

**IV-1.00(A) UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES**

(Approved by the President August 1, 1991; Amended xxxx)

**I. Purpose**

The University of Maryland encourages faculty, staff, students, and administrators to engage in areas of common interest. The creation of entities that help to organize and engage faculty, staff, and/or students from one or more disciplines around those interests may help to enable research, foster improvement of teaching, and/or enhance service to the State. To this end, the establishment, review, oversight, and termination of these entities will be guided by the procedures established in this Policy, in order to protect the legitimate interests of faculty, staff, students, and administrators while ensuring that the management of these entities is not burdensome.

**II. Definitions**

- A. “Approval Authority” means the administrator with authority and oversight of the establishment, review, and termination of Centers and Institutes. Depending on the level at which the entity operates, the Approval Authority may be a Dean, multiple Deans, the Senior Vice President and Provost and/or the Vice President for Research, or the President.
- B. “Center” means an entity that is comparable to an academic program without departmental status, which engages faculty, staff, and/or students in areas of specialized focus within one Unit or across multiple Units. A Center may be affiliated with an external agency and/or laboratory.
- C. “College Level Center” means a type of Center that is typically composed of faculty, staff, and/or students from a single College and involves engagement from multiple departments or areas of focus within the College.
- D. “Department Level Center” means a type of Center that is typically composed of faculty, staff, and/or students from a single department within a departmentalized College.
- E. “Director” means the head of the Group, Center, or Institute.
- F. “Group” means an informal collection of faculty members gathered to promote a common area of interest.
- G. “Institute” means an entity with prominence and stature that is intended to have a level of permanence similar to that of an academic department. Institutes engage faculty, staff,

and/or students in areas of specialized focus within a College, across multiple Colleges, or University-wide. An Institute may be affiliated with an external agency and/or laboratory.

- H. “Intercollegiate Level Center” means a type of Center that is typically composed of faculty, staff, and/or students from two or more Colleges and involves engagement from multiple areas of focus across the University.
- I. “Multi-Institutional Center or Institute” means an entity created collaboratively between the University of Maryland and another institution, in order to advance the missions of both institutions or of the University System of Maryland.
- J. “Unit” means an academic department, a College or School, or a Division.
- K. “Unit Head” means the administrator or administrators responsible for a Unit. A Unit Head may be a Department Chair, Dean, multiple Deans, or the Senior Vice President and Provost and/or the Vice President for Research.

### **III. Policy**

- A. The University recognizes Groups, Centers, and Institutes as organizational entities intended to facilitate research, teaching, and/or service in alignment with a common interest.
- B. Centers and Institutes must comply with applicable University and University System of Maryland (USM) policies. Centers and Institutes that receive federal funds must ensure compliance with federal regulations, including those regarding the conduct of research.
- C. Centers and Institutes have a diverse range of financial models. The impact and returns on State and University resources are considered in their establishment and review.
- D. Centers and Institutes have varied missions, and with few exceptions do not award degrees. If applicable, Centers and Institutes should foster relationships with academic programs to support the University’s educational mission.
- E. Centers and Institutes may not grant tenure. New tenured/tenure-track faculty hires within a Center or Institute must be a joint appointment with an academic department.

### **IV. Entities and Levels of Organization**

- A. Groups
  - 1. Groups may be short-lived, or may persist as the interest of the faculty develops.
  - 2. Groups typically consist of faculty within one Unit but may include faculty from multiple Units.

3. Groups may use naming conventions including “Group,” “Research Group,” “Research Laboratory,” or other appropriate terminology, as long as the name does not improperly imply that the Group is a Center or Institute, as defined by this Policy.

#### B. Centers

1. Centers may operate within one Unit or across multiple Units.
2. Centers should have an independent budget that is largely supported by external funding, but may also include some level of State support.
3. Centers should have a formal administrative structure and should be headed by a Director who will report to the Unit Head.
4. Centers will be organized within the following levels:
  - a. Department Level Center (DLC): The Unit Head for DLCs will be the Department Chair of the Unit in which the DLC resides. The Approval Authority for a DLC is the Dean.
  - b. College Level Center (CLC): The Unit Head for CLCs will be the Dean of the College in which the CLC resides. The Approval Authority for a CLC engaged in research activities is the Senior Vice President and Provost and the Vice President for Research. The Approval Authority for all other types of CLCs is the Senior Vice President and Provost.
  - c. Intercollegiate Level Center (ILC): The Unit Head for an ILC will be specified at the time of its establishment. ILCs may report to one Dean, multiple Deans, or the Senior Vice President and Provost and/or the Vice President for Research, as appropriate to the level, structure, needs, and focus of the ILC. The Approval Authority for an ILC engaged in research activities is the Senior Vice President and Provost and Vice President for Research. The Approval Authority for all other types of ILCs is the Senior Vice President and Provost.

