

**Policy for the Establishment, Evaluation, and Discontinuation  
of Campus Centers and Institutes with Academic Affiliation  
(Approved by the Academic Senate, March 11, 2014)**

**1. OVERVIEW.**

This policy provides guidance concerning the rationale and procedures for establishing campus centers and institutes with academic affiliation. Such centers and institutes may be formed at the campus level if the teaching, research, scholarly activities, or public service activities of the faculty members who participate will be improved or if the activities cannot effectively be supported by a single department.

This policy governs campus centers and institutes with academic affiliation embodying the enhancement of selected disciplinary areas of teaching, research, scholarly and creative activities, and public service. This policy does not apply to the establishment or running of central administrative or service units such as the Gender Equity Center, the Multi-Cultural Center, the Advising Center, or the Center for Teaching and Learning Technology, which serve campus-wide functions and which also use the term "Center." This policy does not apply to State or Federal centers or institutes with a presence on campus, which are instead governed by policies associated with the enabling entity (e.g., The California State University's Agricultural Research Institute, and the Small Business Development Center that is formed through the Federal Small Business Administration).

**2. RATIONALE FOR CAMPUS CENTERS AND INSTITUTES.**

The main reason for establishing an academic campus center or institute is to bring into sharp focus the communication, planning, research, or other efforts of faculty and students interested in an area of study. Centers and institutes are often proposed when *ad hoc* or regular departmental structures no longer adequately serve the ends desired.

A center or an institute can enhance professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, build links with industry and the community, provide identifiable campus entities for practitioners, foster interdisciplinary work, aid in obtaining external support, and complement instruction and faculty/student research.

An institute is typically a unit that has a broad interest and/or function. A center is typically a unit with specific individual interest and/or function. However, there is flexibility in naming an eligible unit as a center or institute, with the primary goal being to convey the purpose of the center or institute to both on-campus and off-campus constituents.

In addition to the process for appointment of a Director that is described in the proposal to establish a center or institute, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall also have appointment and removal authority for such Director. Although a center or institute may directly report to the Dean of an Academic College, all centers and institutes ultimately report to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, via the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

### 3. FUNCTIONS.

The functions of a center or institute may consist of any or all of the following, as well as additional functions stated in the organizational document:

- (A) to provide opportunities for the professional development of faculty/staff through basic and applied research and development activities, consulting, and faculty exchanges;
- (B) to foster and facilitate interdisciplinary efforts and cooperation among departments and across Colleges;
- (C) to provide a clearinghouse for information of interest to professionals and to conduct workshops and conferences for the continuing education of professionals;
- (D) to enhance the curriculum by facilitating and supplementing the academic experience of students; and/or
- (E) to provide supplementary educational support by acquiring gifts, general purpose grants, and equipment/supply donations.

### 4. PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING A CAMPUS CENTER OR INSTITUTE.

#### (A) NEW PROPOSALS.

It is anticipated that most centers and institutes will be primarily associated with one academic College where subject matter expertise exists to support the center or institute. Multi-academic College proposals are also permitted.

Centers and institutes are not required to adopt bylaws or articles of organization. Instead, a plain English description of how the center or institute will function is preferred.

Each proposal must address the items in section 4(B) of this policy, and be submitted for evaluation via the process described in section 4(C).

#### (B) ELEMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN A PROPOSAL.

The proposal must address each of the following items, as well as any other information that would be helpful in evaluating the proposal:

- (1) **NAME/ACTIVITY.** What is the name of the proposed center or institute and what will the proposed center or institute do? (research, public service, etc.)
- (2) **NEED.** Why is the center or institute needed (versus existing on-campus organizational structure), and what evidence exists to demonstrate that there will be sufficient engagement with faculty, staff, students, and relevant members of the off-campus community?

- (3) **SUPPORT OF CAL POLY MISSION.** How will the center or institute support instruction, faculty/student research, Learn By Doing, or other elements of the University mission?
- (4) **EXPERTISE.** Who are the individuals prepared to support the center or institute with necessary subject matter expertise? (Signed letters from faculty, staff, and others who agree to participate in activities of the center or institute are beneficial in documenting overall support.)
- (5) **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.** How will the center or institute be managed and function? (An organizational chart should be included with the proposal.)
- (a) **Director.** Every center or institute is expected to have a Director responsible for day to day activities. The Director may be a volunteer or may be compensated (full or part time, as appropriate) or receive faculty release time to perform the duties. The Director may be a community volunteer, or a faculty or staff member. The proposal should include an explanation of who will appoint/replace the Director (typically the Dean in the reporting structure) and how the Director position will be funded. The aspirational traits and skills of the Director should be included, as well as key attributes to be considered in for appointment/replacement of the Director.
- (b) **Reporting Structure.** Centers or institutes (including the Director) are normally expected to report to the Dean of the Academic College with faculty most closely aligned with the subject matter expertise for the center/institute. All centers and institutes ultimately report to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, via the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.
- (6) **RESOURCES.**
- (a) **Financial.** How will the center or institute be financed in the short term and in the long term?
- (b) **Facilities and Related Support.** What facilities, equipment, and technology support will be needed and how have those items been obtained or how will they be obtained?
- (c) **Faculty/Staff.** What faculty and staff support will be needed, and how will these individuals be supported (e.g. volunteer, salaried employee, release time, etc.)
- (d) **Collaboration.** How can faculty/staff/students from the same, or other, disciplines participate in the center of institute?
- (e) **Faculty Retention, Tenure, and Promotion.** How will the center or institute ensure that participating faculty receive appropriate

