

Academic Centers

3335-3-36 Centers and institutes.

(A) Definition of an academic center (institute).

An academic center is a non-degree granting educational unit of the university engaged in research; instruction; or clinical, outreach, or related service. An academic center is defined by its mission and scope, not its title, and may be described as a center, institute, laboratory, or similar term. Use of “center” or “institute” in the names of proposed units of the university shall be limited to academic centers, unless otherwise approved by the council on academic affairs. See paragraph (C) of rule 3335-3-56 of the Administrative Code, for the definition of non-academic centers. Academic centers are of two broad types: university centers and college centers.

University center typically will have a substantial research/scholarship component to their mission, but also may be involved in instruction, and/or related service. Their internal funding (initial and continuing) is drawn fully, or in large part, from central university funds (i.e. office of the president, office of academic affairs, office of research). The leadership of the center will report to one or more of those offices.

College centers typically will have some mix, with variable emphases, of research/scholarship, instruction, service, clinical or outreach missions. Internal funding (initial and continuing) is drawn fully, or in large part, from one college or a small set of colleges. The leadership of the center will report to one dean or a small set of deans.

(B) Establishment, reporting, and oversight.

(1) Establishment of university centers

Proposals for university centers will be developed following the “guidelines for the establishment and review of academic centers” and submitted to the office of academic affairs for action.

The chair of the council on academic affairs (CAA), the provost’s designee to that council, and the chair of the university research committee (URC) will review the proposal to ensure adherence to the guidelines and determine if it includes a substantial research component.

If so, a “centers subcommittee” of the council, supplemented with membership from URC, will review the proposal and bring a recommendation for action to CAA. If a substantial research component does not exist, the special subcommittee of the council (without URC involvement) will review the proposal and bring a recommendation for action to CAA.

If approved by CAA, the proposal will be sent to the university senate for final approval. That action will be communicated to the board of trustees.

(2) Establishment of college centers.

Each college will have a template for the establishment and review of centers that will be included in the college pattern of administration. Copies of college templates also will be maintained in the office of academic affairs (OAA). Proposals will be developed with adherence to the template, and submitted to the dean(s) of the college(s).

No review/action by CAA is required. The dean(s) will inform the OAA of the establishment of such a center. OAA will inform CAA, resulting in official institutional notification.

The office of academic affairs shall maintain a register of all academic centers and appropriate records concerning each one.

(3) Curricula and faculty affiliation.

Although neither university nor college centers may establish independent course offerings and degree programs, they may participate in cooperative programs involving course offerings and degree programs within existing academic units. With the approval of the council on academic affairs, the faculty of a school or college may delegate to an academic center the authority to offer courses or degree programs established under the auspices of that school or college. Proposals for any such courses or programs must be forwarded to the office of academic affairs with the signature approval of the appropriate school or college which must retain ultimate authority and responsibility for the courses or degree programs.

University faculty and staff may affiliate with the academic center under procedures approved by its oversight committee. Academic centers shall not serve as tenure initiating units.

(4) Administration.

An academic center shall be administered by a director who shall be appointed by and report to the dean, relevant vice president(s) or deans of the pertinent college(s).

(5) Oversight.

Each university and college center shall have an oversight committee, at least two-thirds of whose members are regular faculty from the academic units involved in the center. The director shall consult regularly with the oversight committee.

The director of each academic center shall develop in conjunction with the oversight committee a pattern of administration for the center.

(6) Review process.

All university centers will be reviewed two years after initial establishment and at four-year intervals thereafter. The centers subcommittee of CAA will conduct the review following the "guidelines for the establishment and review of centers" and bring a recommendation for action to CAA. The range of actions include: continuation, conditional continuation with a follow-up in less than four years, and termination.

All college centers will be monitored through annual reports to the college dean(s). Should significant change to a center occur, or a decision be made to abolish a center, notification of that decision will be made to the office of academic affairs and through it to CAA.

(7) Previously established centers.

All existing academic centers established outside this rule shall be reviewed under the requirements of this rule. Those not in compliance with the rule shall be allowed one additional year to make appropriate adjustments to allow for their continuation.

Note: the request of any established center seeking to move from one type to another must be reviewed and approved by CAA.

(C) Conditional use of the term "center."

Start-up centers are permitted. Following a formal request by a vice president or dean and expedited review and approval by CAA, the term "center" may be used related to external or central funding possibilities. That action will be communicated directly to the board of trustees. Should funding not be secured within one year, the unit must request from CAA an extension of the use of the term. Once funding is secured, the appropriate process for establishment of a university or college center must be initiated within one year. (B/T 9/8/61, B/T, 6/4/93, B/T 9/1/97, B/T 12/4/98, B/T 6/7/2005, B/T 6/6/2008, B/T 2/01/2013)

Guidelines for the Establishment and Review of Academic Centers

Academic centers/institutes are of two broad types, based on the inter-related characteristics of mission, source of funding, and reporting line.