#### C. Institutes

1. Institutes may operate within a College, across multiple Colleges, or University-wide.
2. Institutes should have an independent budget that may be supported by external funding and/or State support.
3. Institutes should have a formal administrative structure and should be headed by a Director who will report to the Unit Head.

4. The Unit Head for an Institute will be specified at the time of its establishment, as appropriate to the structure, needs, and focus of the Institute.
5. The Approval Authority for an Institute is the President.

## **V. Proposal and Establishment**

### **A. Groups**

1. Groups may be established at any time with appropriate notice to the Unit Head of the department(s) or College(s) in which they reside.
2. The Unit(s) will be responsible for maintaining records of all Groups and providing information about the Group in departmental communications and on departmental websites.

### **B. Centers and Institutes**

1. The establishment of a new Center or Institute must be guided by a formal proposal.
2. A proposal for the establishment of a new Center or Institute may be prepared by informal groups of interested faculty and administrators, a committee appointed for the purpose of determining the need, desirability, and feasibility of a Center or Institute, or any similar formal or informal group.
3. Proposers are encouraged to consult with the Division of Research as a resource when determining the long-term feasibility of securing external funds in a specific research area.
4. All proposals should include the following elements, as well as any additional information specific to the entity being proposed:
  - a) A description of the purpose and mission of the proposed entity;
  - b) A description of whether and how the proposed entity addresses the teaching, research, and service missions of the University of Maryland;
  - c) A description of whether and how the proposed entity intends to incorporate graduate students and undergraduate students;
  - d) An explanation of how the proposed entity differs from existing Centers or Institutes at the University that focus on similar or related topics;
  - e) An overview of expected interdisciplinary connections and collaborations, if appropriate;

- f) Details regarding the proposed administrative and organizational structure, as well as any planned advisory or governance structures;
- g) A description of space requirements needed for the entity, including any specialized equipment or space needs;
- h) An overview of the financial model of the proposed entity;
- i) Benchmarks and metrics to be used in measuring the proposed entity's progress and success; and
- j) A research and/or budget plan for the first five years of operations.

C. Review Process for Proposals

1. All proposals should be submitted to the proposed Unit Head, who will oversee the review of the proposal.
2. Review of Proposals for DLCs
  - a) The Unit Head will review the proposal, and should submit it to the departmental Programs, Curricula, and Courses (PCC) Committee for review.
  - b) The Unit Head will consider the recommendation from the PCC Committee and the merits of the proposal, and will make a recommendation to the Dean.
3. Review of Proposals for CLCs, ILCs, and Institutes
  - a) The Unit Head should submit the proposal to the relevant College PCC Committee(s) for review.
  - b) In reviewing the proposal, the Unit Head should consider the merits of the proposal and the feasibility of the request(s) for space and funding necessary to create and maintain the Center.
    - (1) Funding sources may include, but are not limited to College funds, short-term commitments from the University, and/or external funds.
    - (2) The Unit Head will work in consultation with the Approval Authority on assessing the space and funding aspects of the proposal.
      - (a) The Senior Vice President & Provost may request that proposals that capitalize on special funding opportunities where the College cannot supply all necessary resources, or those that involve large or long-term commitments from University funds, be reviewed by the Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC).

(b) The Senior Vice President & Provost may ask APAC to review other proposals for CLCs, ILCs, and Institutes, as appropriate.

c) After review of the proposal and consideration of any recommendations from the PCC Committee and APAC, the Unit Head will make a recommendation to the appropriate Approval Authority.

**D. Approval Process for Center & Institute Proposals**

1. The Approval Authority will determine whether to approve the establishment of the proposed Center or Institute. The Approval Authority for entities at different levels of organization are specified in section IV above.
2. Proposals to establish Institutes will be reported to the University System of Maryland.
  - a) The Chancellor will be notified of the establishment of all Institutes.
  - b) The establishment of a Multi-Institutional Center or Institute will require the approvals of the Presidents of each institution and the Chancellor.
  - c) The establishment of a Center or Institute that is administratively separate from the University of Maryland will require the approval of the President, the Chancellor, and the Board of Regents.
3. Approved proposals for new Centers and Institutes should be forwarded to the Division of Research for inclusion of the new entity in public-facing information about Centers and Institutes at the University, and for internal tracking of Centers and Institutes by the Division.

**VI. Periodic Review Processes**

**A. Review of Groups**

1. Groups need not undergo a formal periodic review process.

**B. Review of Centers & Institutes**

1. Centers and Institutes must be reviewed every five years.
2. The initial five-year review of a new Center or Institute is a major milestone in assessing its future viability and subsequent reviews will assess continued sustainability.

