funds.

## PROCEDURES

Consideration will only be given for purchasing and/or operating a UAS/MA if the written request to the Department of Public Safety includes all of the following:

1. exact dates and times of intended operation;
2. campus location and intended flight path;
3. the University purpose for the use of the UAS/MA;
4. for UAS, a current 333 exemption or Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA) or a Remote Pilot Certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) or documentation verifying that the individual operating the UAS is fully authorized by the

FAA to do so;

5. for UAS, a Certificate of Insurance evidencing UAS/Drone Aviation Liability coverage with limits of not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence and recognizing Grand Valley State University as Additional Insured;
6. The Vice President for Finance and Administration will submit written approval for the purchase and/or operation of a UAS/MA to the Department of Public Safety.

Operation of UAS on University property is to be done in accordance with only part 107 of the FAA rules for certified remote pilots and commercial operators. All rules of part 107 apply to operation on University property with the exception of prohibited external load and transportation of property for compensation or hire. Only the Vice President for Finance and Administration may waive any of the part 107 rules.

Operation of UAS/MA on University owned or controlled property is done at the Operator's sole risk and the University is not responsible for damage to UAS/MA flown in or near university owned and controlled property.

In operating UAS/MA for purposes of recording or transmitting visual images, operators must take all reasonable measures to avoid intrusions into areas normally considered private.

All uses of UAS/MA must comply with the following:

1. UAS/MA must not be used to monitor or record areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy in accordance with accepted social norms. These areas include but are not limited to restrooms, locker rooms, individual living center rooms, changing or dressing rooms, health treatment rooms, daycare facilities and classrooms during periods of instruction. UAS/MA may not fly closer than thirty (30) feet outside a window of any university building.

2. UAS/MA may not be used to monitor or record institutional or personal information, which may be found in an individual's workspace, on computers or on other electronic devices.

3. UAS/MA may not be used inside of any University building without prior permission given by an Executive Officer of the University.

4. The following operational rules apply to the use of all UAS and MA:

- UAS/MA must be in visual line of sight of the remote pilot in command
- UAS/MA must be visible to the operator with no assistance other than corrective lenses
- UAS/MA may not fly over people

- UAS/MA may be operated in daylight only
- UAS/MA must yield right of way to other aircraft
- UAS/MA maximum speed 100 mph/87 knots
- UAS/MA maximum height of 400 feet
- UAS/MA minimum visibility 3 miles from point of control
- A remote pilot in command may not command more than one UAS/MA
- A remote pilot in command may not operate a UAS/MA from a moving aircraft
- A remote pilot in command may not operate UAS/MA in or near crane structures or hoisted loads, unless conducting an approved inspection operation under controlled safety procedures and in compliance with FAA standards.
- A remote pilot in command may operate UAS/MA from a moving vehicle only in sparsely populated area
- Reckless operation of UAS/MA is prohibited
- A UAS/MA may have no hazardous material on board
- The remote pilot in command must inspect UAS/MA prior to operation to ensure safe working order
- The remote pilot in command may not operate UAS/MA if physical or mental condition prevents safe operation

**A UASMA may carry an object if it does not affect flight operations and the entire UAS/MA with they object weighs less than 55 pounds.**

**Enforcement of Complaints**

Any violations of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with applicable University procedures which may include disciplinary actions and where appropriate, legal action. All complaints concerning the operation of UAS/MA over University Property should be referred to the Department of Public Safety. Users will also be subject to applicable Federal and State laws.

Any FAA fines incurred by individuals or departments will be the responsibility of the individuals involved.

## DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy, these terms should have the following meaning:

**Model Aircraft** - is an aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds

**University Property** – Buildings, grounds and land owned or controlled by the University.

**Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS)** – UAS are also known as or may be characterized as uncrewed aircraft systems or Drones.

According to the FAA, a UAS is the Uncrewed aircraft and all of the associated support equipment, control station, data links, telemetry, communications and navigation equipment, etc., necessary to operate the Uncrewed aircraft. UAS may have a variety of names including but not limited to quadcopter and quadrotor, FAA regulation applies to UAS regardless of size or weight. Model aircraft are not considered by the FAA as UAS and have different regulations.

**COA** – Certificate of Authorization or Waiver. The COA is an authorization issued by the FAA to a public operator for a specific UAS activity. After a complete application is submitted, FAA conducts a comprehensive operational and technical review. If necessary, provisions or limitations may be imposed as part of the approval to ensure the UAS can operate safely with other airspace users. In most cases, FAA will provide a formal response within 60 days from the time a completed application is submitted.

**333 Exemption** – FAA exemption based on Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (FMRA) which grants the Secretary of Transportation the authority to determine whether an airworthiness certificate is required for a UAS to operate safely in the National Airspace System.

**Remote Pilot Certificate**- Certificate of authorization issued by the FAA to public operator for commercial operation of UAS activity of a craft under 55 lbs. in weight.