



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

Policy Number	Subject	Effective Date	Revised Date
2.0430P	Establishing, Operating, Evaluating, Reviewing, and Disbanding University Institutes and Centers	02/20/08	
Responsible Unit/Division:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Policy Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Major Revision of Existing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Minor/Technical Revision of Existing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of Existing Policy			

OBJECTIVE & PURPOSE

I. Introduction

Institutes and centers are defined in the Policy Guideline (04-07-27) of the Florida State University System as entities established to coordinate intra- and interinstitutional research, service, and/or education/training activities that supplement and extend existing instruction, research, and service at the universities. In addition, the policy provides for exclusions, designations and annual reporting requirements for all institutes and centers. The Policy Guideline, and its successors, are incorporated by reference as part of the UNF Guidelines for Establishing, Operating, Evaluating/Reviewing Centers and Institutes, and appear in the Appendix to this document. All the provisions of this document are subject to the Policy Guideline (PG 04.07.27), and where these provisions depart from the requirement of PG 04.07.27, the latter will prevail.

University research centers and institutes (hereinafter referred to only as University Centers) supplement the activities of traditional academic units, and may not duplicate the functions of those units. They do not serve as an alternate route to secure a faculty appointment. In addition, centers and institutes may not (a) confer degrees, (b) independently appoint faculty members, (c) confer tenure, or (d) acquire capital equipment which is not inventoried to the University. A

university center may partner with an academic unit to offer a regular course in conjunction with the academic unit.

II. Purpose of this Document

The Florida Policy Guideline 04.07.27 requires each institution to develop and publish clearly defined guidelines consistent with System policies for establishing, operating, evaluating/reviewing, and disbanding university centers and institutes. This document responds to this requirement and provides university-wide guidelines for the establishment, operation, and review of university centers. These guidelines are designed to facilitate the formation of new centers and to assist in the management and review of existing centers. These policies will be implemented by the Office of Academic Affairs.

University centers may be formed as an outcome of sponsored projects supported with funds from a federal government or state government agency, private or corporate sponsor, foundation, or endowment. Others may be initiated as part of the UNF Flagship Program, a special university-wide research initiative or by a group of faculty with common or cross-cutting research interests. Another option for the formation of a center is the membership center option. A membership center is one in which corporate and/or government sponsors (referred to as Members) pay membership fees that are used to fund research and from which they may benefit in a manner consistent with the University's sponsored project practice. The designation of a University Institute or University Center shall be made as follows:

- A. A **university center** is an academic unit established under UNF's "Guidelines for Establishing, Operating, Evaluating/Reviewing, and Disbanding Research Centers and Institutes." A university center may focus on one discipline, or may be interdisciplinary. Accordingly, a university center may be located within a department or college, may involve participants from more than one department within a college, or may involve individuals from multiple academic units across colleges. A center may be a subordinate unit within a department, college, school or institute. While the primary purpose of a university research center is to sponsor, coordinate, conduct and promote research, a center may also engage in service activities or offer instruction/training, on a non-degree-granting basis. The *Exclusions* section of PG 04.07.27 identifies other units that may be referred to as "institutes" and "centers," whose purpose is to provide services to the university community (for example, day care centers, teaching or learning centers, computer centers, etc.). Such units shall not be considered "centers" for the purposes of this document.
- B. A **university institute** is a distinct and free-standing unit of substantial size. It may also be focused on one discipline or may be interdisciplinary. The primary focus of an Institute's activity is research, although an Institute may undertake non-research service activities and initiatives. In general, however, an institute will have a much broader mission and a wider set of goals and objectives than a center, and usually will involve a greater interdisciplinary and inter-institutional involvement of faculty. An institute may establish centers (in accordance with established university procedures) or programs as administrative units within its organization.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

III. Administrative Structure and Responsibilities

Each university center shall have a Director and an Advisory Committee. Membership centers shall have an External Advisory Board that includes representatives of the member organizations. A non-membership university center may have an External advisory Board. The Director and Advisory Committee shall develop and maintain at all times a strategic plan for the operation and development of the University Center. Oversight of university centers are prescribed below, in paragraphs A, B, and C, according to the nature of the center.

