



Centers and Institutes Policy

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I. Purpose

The purpose of the Centers and Institutes Policy is to formalize the University’s processes for the establishment, substantive change, deactivation, and review of centers and institutes.

II. Policy Statement

Research Centers

A research “center” provides an organizational base for research in a given area involving faculty and students from a variety of internal administrative structures. A center may be involved in offering continuing education activities related to its area(s) of interest. The center structure may facilitate efforts of the college or University to obtain extramural funding in specific areas. It serves as a formalized link between the academic community and the professional community in the area(s) of focus. A center, however, is not an autonomous structure within the internal statutory organization of a college or university. It is administratively most often an appendage of one of the traditional administrative structures, such as a department. A center is not involved in the independent offering of credit courses or degree programs. (*Academic and Student Affairs Handbook, § 2.14, Research Centers and Institutes*)

Institutes

An “institute” shares a center’s focus on research, provision of opportunity for interdisciplinary activity, involvement in continuing education activities, value in facilitating efforts to obtain extramural funding, and service as a link between the academic and professional communities. An institute, however, is a far more formalized structure may be equivalent to an autonomous unit within the internal structure of the college or university such as a department, division, school, or (university level) college. Unlike a center, an institute may offer credit courses and degree programs. (*Academic and Student Affairs Handbook, §2.14 Research Centers and Institutes*)

III. Exclusions

None.

IV. Procedures

Approval of Centers and Institutes

Requests to establish, alter, or deactivate centers shall be made to the Provost by the Dean of the college in which the center is located or proposed to be located. For institutes located within or closely linked to colleges, the same procedure shall be followed. In the case of institutes that are not located within a college or similar administrative structure, the request shall be made to the Provost by the Director of the institute or other closely related party. Proposals approved by the Provost shall be submitted to the President of the University for a final decision.

Requests to establish centers and institutes shall include a rationale that outlines the need for the establishment of the center or institute; the proposed center's or institute's mission and an explanation of how that mission supports and advances the University's mission and strategic plan; a statement of long-term goals and specific measurable objectives of the center or institute; an outline of the proposed budget with short- and long-term revenue sources and projections; a statement of the relationship of the center or institute to existing faculty resources; a description of how the center or institute fits into the University's existing organizational structure, along with a copy of the proposed organizational chart; and a description of the process by which the proposal for the center or institute was developed and the names of the key contributors to the proposal.

Requests to make a substantive change (purpose, structure, reporting relationship, activities) to an existing center or institute shall include a rationale for the change; an explanation of how the proposed change will improve the effectiveness of the entity; a description of how the change advances the University's strategic plan; and the budgetary implications of the change.

Requests to deactivate centers or institutes shall include a rationale for the deactivation of the unit; a detailed statement of the financial condition of the center or institute; a prospectus for fulfilling any contractual obligations of the center or institute; and a plan for phasing out the activities of the center or institute, including any recommendations for continuing activities of the deactivated center or institute through other organizational units of the University.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the President shall submit to the Chancellor a list of all academic institutes and centers that are authorized to operate on each campus highlighting those which have been added or deleted since the prior year's submission. The addition or elimination of academic centers and institutes does not require the Chancellor's or Regents' approval. (*Board of Regents Policy Manual, §2.7, Organization Structure and Changes*)

Furthermore, the applicable Dean shall initiate a review of centers and institutes every five years, or upon the recommendation of the Provost, focusing on effectiveness in achieving stated outcomes and relevance to the institution's strategic plan. The completed reviews shall be forwarded to the Provost with a recommendation to either "enhance," "maintain," "reorganize," "reduce," or "eliminate" the center or institute reviewed.