acknowledgement in the retention, tenure, and promotion process, and what artifacts will be created to document this participation?

(f) Advisory Board. Will the center or institute have an internal (e.g. faculty) or external (e.g. business and industry) advisory board? It is not necessary to have such an advisory board, but proposals that reference an advisory board must address the role of the advisory board, how members are selected, removed, and replaced.

- (7) SUSTAINABILITY. What information is available to demonstrate that the center or institute is likely to be sustainable (both financially and with sufficient faculty/staff/student participation) over an extended period of time?

(C) PROCESS FOR CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR CENTERS AND INSTITUTES.

At any level of review in the following process, the reviewers may request clarifications and/or revisions to the proposal prior to submission for the next level of review. All revisions will be copied to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

A completed draft proposal shall be submitted to the College Dean(s) of the academic College(s) where the center or institute is proposed to have its association and to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. When the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs determines that the proposal addresses all of the elements in section 4(B) of this policy, the proposal will be discussed with the Academic Deans' Council, and any comments relayed to the proposer.

The proposal will then proceed to review by the Dean of Research, who will appoint an *ad hoc* administrative review committee, chaired by the Dean of Research. Any comments will be relayed to the proposer.

The final revised proposal will then be provided again to the Academic Deans' Council, and the Deans will make a recommendation to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs as to the advisability of establishing the center or institute.

The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will then make a determination as to the viability of the proposed center or institute, including an evaluation of resources essential to its operation. If the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs determines that sufficient support and resources exist, the proposal will then be forwarded to the Academic Senate.

After approval by the Academic Senate, the proposal will be forwarded to the President. Proposals approved by the President constitute the organizational document for the center or institute.

In order to expedite review, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may request concurrent review at any phase of this process.

(D) UPDATES/REVISIONS TO ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS.

(1) AT THE TIME OF EACH PROGRAM REVIEW. In order to assure that organizational documents are up to date and reflect current practices, each center and institute shall review its organizational documents for accuracy at the same time of its scheduled program review. Program review shall be conducted in accordance with the posted policy of program review for centers and institutes, available from Academic Affairs. Any proposed updates/revisions to the organizational documents shall be submitted in writing to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

(2) UPON REQUEST. When the organizational documents of a center or institute appear to merit review and updating, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may issue such a request. The center or institute shall then review its organizational documents for accuracy and submit a report with any proposed updates/revisions to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs within ninety (90) days of request, subject to approved extensions.

(3) APPROVAL OF UPDATES/REVISIONS TO ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS. Any proposed updates/revisions that do not alter the fundamental purpose of the center or institute may be approved by the President. Updates/revisions that the President deems to alter the fundamental purpose under which the center or institute was originally formed (e.g., changing a center's area of subject matter focus and expertise) will necessitate a full review process as described in section 4(C) of this policy.

5. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Each center or institute shall be administered by a Director, reporting to the Academic Dean in the Academic College wherein the center or institute is housed (or directly reporting to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development for "University" based centers and institutes). All centers and institutes ultimately report to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs via the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. The Director has the obligation to prepare and file annual reports in a timely manner, and to assure that program review is conducted, completed, and reported in a timely manner. The Director is responsible for the center or institute's budget and for assuring fiscal solvency and compliance with all applicable budgetary and fiscal protocols as in effect from time to time.

Centers or institutes may not directly offer academic courses, academic credit, or confer degrees, but may offer instructional support to academic units that do allow for credit and degrees. Centers or institutes may offer extended education courses and verification of completion for licensed professionals who require such continuing education, but this is not a form of academic credit.

Members of a center or institute will not have academic titles unless expressly granted by virtue of an academic appointment in a department in accordance with all University policies and procedures, and signed by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Any conferences, grants and contracts, consulting agreements, continuing education training, or other activities of the center or institute must conform to University procedures and protocol. It is the duty of the Director to be familiar with this process and to obtain appropriate approvals. The Sponsored Programs Office (affiliated with Cal Poly Corporation) or the Vice President for Research and Economic Development will provide guidance to the Director regarding these processes, upon request.