All centers will have:

- A director who is appointed by and reports to the relevant vice president(s) or dean(s).
- An oversight committee composed primarily of faculty who will be consulted regularly by the director.
- A pattern of administration developed by the director in conjunction with the oversight committee that will include center membership criteria.

No center may:

- Serve as a tenure initiating unit.
- Establish independent course offerings and degree programs.

Temporary/Conditional Use of the Term “Center”

By university rule, all uses of the terms “center” and “institute” must be approved by the Council on Academic Affairs. Beyond “university” and “college” centers, start-up centers are permitted.

Use of the term “center” related to external and/or central institutional funding possibilities may occur in an expedited manner following submission of a formal request by a vice president or dean and then review and approval by the Council on Academic Affairs. If approved, that action will be communicated directly to the Board of Trustees. Should funding not be secured, use of the term center ends. If funding is secured, the appropriate process for establishment of a university or college center must occur.

College Centers

These centers typically will have some mix, with variable emphases, of research/scholarship, instruction, service, clinical or outreach missions. Internal funding (initial and continuing) is drawn fully, or in large part, from one college or a small set of colleges. The leadership of the center will report to one dean or a small set of deans.

Each college will have a template for the establishment and review of centers that will be included in the college pattern of administration. Copies of college templates also will be maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs. Proposals will be developed with adherence to the template, and submitted to the dean(s) of the college(s).

No review/action by the Council on Academic Affairs is required. The dean(s) will inform the Office of Academic Affairs of the establishment of such a center. The Office of Academic Affairs will inform the council, resulting in official institutional notification.

All centers will be monitored through annual reports to the college dean(s). Should significant change to a center occur, or a decision be made to abolish a center, notification of that decision will be made to the Office of Academic Affairs and through it to the Council on Academic Affairs.

All centers moving from one type to another must be reviewed and approved by CAA.

University Centers

These centers typically will have a substantial research/scholarship component to their mission, but also may be involved in instruction, and/or related service. Their internal funding (initial and continuing) is drawn fully, or in large part, from central university funds (i.e., Office of the President, Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Research, College of Arts and Sciences). The leadership of the center will report to one or more of those offices.

Procedures for Establishing a University Center

Those wanting to establish an academic center must consult with the Office of Academic Affairs to determine the appropriate path for proposal development.

- I. A university academic center proposal will be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and reviewed by the chair of the Council on Academic Affairs, the executive vice president and provost's designee to that council, and the chair of the University Research Committee to ensure adherence to the guidelines and determine if a substantial research component exists.
- II. A centers subcommittee of the council then will review the proposal. That subcommittee will be supplemented with membership from the University Research Committee if there is a substantial research component. The subcommittee will bring a recommendation for action to the Council on Academic Affairs.
- III. A proposal approved by the council will be sent to the University Senate for action. If approved by the Senate, that action will be communicated to the Board of Trustees.

Proposal to Establish a University Center

The proposal should provide in clearly labeled sections the information requested below.

- I. Mission: Explain the mission of the center and how it is aligned with the university's Academic Plan and strategic goals. In particular, describe or explain the following:
 - A. The missions of the university (research, teaching, service or outreach) most relevant to the center.
 - B. The interdisciplinary nature of the center.
 - C. The goals of the center that cannot be met within existing academic units.
- II. Faculty: Describe the level of faculty interest and commitment to the center. In particular, provide, describe or explain the following:
 - A. The criteria for selecting the center's faculty membership.
 - B. A list of faculty expressing interest in associating with the center and accompanying documentation that their chairs/directors support such involvement.
 - C. The extent to which staff and students will be involved and how they will be supported.
- III. Administration: Describe the administrative structure and responsibilities of the director and oversight committee. In particular, describe or explain the following:
 - A. The name of the director or interim director of the center.
 - B. The proposed responsibilities of the director.

- C. The function(s) and composition of the oversight committee.
 - D. The reporting line—the dean, group of deans, or vice president to whom the center will report.
 - E. The main components of a pattern of administration for the center (to be formally completed/approved within a year of center establishment).
- IV. Budget/Funding: Specify budget and funding sources for the center. In particular, describe or explain the following:
- A. The expected budget for the first year of operation.
 - B. Funding sources and one-time and recurring costs.
 - C. Existing or new equipment, space, and facilities needed to establish the center.
 - D. The sustainability of the center—possibilities for external funding, and details of related funding proposal submissions.
- V. Evaluative Criteria and Benchmarks: Propose and define specific criteria and benchmarks against which the center will be measured.
- VI. Supporting Materials: Solicit and include letters of support from:
- A. Relevant department chairs, school directors, deans, and vice presidents from within the university.
 - B. Interested parties outside the university.
 - C. Entities with similar emphases at other universities.

