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Preliminary Directions: Centers & Institutes Policy

University Research Council

Background

- ▶ UMD Policy & Procedures for the Establishment & Review of Centers & Institutes - 1991
- ▶ Concerns with current policy include:
 - ▶ No consistent tracking of centers & institutes at the University;
 - ▶ inconsistent guidelines on structure/operations;
 - ▶ inconsistent definitions with wide variations in the types of centers & institutes (size, purpose, funding-model, etc.);
 - ▶ no formal establishment/approval process;
 - ▶ no standard review process;
 - ▶ no sunset provisions;
 - ▶ no enforcement mechanisms or implementation plans.

Research Council Charge

- ▶ The Research Council was charged with reviewing the current policy and making recommendations to the Senate.
- ▶ The Research Council intends this review to be constructive, and seeks to develop best practices.
- ▶ The Research Council does not intend to interfere with existing successful centers or institutes.

Research Council's Work to Date

- ▶ Reviewed current policy and report of Research Institute Advisory Committee
- ▶ Requested information on centers & institutes from each College
- ▶ Collected and analyzed peer institution policies
- ▶ Collected and analyzed feedback from center & institute directors, graduate students involved in centers, deans, and others through forums, meetings, and a survey

Preliminary Directions

- ▶ Central database is needed, with public-facing list and internal data components.
- ▶ Current levels of group, center, and institute or bureau should be retained.
 - ▶ More detail is needed on the different types of centers at the University.
- ▶ There should be a common proposal with key elements to create new centers or institutes.
 - ▶ Elements could include role, alignment with the University's mission, graduate student engagement, and performance metrics.

Preliminary Directions

- ▶ UMD's research, teaching, and service mission should be considered in proposals and reviews.
 - ▶ Contributions to all three aspects are not required, but all three should be considered.
 - ▶ Including graduate students is one way of addressing the educational mission.
- ▶ New centers and institutes should be created with a probationary status.
 - ▶ At the first review, consider whether the probationary status should be extended; if it should be lifted; or if the entity should be sunsetted.

Preliminary Directions

- ▶ Review processes for centers & institutes should be more clearly specified, and may need to vary based on the type of level of center or institute.
 - ▶ Review processes are not needed for groups.
- ▶ Sunset provisions should not be required to be built in from the outset.
- ▶ Procedures for sunseting a center or institute in the wake of a negative review should be specified.

Preliminary Directions

- ▶ The Research Council intends to discuss additional issues as it moves forward:
 - ▶ workflow of approval process
 - ▶ clarification on funding models, including institutional support and DRIF return rates
 - ▶ how reorganizations, restructurings, and renamings should be addressed in the policy
 - ▶ how to transition existing centers and institutes to the new policy and review processes
 - ▶ policy implementation and oversight mechanisms

Timeline and Next Steps

- ▶ Research Council is reviewing all of the feedback and is finalizing key principles.
- ▶ The Council will develop policy language to align with principles.
- ▶ The Council will gather feedback from stakeholders and the Office of General Council on policy revisions.
- ▶ Proposed revisions will be finalized by March 30 and reported to the Senate on April 21, 2020.