

POLICY ON CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

Centers

A center or bureau (referred to as “center” in this document) provides an organizational base for research, study, or continuing education in an academic area or closely related areas. It often provides a vehicle for interdisciplinary research involving faculty and students as well as collaboration among internal administrative units. A center may facilitate efforts of the university to obtain extramural funding or enhance revenue while providing public services, outreach, training, or conducting research of benefit to communities. It may serve as a formalized link between the academic community and the professional community in a specified area of focus. A center is not an autonomous structure within the internal statutory organization of the university. It is administratively most often an appendage of traditional administrative structures, such as departments, divisions, schools, or colleges. A center is not typically involved in the independent offering of credit courses or degree programs.

Institutes

An institute focuses on research, opportunities for interdisciplinary activity, involvement in continuing education activities, efforts to obtain extramural funding, service, and outreach as a link between the academic and professional communities. It is a more formalized structure than a center and may be equivalent to an autonomous unit within the University’s internal structure such as a department, division, school, or college. Institutes may be involved in the offering of credit courses and degree programs.

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 which 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 final approval.

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

Policy on Centers and Institutes
Page 2 of 2

1 Requests to make a substantive change (purpose, structure, reporting relationship, activities) to
2 an existing center or institute shall include a rationale for the change, an explanation of how the
3 proposed change will improve the effectiveness of the entity, a description of how the change
4 advances the University's strategic plan, and the budgetary implications of the change.
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6 Requests to deactivate centers/institutes shall include a rationale for the deactivation of the unit,
7 a detailed statement of the financial condition of the center/institute, a prospectus for fulfilling
8 any contractual obligations of the center/institute, and a plan for phasing out the activities of the
9 center/institute, including any recommendations for continuing activities of the deactivated
10 center/institute through other organizational units of the University.
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12 An annual report of approved centers and institutes shall be submitted to the Board of Regents
13 by the Office of the Provost. In addition, the Dean or Director shall initiate a review of centers
14 and institutes every five years, or upon the recommendation of the Provost, focusing on
15 effectiveness in achieving stated outcomes and relevance to the institution's strategic plan. Such
16 reviews shall result in recommendations to the Provost of "enhance," "maintain," "reduce," or
17 "eliminate."
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19 *August 14, 2001*