Oversight

- A. The oversight of *university centers that reside within a single academic department or non-departmentalized college* shall be the responsibility of the chair or dean, and the director of the university center shall report to the chair or dean. The dean, in consultation with the Assistant Vice President for Research (AVPR) and the chair (where applicable) shall determine which of these individuals is charged with this oversight/supervisory responsibility. In the case of a university center which resides within a single academic department, in determining to whom the director will report, the dean and AVPR shall consider whether it is more appropriate for the director (in his director capacity) to report to the department chair or to the dean. A significant factor in the decision should be the percentage of time the director will be expected to expend on his/her university center activities versus his/her responsibilities as a faculty member of the department.
- B. For university centers which reside *within a single college*, but whose research is interdisciplinary and *involves faculty from more than one department*, oversight of the university center shall be the responsibility of the dean, and the director of the center shall report to the dean.
- C. The oversight of interdisciplinary university centers that involve *active faculty from more than one college, and/or where two or more deans each provide substantial non-faculty/non-monetary resources (e.g. labs, office space, etc.) to the university center*, shall be the responsibility of the AVPR, and the director of the university center shall report to the AVPR. The AVPR and deans, who have provided resources for a university center, shall constitute a Center Oversight Committee (COC) that will oversee the university center, with specific responsibilities identified below. When a university center is dealing with matters related to undergraduate education, the Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies will assist the AVPR and the deans in the oversight of the programs of the university center.

Responsibilities of COC:

1. Receiving and reviewing the annual reports of the centers under its jurisdiction;

2. Annually reviewing and evaluating the budgets of the centers under its jurisdiction and making appropriate recommendations;
3. Recommending the appointment/reappointment of the directors and principal personnel of the centers under its jurisdiction, including the Advisory Board and the External Advisory Board; and
4. Making recommendations to the Provost regarding the activities and administration of the university centers under its jurisdiction.

Director

The director shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the center and for the leadership of the center. In particular, it shall be the director's responsibility to ensure that the center conducts research, provides services where necessary, and meets all the goals, objectives and mission, as stated in its charter. He/She will interact with faculty, university administrators, and external constituents on behalf of the center, and shall ensure that all agreements are met and that all reports are submitted as required.

Associates

Faculty who participate in the activities of a university center shall be referred to as *Associates* of the university center. The director, in consultation with existing associates (where applicable), will recommend the appointment of a faculty member as an associate. This recommendation will be made to the dean of the college to which the faculty belongs. Upon approval by the dean, the faculty will become an associate of the university center. Consistent with the Faculty Handbook and the procedures within an associate's academic department or unit, tenure and/or promotion considerations will include activities performed at a university center. In particular, if an associate devotes a minimum of 25% effort within a calendar year to the activities of a university center, the director of the university center will provide the associate's department or unit with a report which will be part of the tenure, promotion, or annual review processes of the faculty.

Advisory Committee

Membership of the Advisory Committee shall be drawn from the ranks of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Each Advisory Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members, including a chair (not the same as the director), appointed by the chair of the department, dean or AVPR (depending on who has oversight of the university center) in consultation with the director. The Advisory Committee shall:

- a. provide academic oversight for the university center
- b. ensure that the activities of the university center are consistent with its stated mission, goals and objectives
- c. advise the director regarding all projects receiving internal university funds
- d. consider recommendations from the External Advisory Board, where applicable

- e. make recommendations about the expenditures of center funds and new directions of the center
- f. meet at least two times a year
- g. be responsible for the evaluation of the university center

External Advisory Board

Membership of an External Advisory Board may include qualified representatives from professional organizations, industry, academic institutions and the local community. The Advisory Board of a membership-type university center shall include at least one qualified representative from each member organization. The Chair of the Board will be selected from among the members. The AVPR shall be an ex-officio member of the Board. An External Advisory Board shall:

- a. monitor the financial status of the university center
- b. recruit new members
- c. make recommendations to the Advisory Committee regarding the strategic goals of the university center
- d. monitor how the university center meets its stated objectives, goals and mission with regard to its external customers
- e. receive the evaluation reports from the Advisory Committee and advise the director on implementing improvement strategies suggested in the evaluation reports

