Division of Research
Guidelines for the Creation, Management, Evaluation, Modification and Dissolution of Texas A&M University Centers and Institutes

The vice president for research serves as the institutional official with oversight and monitoring responsibilities for university-wide administration of centers and institutes. The following provides general guidelines for the effective creation, management, evaluation, modification and dissolution of university centers and institutes.

I. CREATION OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

A. The creation of centers and institutes as defined in System Policy 11.02 and TAMU Standard Administrative Procedure 11.02.99.M0.01 requires prior approval by the board of regents.

B. Proposals for the creation of centers and institutes involving TAMU originate at the department or college level in a format prescribed by the chancellor. Information on the format as well as sample proposals can be found at the System URL: https://www.tamus.edu/academic/academic-planning-and-policy/changes-that-require-board-approval/centers-and-institutes/. Prospective center or institute proposal writers are strongly encouraged to visit this website and follow the proposal format described there.

C. Center and institute creation proposals should be brought to one of the Council of Deans meetings by the dean(s) of the originating college(s) for discussion. This is not intended to result in an up or down vote on the creation of the center or institute, but rather it is meant to inform and help avoid gross oversights.

D. Following discussion at the Council of Deans, the proposal should be sent to the office of the vice president for research who works with the office of the provost to prepare the proposal for submission by the president to the chancellor. For presentation of the proposal at a specific board of regents meeting, the proposal must be submitted to the office of the vice president for research two weeks prior to the deadline determined and publicized by the office of the provost and executive vice president. The provost and executive vice president deadlines are approximately three months prior to the board meeting.

II. MANAGEMENT OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

A. Accountability for each center or institute rests with the director or other responsible administrative official as designated by the official of the unit to whom the center or institute reports.

B. The director is responsible for the day-to-day management of the center or institute as outlined in the board-approved proposal for the creation or modification of the center or institute.

C. The director of the center or institute shall report to the departmental head/chair, academic dean or other administrative official.

D. Department heads/chairs may request and should receive reports from directors on a faculty members’ contributions to a center or institute.
III. REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES
A. The Division of Research will maintain a database of centers and institutes which will include among other information the dates for upcoming reviews. Working with the Division of Research, the deans or other responsible university officials to which a center of institute reports to has primary responsibility for keeping information in the database current.
B. The dean(s) or other responsible university official(s) shall assure that periodic reviews of centers or institutes are conducted and completed in accordance with an approved schedule of required reviews.
C. The vice president for research’s single most important guideline in the evaluation of centers or institutes is whether they serve as productive incubators of multidisciplinary research and other scholarly works and engage faculty broadly across departments and colleges. Deans or other responsible university officials shall establish review criteria that adhere to the above stated guideline and assure centers and institutes are managed effectively. Periodic review and evaluation should be conducted to determine if the center or institute under its leadership, organizational structure and funding level is making sufficient progress toward the center or institute's goals and objectives and if activities remain aligned with the university's goals and priorities.
D. Reviews of centers and institutes will be conducted at least once every 5 years, in accordance with a schedule developed by the college(s) and agreed upon by the vice president for research. Postponements of a scheduled review must be approved by the vice president for research.
E. The deans or other responsible university officials shall submit a copy of the review to the vice president for research with a statement that the review has been conducted and the date on which the review was completed. A specific outcome of the review should be a determination on whether the center or institute should remain or be dissolved. Deans or other responsible university officials should give serious consideration to closing centers or institutes which are deemed to no longer provide value.
F. The vice president for research shall review the reports and may provide comments and/or recommendations as to improvements or other further actions that may be indicated, including personnel actions, modifications of the center’s or institute’s mission or programs, or dissolution of the center or institute.
G. The deans or other responsible university official(s) shall provide copies of comments and/or recommendations to the center or institute director and provide any other guidance or direction to the center or institute director resulting from the review.
H. As prescribed in System Policy 11.02, the vice president for research shall forward periodically reviews to the vice chancellor for academic affairs.
I. The vice president for research shall maintain records as to review schedules and completion to ensure that centers and institutes have been reviewed and evaluated at least once every five years in accordance to System Policy 11.02.
J. Deans or responsible university officials may conduct additional and/or special reviews or require additional reports as deemed necessary and/or beneficial.

IV. MODIFICATIONS TO BOARD-APPROVED CENTERS AND INSTITUTES
A. Major changes in function, focus or funding sources for a board-approved center or institute must receive prior approval from the president and the chancellor and subsequent approval by the board.

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B. All requests to the chancellor for modification of board-approved centers or institutes require the approval and recommendation of the president. Requests shall be forwarded by the dean or other responsible university official through the vice president for research, the provost and executive vice president to the president of the university.

V. DISSOLUTION OF CENTERS OR INSTITUTES
   A. When the responsible administrative dean or other university administrative official proposes to dissolve a center or institute, a request should be submitted from the dean or responsible university official through the vice president for research, the provost and executive vice president, to the president of the university.
   B. If approved by the president, the president shall then submit the request to dissolve a center or institute to the chancellor.

VI. JOINT CENTERS OR INSTITUTES
   A. When a university center or institute is proposed as being a joint center or institute with one or more other system member(s), the same university procedures described in Section I, Creation of Centers and Institutes, shall be required as those required for university centers or institutes only.
   B. Joint university centers or institutes will require the approval of the president as well as the chief executive officers of the other system members responsible for the center or institute. One agenda item will be submitted to the board of regents, jointly by all system members.
   C. While respecting each system member’s authority and responsibility in the oversight of the center or institute, efforts will be made to streamline approval and review processes to maximize the productivity of the director in the effective management of the center or institute.
   D. Review and evaluation processes of joint centers and institutes will normally be addressed in the full proposal as submitted through each system member’s approval and recommendation processes to the board of regents.

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