

# **Policies and Procedures for Creation, Review and Termination of Centers and Institutes**

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The mission of Centers and Institutes at Oregon State University is:

“to motivate, facilitate and support OSU faculty to grow the University’s research and education enterprise across colleges and disciplines and increase the impact and visibility of multidisciplinary research.”

These Policies and Procedures have been adopted to provide a standard process for creating, review and terminating centers and institutes. The Policies and Procedures were developed by the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Centers, Institutes and Programs.

## **1. Applicability**

These policies and procedures apply to any organization within OSU that is called a center or institute without regard to their reporting lines, funding (single college or Research Office) or origin, including centers and institutes created and funded through federal calls for proposals, state legislative action, internal university initiatives or external gifts.

## **2. Creation**

**2.1 Proposals.** Anyone seeking to create a new center or institute, as defined in Attachment A, shall submit a formal written proposal to the Vice President for Research (VPR) and the Deans of any Colleges whose faculty are participating in the proposal. The proposal should include the following information:

- The name of the new center or institute
- A mission statement and strategic plan, including a description of how the new center or institute’s strategic plan aligns with the plans of any participating colleges or departments
- A list of principal faculty members involved, including the director and participating researchers
- A short summary of the center or institute’s preliminary research agenda, including brief initial project descriptions, if available
- A description of the center or institute’s organizational structure
- A description of the center or institute’s initial and potential external funding sources
- A 5-year financial plan addressing all revenue sources and matching requirements

- A detailed description of the funds requested centrally and a summary of the internal sources of support and space.

**2.2 Review of Proposals.** Following review by the Research Office, the proposal will be submitted to the Research Council for review and comment. The Research Council will review the proposal and make recommendations based upon the information provided in the application and application of the following criteria:

- Clarity of mission
- Alignment of strategic plan with the OSU strategic plan and the plans of colleges whose faculty are participating
- Level of faculty engagement
- Soundness of the proposed research agenda
- Sustainability of organizational structure and financial plan

The Research Council shall advise the VPR and the Dean(s) whether the new center or institute should be formed. For centers or institutes requesting funds from Central Administration, the VPR shall recommend approval or disapproval to the Provost, who shall make the final decision on creation of a new center or institute. For centers or institutes not requesting funds from Central Administration, the Dean(s) shall make the final decision on the creation of a new center or institute.

**2.3 Special Procedures for Federal Solicitations.** If a center or institute is created in response to federal research solicitations the proposal submitted to the federal agency may be submitted to the VPR and the Dean(s) when it is filed with the funding agency. Internal review at OSU will occur simultaneously with the federal agency review. If federal funds are awarded, the Provost shall create the center or institute if Central Administration funds are committed. The Dean(s) shall create the center or institute if College funds are committed.

### **3. Review.**

**3.1 Process.** All centers and institutes supported by the Central Administration shall be reviewed every 5 years, or at any time requested by the center or institute's advisory board, the VPR or the Provost, using the review procedures in Attachment B.

If a center or institute is subject to a formal external review by a funding agency, no separate University review shall be required if the external review addresses the elements required in Attachment B.

**3.2 Results.** Following completion of the review and the recommendations of the Review Panel, the VPR and the Provost, in consultation with appropriate Deans may take one or more of the following actions: rename the center or institute to reflect its functions, change reporting lines, terminate the center or institute, or consolidate or reorganize the center or institute.

**4. Disestablishment/Change in Reporting.** In conjunction with the 5-year review of centers and institutes, recommendations will be made concerning changes in reporting lines or disestablishment.

**4.1 Disestablishment.** Any decision to terminate a center or institute will be made by the Provost based on a recommendation of the VPR.

If a center or institute was created by a federal, state or private program designating the organization as a center or institute, the center or institute will be automatically terminated at the completion of the funded program. If the faculty participating in the funded center or institute wish to continue the center or institute, prior to the termination of funding they shall submit a proposal as described in Section 2.

**4.2 Change in Reporting.** If a center or institute no longer involves faculty and support from multiple colleges or no longer receives Central Administration support, it will be shifted to report to an individual college. Conversely, if a center or institute which has reported solely to one college has grown to engage a significant number of faculty from other colleges, its reporting shall be shifted to the Research Office. Any changes in reporting will be made by the Provost upon the recommendation of the VPR.