IV: Establishing University Centers

A. The effective operation of research centers require the coordination of research, scholarly and service efforts. This coordination imposes an administrative burden on the directors and others associated with the management of university centers. This administrative requirement draws on the resources (e.g. faculty release time, overhead return, space, etc) of the University and must be balanced with the need to provide resources for other components of the academic mission of the institution. These resources are of special concern to departmental and college interests. It is important that faculty members planning to establish a university center include their chair(s) and dean(s) in all phases of the planning process. The establishment of a university center demands careful planning and a clear justification for the institutional resources to be allocated to the university center. The following points shall be considered in the establishment of a university center:

- a. the involvement of several faculty (at least three) with long-term interest in the mission of the proposed university center
- b. the potential for sustaining the proposed activities for a minimum period of five years
- c. alignment with the mission and strategic goals of the University
- d. non-duplication of substantial portions of research taking place in an existing center, department, or college
- e. a clear statement on why the objectives of the proposed university center cannot be achieved by individual faculty effort or through existing units

- f. identification of an internal or external source of funding for the first year of operation of the university center
- g. identification of potential funding source(s) for the long-term operation of the university center
- h. plans for the evaluation of the university center
- i. the critical metric(s) to be used in disbanding the university center

B. A request for the establishment of a university center will include the following information:

- 1. The name of the proposed university center.
- 2. The specific mission, goals and objectives of the university center, indicating how these will contribute to the achievement of excellence, focus, relevance and accountability at this University.
- 3. The name and qualifications of the proposed director, the administrative structure, the composition of the proposed Advisory Committee, and where applicable, the composition of the External Advisory Board.
- 4. A three-year activity plan including budget estimates for the first year of operation, projections for the following two years, and the expected source of funding.
- 5. Immediate and future space needs.
- 6. A statement of capital equipment needs/requirement, where applicable.
- 7. The relationship of the university center with existing academic units and the potential impact, if any, on these units.
- 8. Identification of the transformational learning opportunities that the university center will offer to students at the undergraduate and/or graduate level.
- 9. A plan for the evaluation of the activities of the university center.
- 10. Conditions that should trigger the disbandment of the university center.

Approval Procedure

All applications for the establishment of an intra-college university center must first be reviewed and endorsed by the dean of the college. The dean will establish the administrative structure by nominating the proposed director, faculty associates, chair and members of the advisory committee and, where applicable, the chair and members of the External Advisory Board. In the case of an inter-college application, the AVPR will review and endorse, in consultation with the COC, and will establish the administrative structure. Subsequently, the application will be forwarded to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will review it, and if approved, will forward same to the President for final institutional approval. No university center shall commence activities without final authorization from the President.

After the final institutional approval, the AVPR, in consultation with the Office of the President, shall provide the following basic descriptive, contact, and fiscal information to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs of the Florida Board of Governors:

- The name of the university center.
- The name of the university.
- The primary discipline(s) with which the university center is affiliated.
- An indication of whether the university center receives a specific appropriation from the Legislature
- The name of the director of the university center.
- Contact information, including the mailing address; telephone and fax numbers, the university center's web site; and the email address for the director.
- A list of institutions of higher education affiliated with the university center.
- The mission of the university center.
- Key terms that identify the primary foci of the university center.
- Estimated total funds to be expended by the university center in the next fiscal year (or current year, if mid-year proposal) by funding source (State Appropriation to State University System, Contracts and Grants, Fees for Services, and Private & Other funds) and by entity (Education and General, IFAS, Health Sciences Center).
- Estimated total positions to be allocated to the university center for the next fiscal year (or current year, if mid-year proposal) by funding source and type of position.

V: Operation of a University Center

- A. A significant portion of the long-term funding of a university center must be derived from sources external to the University. While a portion of the start-up funds may be provided internally, a viable university center is one that has the potential to attract all its operational funds from external funding agencies. PG 04-07-27 stipulates that university centers “may expend State funds appropriated to the institute or center according to Legislative and/or university decisions.” The director and faculty associates are expected to work closely with the staff of the Division of Sponsored Research and Training, and the staff of the Division of Institutional Advancement, to access funding from local, state, regional, federal and private funding sources for the operation of the university center.