#### 6. ANNUAL REPORTS

The Director shall submit an annual report no later than November 1 of each and every year that covers the immediately preceding fiscal year period (July 1-June 30) to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, as well as the Academic Dean(s) affiliated with that center or institute.

This annual report must contain:

- (A) a complete reconciled budget for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- (B) a summary of the year's activities, including any applicable information on scholarly publications and technical reports, details about research, theses, and senior projects completed under the auspices of the center/institute, and honors/awards to faculty and students; and
- (C) any other relevant information.

When deemed necessary or desirable, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant an extension for the deadline of an annual report.

The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may waive the annual report filing for a new center or institute (or a previously inactive center or institute which has been reactivated) and which has been in operation (or reactivation) for less than the full fiscal year to be covered by the annual report, but in such event, the subsequent annual report must cover the entire period from the commencement of operation (or reactivation) of such center or institute.

#### 7. PROGRAM REVIEW.

Centers and institutes will undergo review every five years in accordance with the guidelines and schedule established specifically for centers and institute program review and available from Academic Affairs.

8. SUSPENSION, INACTIVE STATUS, AND DISSOLUTION OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES.

(A) SUSPENSION IS AN EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE.

Suspension of a center or institute is an extraordinary measure available to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and shall be reasonably avoided. Whenever possible, any suspension shall be implemented in a manner to prevent existing or pending grants and related activities (fee for service, etc.) from being adversely impacted. Unless immediate suspension is deemed necessary, suspension shall not occur until after at least thirty (30) days prior written notice containing the specific reasons for suspension to the Director and Academic Dean(s) for such center or institute, with an opportunity to cure the deficiency within that time period, subject to extension. In order to avoid suspension and address concerns related to the center or institute, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may remove or suspend the Director and appoint an interim Director to address the items of concern.

(1) SUSPENSION FOR FAILURE TO OPERATE WITHIN APPROVED SCOPE OR UNIVERSITY POLICIES. If a center or institute is not operating within its approved scope or within University policies, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may suspend the center or institute, as described above, until such time as the center or institute shall have remedied such deficiencies.

(2) FAILURE TO SUBMIT TIMELY ANNUAL REPORTS OR PROGRAM REVIEW REPORTS. In the event that any center or institute does not submit a timely annual report or program review (subject to any approved extension), the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may suspend the center or institute, as described above. Upon receipt of a complete annual report or program review which remedies the reason for suspension, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall lift the suspension.

(B) INACTIVE STATUS.

(1) VOLUNTARY. A center or institute that currently lacks sufficient activity, but that envisions potential near-term growth, may request to be placed in "Inactive" status. Inactive status does not result in the dissolution of the center or institute, but instead freezes its accounts and activities on a voluntary basis during the period of Inactive status. A request to be placed on Inactive status from the center or institute should expressly state the expected time of inactivity, and contain details about how and why the center or institute expects to become active again. Such requests should be accompanied by support of the faculty/staff associated with such center or institute, as well as the Director and Academic Dean. Inactive status is intended for periods of five years or less, but longer durations may be granted by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Upon the determination that sufficient resources and faculty interest/support exist for a voluntarily inactive center or institute, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may reactivate the center or institute (into active status).

(2) **INVOLUNTARY/EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE.** The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may elect to declare Inactive status for any center or institute, which is an extraordinary measure. This determination is based upon either a lack of activity and involvement (e.g. no faculty participation), the failure of the center or institute to file annual reports or program review reports (following suspension), a lack of resources, or other similar factors which indicate that the center or institute is not active and that continued operation is inappropriate. Such a declaration of inactive status shall not occur until after consultation with the Director, the Academic Deans, and the faculty/staff who were previously engaged with the center or institute. If there is renewed interest and support for such center or institute, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may reactivate the center or institute (into active status).

(3) **EFFECT OF INACTIVE STATUS.** During any period of Inactive status, the center or institute shall not be required to submit annual reports, except for any annual reports that are due at the time of entering Inactive status, as well as a partial year annual report covering the time period from the last filed annual report up to the date of entering Inactive status. During any period of Inactive status, the subject center or institute shall have its program review deadline extended, day for day, for the duration of its Inactive status.

(C) **DISSOLUTION.**

It is possible that a center or institute may naturally and normally decline in activity to the point where the underlying purpose or functional need of the center or institute no longer exists, or when resources no longer exist to support the center or institute. In such event, the Director, Dean(s), and faculty/staff associated with the center or institute may request dissolution. The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may also initiate dissolution, but shall consult with the Director, Dean(s), and faculty/staff associated with the center or institute. After determining that the underlying purpose or functional need of the center or institute no longer exists or that resources no longer exist to support the center or institute, the center or institute may be dissolved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Upon dissolution, equipment and funds associated with the center or institute shall be handled in conformance with University policies. Once dissolved, the re-establishment of a center or institute must go through the formal proposal process.