## **Attachment A-Definitions**

A research organization should be called a center or institute only if it serves to bring together a group of people dedicated to addressing specific interdisciplinary research problems. The place may be virtual or physical.

The nature of interdisciplinary efforts change over time and it is unadvisable to try and write standard definitions for every relationship that may develop among university faculty. All of the terms used to refer to interdisciplinary research enterprises, such as alliances, laboratories, consortiums, facilities and others are not defined.

***Institutes.*** An institute is an organized research unit established on a continuing basis primarily for the coordination and promotion of faculty research interests. The breadth of research projects transcends department, school, college, or even the University's boundaries. Public service activities and programs related to and arising from research conducted within an institute help advance institutional goals.

An institute shares a center's focus on research, provisions of opportunity for interdisciplinary activity, values in facilitating efforts to obtain extramural funding, and serves as a link between the academic and professional communities. Institutes are generally composed of individuals who are recognized authorities in a particular field or subject for advanced study and serve to promote activities at the level of a college.

**Centers.** A center provides an organizational base for the enhancement of interactions in a given academic area or closely related areas. Centers exist primarily to foster research, public service, and/or teaching activities that are focused around one topic, issue, or goal but typically require the efforts of faculty or other professionals from several departments, schools, colleges throughout the University.

A center provides a vehicle for interdisciplinary research in a given area involving faculty and students from a variety of internal academic structures. A center may facilitate efforts of a college or the University to obtain external funding in specific areas. A center serves as a formalized link between the academic community and the professional community in the area(s) of focus. A center may provide the infrastructure support functions needed by a group of faculty with shared education, research or service interests and may occupy contiguous space.

## **Attachment B-Review Procedure**

### **Centers and Institutes Reviews**

The intent of review is to provide centers and institutes an opportunity to:

- reflect on their research, programs and services;
- solicit input on the research, programs and services provided relative to their core mission (from students, staff, faculty and other stakeholders/customers);
- develop approaches to enhance quality of research, programs and services;
- ensure accountability; and
- ensure alignment with the OSU Strategic Plan and between academic units and centers and institutes.

Reviews will include external input from peer institutions in order to benchmark the quality of the research, programs and services, with a focus on future improvements.

### **Process**

### Self Study prepared by the Center or Institute

The Self Study will be no more than 10 pages in length. It will include:

- Mission
- Key goals and objectives
- Current resources (FTE and financial) allocated to support research, services and administrative processes
- Recent actions initiated due to changes in customer base, resources and/or other internal/external drivers
- Assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and concerns
- Recommendations for improvement, including alignment of research across the institution

The Self Study will answer these questions:

- What are the essential functions of the center or institute?
- How does the center or institute's plan align with the strategic plans of the colleges of participating faculty?
- How well is the center or institute performing relative to those functions and who thinks so?
- How does the center or institute intend to evolve into the future, given where it is now?
- How will the center or institute evaluate its progress and success?
- How does the center or institute use its resources? Are there opportunities to attract additional resources and if so, how would those resources be used?
- How does the center or institute collaborate with others across campus and are there opportunities for further partnerships?

The primary benefit of the review process lies in the opportunity for self-analysis and the use of this analysis along with the report of the Review Team in subsequent program enhancement. Thus, a major component of the review is the process involved in the preparation of a self study document which serves as the primary source of information for the Review Team. The center or institute Director is responsible for guiding the preparation of the self study and assembling data and materials pertinent to the review. It should include a thorough narrative and tabular descriptions of the program and a thorough self assessment of program strengths, weaknesses, needs and opportunities for each section.

### Review Team

- The review team will consist of 5-6 members. The team members will be from outside the center or institute, including at least 2-3 external representatives (external to OSU). The review team will include members with expertise in core disciplines of the center or institute and at least one member with significant interdisciplinary research experience. At least one of the external representatives will be a user of the research produced by the Center or Institute.
- The team will be appointed by the Vice President for Research following consultation with the center or institute head and administrative and faculty leadership.