University centers are responsible for the initial and ongoing management of grants and contracts which they receive. The University, however, will continue to handle the administration of all grants and contracts. All proposals submitted by a university center to external agencies must comply with all applicable University policies and procedures.

The director is responsible for the general administration of the university center, ensuring that the financial accounts of the university center are properly maintained. The director's responsibilities also include the timely submission of all required reports and evaluations to the dean(s), AVPR and relevant funding agencies.

Each university center is required to submit a written annual report to the AVPR, as well as to the dean(s) and chair(s) with vested interest in the center.

Returns of recovered F&A costs from grants held by university centers will be distributed as follows: 10% of the F&A costs recovered will be taken off the top and assigned to the

university center and the remaining 90% will be distributed in accordance with existing distribution policy for recovered F&A at the University.

The distribution of license and/or royalty fees generated by activities of a university center will be in accordance with existing university policy.

B. Reporting Requirements

PG 04-07-27 requires the Provost or his or her designee to review, no later than September 30 of each year, the inventory of authorized institutes and centers to determine the accuracy of information that is maintained by the Florida Board of Governors. It also requires an annual report of actual and estimated expenditure and position data, as well as evaluation/review information for all university centers that are approved for all or part of a given fiscal year. In order to meet these reporting requirements, each university center will be required to submit an annual report that addresses the following items:

- a) Mission: How the university center's activities fulfilled its stated mission, goals, and objectives
- b) Staffing: Total positions during the previous fiscal year (July 1 -June 30) by funding source and type of position.
 - List of faculty associates indicating rank and FTE dedicated to the activities of the university center.
 - List of other affiliated personnel and the nature of their connection to the university center.
 - Plans for further development of core membership and/or collaboration with other units (both on and off campus) to further the mission of the university center.
- c) Grants & Contracts: A list of external and internal grants received or held during the previous fiscal year by funding source, entity, level and duration of support.
Total funds expended during the previous fiscal year by funding source, entity, level and duration of support.
- d) Research: Summary of outcomes for each research project area, citing achievements in the following categories, where publications include both print and electronic:
 - Journal articles
 - Monographs
 - Books
 - Working papers
 - Conference papers
 - Conferences sponsored
 - Patents
 - Copyrights
 - Exhibitions
 - Performances

- Summary of future research plans and goals, as well as funding projections for planned activities.
- e) Resources and Facilities:
 - Summary of resources and facilities available to the center.
 - Summary of available support services integral to the activities of the university center (e.g. computer facilities, laboratory)
 - Resource implication for proposed new areas of research activities.
 - Evaluative comments on resource and facilities.
- f) Teaching
 - Number of graduate and undergraduate students supported on the research grants of the university center.
 - Number of theses and dissertations on university center related projects directed by Center Associates.
 - Non-transcript/non-credit programs and courses offered. A list of colloquia and seminars organized by the university center.
 - Describe any teaching activity done in collaboration with an academic department
- g) Describe outreach and service activities to the University, profession and community.

VI: Evaluation of University Centers

A. Review Cycle

The normal review cycle for each university center and its director will be once every seven years. Each university center will be reviewed to determine if it should continue, be classified as inactive, be discontinued or should apply for classification as a State of Florida institute or center. A university center may be reviewed at any time, upon the authorization of the Provost in response to a request by the faculty associates, advisory committee, external advisory board, participating department chair(s), dean(s) or the AVPR. Such a review of a university center, outside the normal seven-year cycle, will be made by an external or internal review panel appointed by the Provost, and may include a financial audit. Additional audits and/or reviews may be necessary as mandated by a contract with a funding agency.

B. Process

In the spring of each academic year, the Assistant Vice President for Research (AVPR) will notify the directors of the relevant centers and institutes, and the participating dean(s), of the impending review and will issue a call for a self-study report. This report will be submitted to the Office of the AVPR by October 1st of that calendar year. Among other things, the report should provide information on the progress of the center or institute relative to its stated goals and objectives, within the context of its mission, the University's mission, and the Florida Board of Governors' Strategic Plan. The report should include the estimated return on investment of State funding, if applicable. Guidelines for Center and Institute Review Content Requirements are provided in this document. The external reviewer for each center or institute will be provided with a copy of this report prior to her/his visit for the review.