Review of University Centers

All university centers and institutes (hereafter “university centers” or “centers”), as defined in 3335-3-6, must be reviewed two years after initial establishment and at four year intervals thereafter, as articulated in 3335-3-36. The following priorities will guide the review of existing centers (those established before adoption of the 2008 revision to 3335-3-36). Of highest priority are those university centers that

- Have not been reviewed in the past five years or are *not* subject to close periodic scrutiny by an appropriate review agency, accreditation body, or funding agency typically composed of distinguished faculty, researchers, or community partners with expertise in the relevant area.
- Have experienced substantial growth in administrative staff over the past five years not fully anticipated or funded by initial budget allocations or subsequent external funding or earnings.
- Were initially justified on the basis of external funding, but where the amount of external funding has proven to be insufficient to cover operating costs.
- Are deemed inactive.

The following principles and procedures will govern all reviews of university centers and are proposed as a guide for the review of college centers. The review of university centers will be conducted by the centers subcommittee of CAA and will proceed according to the terms outlined in the “Guidelines for the Establishment and Review of Centers.” If the center being reviewed is a research-intensive center, as determined under Section II of “Procedures for Establishing a University Center”, the subcommittee conducting the review will be supplemented with one member from the University Research Committee.

The centers subcommittee may, at its discretion, appoint ad hoc committees (always including faculty with expertise in the relevant subject area, but usually also including administrators) to supervise the review

process outlined below. Given that multiple centers may need to be reviewed, the centers subcommittee may appoint several ad hoc committees in any given year.

Specifically, such review by the subcommittee or an ad hoc committee appointed by the centers subcommittee (hereafter “subcommittee”) will include the following:

- I. Statement of rationale for the review: The general rationale for undertaking the review should be clearly explained to all parties. These include:
 - A. The university policy requiring regular reviews of centers.
 - B. The need to ensure cost-effective and successful stewardship of university resources.
 - C. The need for centers to provide valued and productive services to the university.

- II. A comprehensive self-study: The center under review will complete a self-study in which it provides the subcommittee specific information regarding its mission, faculty, administrative structure, budget, and evaluative criteria and benchmarks. To this end, the self-study will include the following:
 - A. Mission
 1. Original mission statement
 2. Proposal establishing the center
 3. Annual reports
 4. Other relevant documents or materials
 5. Description or list of all center activities, events, initiatives, etc., that have contributed to fulfilling the mission and objectives of the center. If current activities of the center differ from those originally envisaged or articulated in the mission statement, explain this evolution.

 - B. Faculty and Student Involvement and Contribution
 1. List of current faculty and graduate student affiliates or associates.
 2. List of past faculty and graduate student affiliates or associates.
 3. List all faculty publications, lectures, grants, or other activities related to their work with the center, focusing on those that contribute most centrally to the mission of the center.
 4. List all student publications, lectures, grants, or other activities related to their work with the center.

 - C. Administrative Structure and Responsibilities
 1. Description of administrative structure.
 - a. Responsibilities and activities of all administrative staff, indicating their contributions to the mission of the center and its objectives.
 - b. Oversight committee, indicating their contributions to the mission of the center and its objectives.
 2. Pattern of administration.

 - D. Budget
 1. Current budget.
 2. Projected budget for next four years.
 3. Past budgets since last review.
 4. Description of the budgetary context for the center, outlining specific information regarding those expenses charged to the university’s general funds. Externally generated funds produced by the center should be itemized and linked to the functions

and services articulated in the mission statement.

- E. **Evaluative Criteria and Benchmarks**
 - 1. List of evaluative criteria and benchmarks articulated in the original center proposal, identifying and describing the degree to which the center has met (or failed to meet) its stated evaluative criteria and benchmarks.
 - 2. Identify and justify any new evaluative measures and describe the degree to which the center has met these criteria or benchmarks.
 - 3. Provide any specific narrative information or data as appropriate and attach as appendices any documentation (letters of commendation, awards, news releases) that demonstrate how the center has met its criteria or benchmarks.
- III. Review of the self-study by the subcommittee: Upon its receipt, the subcommittee will discuss and assess the self-study.
- IV. Discussion and consultation by the subcommittee with the center administration: The subcommittee will meet with the director, oversight committee, and other administrative staff (as deemed appropriate) to discuss the self-study.
- V. Discussion and consultation by the subcommittee with stakeholders: The subcommittee will meet with stakeholders, including (but not limited to) the directors of relevant units or programs and chairs and deans of relevant units or units heavily involved in the programs or services offered by the center. These parties will be fully informed of the review and consulted during the review process.
- VI. Completion of final report: The subcommittee will prepare a final evaluative report that will include all items described in I - V above. Recommendations regarding the status of the center (continuation, conditional continuation with a follow-up in fewer than four years, or termination) will be based on the review outlined above and must focus on the degree to which the center:
 - A. Has fulfilled or is fulfilling its stated mission.
 - B. Is working within its own budgetary constraints.
 - C. Is meeting its own evaluative criteria and benchmarks.

The center director and oversight committee will have an opportunity to review and comment on the final report and/or consult with the subcommittee before it forwards its report to OAA and CAA.

- VII. Presentation of the final report to CAA: The report of the subcommittee and its recommendations will be forwarded to CAA. Recommendations require action by CAA.

Termination of a University Center

Termination of a university center requires University Senate approval.

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the ad hoc Committee's Report on Centers and Institutes, 1987

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