Review team members should be knowledgeable, thoughtful, experienced and objective. Internal reviewers should be from units other than that of the center or institute under review. Peer reviewers should have the ability to realistically evaluate the program's strengths and weaknesses relative to similar programs at peer institutions, the program's operations, plans for growth and development, etc.

Expenses of the external reviewers, including travel, lodging, meals, any honorarium, and all other costs associated with the conduct of the review are the responsibility of the center or institute whose program is being reviewed.

### Site Visit

- The Review Team, after reviewing the self-study, will visit the center or institute and have conversations with the team. This will include interviews with the center or institute Director, appropriate administrators, faculty and staff and users of programs and services (students, staff, faculty, administrators, the public, etc.)
- The site visit is typically 1-2 days in length. The schedule and agenda of the site visit will be developed by the center or institute Director in consultation with the chair of the Review Team.

Arrangements for scheduling participants and for locating space are the responsibility of the center or institute.

The opportunity should be extended for additional feedback to the Review Team after the site visit, to allow input from individuals who may not be present at the site visit or who may have follow-up comments. This information should be delivered to the team chair no later than one week after the site visit.

At the conclusion of the site visit, the Review Team, in an exit session, will review its preliminary findings with center or institute head and the Vice President for Research.

#### Review Team Preliminary Report

- The Review Team will prepare a report with preliminary findings and recommendations.
- The preliminary report will be completed within two weeks of the site visit and shared by the team chair with center or institute Director and the Vice President for Research.
- The center or institute Director may offer corrections to factual errors within a week of receiving the preliminary report.

Based on the site visit and analysis of the materials presented in the self study documents, the Review Team will prepare a formal report of its findings. The report provides both evaluation and constructive recommendations. The report should address the quality, vitality, and direction of the center or institute and the extent to which the center or institute is meeting its stated mission and goals. It should also analyze and evaluate inputs, productivity, and outcomes by assessing appropriate indicators.

The report should contain recommendations concerning the future of the center or institute and its programs, including its structure and scope of activities. The Review Team will specifically address whether reporting lines should be changed, whether the center or institute should be reorganized or consolidated with another center or institute and whether the center or institute should be disestablished.

The initial draft will be submitted by the team chair to the Vice President for Research and the center or institute head for a review of errors in factual content. After factual information has been confirmed, the final report will be submitted by the team chair to the Vice President for Research and center or institute Director. The final report will be shared with administrative, faculty and student leadership and with other members of the campus community as appropriate.

#### Review Team Final Report

- The final report will be completed within two weeks of the discussion of the preliminary report with the center or institute Director and the Vice President for Research.
- On receiving the final report, the center or institute Director will have an opportunity to offer disagreements with interpretation or any other findings of the evaluation prior to initiating development of an action plan. A summary of the center or institute Director's comments will be included in the final report.

- The final report will be discussed by the Vice President for Research and center or institute Director, leading to an action plan.

#### Action Plan

- The center or institute Director will create an action plan to address the recommendations in the final report.
- The center or institute Director will submit the action plan to the Vice President for Research within four weeks of the date the Review Team final report was accepted.
- The Vice President for Research will finalize the action plan with the center or institute Director, in consultation with others as appropriate.

#### Implementation Progress Check

- One year after the action plan is accepted, the center or institute Director will submit a progress report to the Vice President for Research.
- The Vice President for Research, and perhaps some representatives from the Review Team, will evaluate progress on the action plan and will provide feedback to the center or institute Director.
- Center or institute's progress toward achieving the outcomes detailed in the action plan will become part of the annual review process of the center or institute Director.

#### **Review Criteria**

Inputs – the adequacy of the total resources entering into or supporting the program

- Input assessment refers to the reporting and evaluation of program inputs or resources including context, budget, personnel, facilities, and organizational support.

Productivity – the level of performance, including both the breadth and depth of its capacity, to fulfill its mission and goals

- Analysis of productivity includes performance metrics appropriate to the mission and goals of the center or institute.

Outcomes – the quality of the outcomes that result from the existence of the program

Data relative to inputs, productivity, and outcomes should be collected and maintained on a continuing basis by the center or institute.

### **Timing of Reviews**

Center and institute reviews will be conducted on a 5-year schedule. Supplemental interim reviews may be conducted as requested by the center or institute or as deemed appropriate by the Vice President for Research.