The Academic Affairs Program Review Committee (PRC) provides administrative oversight to the process. The committee membership is comprised as follows:

Director, Academic Affairs, SACS & New Program Liaison
Assistant VP for Research
Dean of the Graduate School
Assistant VP for Undergraduate Studies
Associate Provost for Assessment
Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness

The PRC is responsible for selecting the external reviewer for the center or institute. The director of the center or institute submits a minimum of 3 curriculum vitae to the PRC. The PRC will take one of these options: 1) select the external reviewer from the list of potential reviewers submitted; 2) request additional reviewers from the program review chair; or 3) recommend potential reviewers to the director.

The AVP for Research will work with the director of the center or institute to set up the review agenda, including a visit of related facilities and meetings with faculty associates, key staff and students.

When the external reviewer comes to campus, her/his first meeting is with the Program Review Committee. The PRC discusses the reviewer's preliminary findings based on the review of the self study, provides an outline of its expectations of the report to be submitted based on the visit and self study review, and asks the reviewer to pay particular attention to current issues specific to the center or institute under review. The PRC and the Provost attend the exit interview with the external reviewer.

The PRC receives the external reviewers report and provides a copy to the dean(s) and the director. The director will review the report and incorporate the suggestions and recommendations into the center's or institute's continuous improvement plan. Once the chair, dean(s), or the Center Oversight Committee (COC) has reviewed and commented on the final product, the review is submitted to the Program Review Committee.

The Program Review Committee will review all of the reports and meet with the chair, dean(s) and director to discuss the findings. The Committee will prepare a report detailing its findings and recommending one of the following four courses of action: (a) upgrade the university center and apply for classification as a State of Florida institute or center, (b) continue the university center, (c) classify it as inactive, or (d) disband the university center. This report will be submitted to the Provost, for final review and transmission to the President. The Provost will make the final recommendation to the President on the status of the university center. The President has the ultimate authority to decide which of the four courses of action is appropriate for a university center.

Upon completion of the cycle, the Program Review Committee meets with all of the parties involved to discuss the overall process to determine what changes should be implemented to improve the process for the next cycle.

C. Guidelines for Center and Institute Review Content Requirements

Mission

- Articulate the mission(s) and purpose(s) of the Center/Institute within the context of the institutional mission, college/department strategic plan, and the Florida Board of Governors' strategic plan;
- Describe the unit's ability to enhance the academic mission of the university; and
- Provide a description of the unit's contribution to the visibility and stature of the university.

Center/Institute Description and Organizational Structure

- Provide a brief history of the center or institute;
- Describe the organizational structure of the unit;
- Discuss the effectiveness of the management of the unit and include a description of the administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the services offered;
- Describe the level of faculty and student activity and participation and the impact on the center/institutes ability to achieve its mission and goals;
- Discuss relationships or connections with industry, educational, or other external organizations; and
- Describe the unit's ability to enhance the academic mission of the university

Goals and Outcomes

- Describe the specific goals the unit has accomplished or expects to accomplish and provide specific activities/outcomes that relate to these goals.
- Discuss the measures (direct/indirect, qualitative/quantitative) used to evaluate the success of the unit's accomplishments or meeting the unit's goals; and
- Discuss the quality of scholarly activity, educational programs, and/or other intellectual contributions of the unit.

Resources and Support Services

- Describe the units contributions to providing transformational learning opportunities for students;
- Describe the support and training efforts for graduate students;
- Describe and discuss the utilization of space; and
- Describe the effectiveness of the unit's external funding activities and financial sufficiency to support the unit mission and goals.

Continuous Improvement

- Provide a summary of the last review (including when the review took place) and a brief description of major changes made since the previous review;
- Provide a summary of the current strengths and weakness that support or impede the achievement of the units mission and goals;
- Identify the current opportunities and threats for the unit; and
- Based on the current review identify actions to achieve the units mission and goals;
- Based on the current review, what changes need to be made to the units strategic plan in the following areas:
 - Program development or modifications;
 - Budgeting decisions; and
 - Resource allocations / realignments.

D. External Reviewers

The purpose of the external review is to provide independent and object expert evaluation of the center or institute

The first task in the evaluation process is the identification of possible reviewers. It is recommended that the director create the list of potential external reviewers in consultation with the faculty associates, department chair and the dean(s).

September 29th Center and institute directors submit CV's for a minimum of 3 proposed external reviewers to the Academic Affairs Program Review Committee.

October 13th Program Review Committee notifies directors on external reviewer selection.

Note: The Program Review Committee will:

- select the external reviewer from the list of potential reviewers submitted;
- request additional reviewers from the director; or
- recommend potential reviewers to the director.

November 17th Directors submit date (visits should be conducted between January – March) for external reviewer visit and the proposed itinerary to Program Review Committee.

Academic Affairs will meet the cost of agreed reviewer honoraria, and refund documented accommodation and travel costs, in each case. All travel arrangements will be made by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. If the Provost wishes to appoint a second

reviewer, in selected center or institute evaluation cases, appropriate arrangements will be made by Academic Affairs.

External Reviewer Credentials

External reviewers are expected to have the following credentials:

- highest degree(s) in relevant discipline(s);
- have a track record in related research, teaching and service;
- experience with center or program review, or experience as a program officer in a funding agency
- a national reputation in field, as evidenced by published research, and participation (including offices held) in national organizations;
- have experience as director of a center or an institute at a university;
- hold the rank of Associate Professor or higher;
- have experience outside of Florida;
- no existing conflicts of interest (e.g. concurrent post or prospective candidacy for a post at UNF); and
- ability to undertake a site visit to UNF within the necessary time-frame.

External Reviewer Report Visit Guidelines and Report Format

The external reviewer must be prepared to review the draft report of the Program Review Committee, visit UNF for at least a day, and prepare recommendations as well as suggestions in light of his/her interviews and report review. This should be a succinct document of five to ten pages. A copy of the outside review should be sent to Academic Affairs within 10 working days of the site visit

Review Criteria: The reviewer will seek answers to the following questions which will set a frame of reference for the report:

- a. Have the activities of the center been consistent with the stated mission, goals, and objectives of the university center?
- b. Are the activities of the center consistent with the University's mission and the Strategic Plan of the Florida Board of Governors?
- c. Does the university center duplicate the efforts of other centers or units at the university?
- d. Is the university center being managed properly? Were any serious problems uncovered?
- e. Is faculty participation sufficient to continue the operation as a university center?
- f. Is a high quality of scholarly activity by faculty associates, professional staff, and students reflected in its output (publication, patents, copyrights, etc.)?
- g. Is the evidence for the support and training of graduate students consistent with the stated goals of the center or institute? Has the center or institute developed and offered clearly identified transformational learning opportunities for students?

- h. Is current funding sufficient to continue its operation? Has the center attracted sufficient external funds to continue with limited or no additional institutional support?
- i. Does the center have the required space for its operation?
- j. How well does the center serve its clients?
- k. What is the return on investment of State funds expended by the center?

VI: Disbanding a University Center

A university center shall cease to exist on the date that the President decides that it should disband. The Provost will send a notice regarding the President's decision to the director, the AVPR, dean(s) and chair(s). All facilities and equipment allocated to the university center will revert back to the units that provided them. Facilities and equipment acquired by an inter-college university center will come under the purview of the AVPR, who will distribute them, in consultation with the deans of the participating colleges, for research purposes to other units in the university.

In compliance with PG 04-07-27, the President or his designee shall notify the Florida Board of Governors' Office of Academic and Student Affairs of the disbanding of the university center. If the university center had been funded by the Legislature, the University will provide documentation to ensure that Legislative intent has been achieved and that the university center is no longer needed. In addition, the University will provide fiscal information, as part of its annual report if the university center had expended any funds during the fiscal year.

Sources:

Institutes and Centers Policy Guideline 04-07-27, Division of Colleges & Universities, Florida State University System (2004).

Policies and Procedures for Establishing, Managing, and Reviewing Research Centers, Northeastern University (1997).