3. Reviews should be tracked by the Division of Research, which will notify Unit Heads of the need to initiate a review. Unit Heads will be responsible for ensuring that reviews occur on schedule, and will oversee the review process.
  - a) All reviews should begin with a self-assessment conducted by the Director of the Center or Institute.
  - b) Reviews for Institutes should include an external review. Reviews for DLCs, CLCs, and ILCs may include an external review if recommended by the Unit Head in consultation with the Senior Vice President and Provost and the Vice President for Research if the Center is engaged in research activities.
  - c) Reviews should measure progress against the benchmarks and metrics for success identified during the establishment of the entity and/or in the immediate past review. Reviews should also include consideration of the following elements:
    - (1) Continued alignment with the mission and purpose of the University and the Unit(s) affiliated with the entity;
    - (2) An assessment of activities and trend data since the establishment of the entity or since the last review;
    - (3) An evaluation of challenges and opportunities since the last review;
    - (4) An assessment of financial viability;
    - (5) An assessment of the efficacy of organizational and administrative structures;
    - (6) Quality of any related instruction, advising, mentorship, or professional development activities;
    - (7) Research activities including peer-reviewed publications, scholarship, and creative activities performed by the Center or Institute since the last review;
    - (8) Service and outreach activities;
    - (9) Stakeholder feedback;
    - (10) A reevaluation of the benchmarks and metrics for success; and
    - (11) An assessment of whether changes are needed to enable future success.
  - d) Components of external funding agency reviews may be used to fulfill elements of a periodic review, when authorized by the Unit Head.
4. The results of the review(s) should be sent to the Unit Head for consideration.

5. The Unit Head will make a recommendation to the Approval Authority.
6. The Approval Authority will make a final determination on actions following a review as defined in Section VII.
7. Upon completion of all review processes, notification should be forwarded to the Division of Research so that public-facing information and internal tracking mechanisms for Centers and Institutes can be updated by the Division.

C. Review of Center & Institute Directors

1. Directors must undergo a formal comprehensive review. The review should normally occur concurrent with the periodic review of the Center or Institute unless an alternative timeline is authorized by the Unit Head.
2. The major components of the review should consider:
  - a) How well the Director is fulfilling his/her administrative responsibilities based on those articulated at the time of appointment;
  - b) How the Director's leadership has impacted the Center or Institute's progress in meeting its benchmarks and metrics for success;
  - c) Input from faculty, staff, and students associated with the Center or Institute;
  - d) Input from external stakeholders, as appropriate; and
  - e) Constructive recommendations for continued success.
3. Components of external funding agency reviews of Directors may be used to fulfill elements of this review, when authorized by the Unit Head.
4. The Unit Head will appoint a representative internal review committee, which will be responsible for conducting the review and submitting its findings in a written report.
5. The Unit Head will consider the review committee's report and the Director's response to the report before making a recommendation regarding continuation of the appointment to the Approval Authority, who will make a final determination.

**VII. Outcomes Following Periodic Reviews of Centers & Institutes**

- A. The Center or Institute may be approved to continue normal operations with no modifications.
- B. Reorganization or renaming procedures may be initiated.



1. If the Approval Authority determines that a reorganization is warranted following a review, the Unit Head may initiate procedures to transition the Center or Institute to a different type of entity.
    - a) The Unit Head may recommend reorganizing existing Centers by combining two or more Centers, creating umbrella structures, splitting one Center into two or more Centers, changing the level at which the entity operates, or may consider other structural changes appropriate to the needs identified in the review.
    - b) The Unit Head should consult with the faculty and administrators engaged in the entity's work, as well as with the relevant College(s), the Dean(s), the Senior Vice President and Provost, and/or the Vice President for Research prior to approving a reorganization.
    - c) If the proposed reorganization would result in the creation of a new Center, the new Center should be approved through the process for establishing a Center outlined in Section V.B.
  2. If the review indicates that the name of the entity should be changed, the Unit Head may initiate a process to rename the entity.
    - a) The Unit Head should consult with faculty and administrators engaged in the work of the entity to develop a new name, and may consider engaging departmental or College-level committees as appropriate.
    - b) The Unit Head should determine whether a proposed new name would conflict with names used by existing Centers or Institutes at the University that focus on similar or related topics, and whether the proposed name is appropriate for the level at which the entity operates.
    - c) The Unit Head may approve a new name for the entity after consultation with key stakeholders and the Approval Authority.
    - d) The Unit Head must notify the Division of Research of a name change so that public-facing information and internal tracking mechanisms for Centers and Institutes can be updated by the Division.
- C. In the event of a negative review, the Center or Institute may be placed on probation.
1. The Unit Head, in consultation with the Director, will develop a plan of corrective actions that must be taken during the probationary period to address the factors that led to the negative review.

2. The Center or Institute will have up to two years from the point at which the plan is finalized to implement the corrective actions.
  3. The Center or Institute will submit a self-assessment to the Unit Head detailing its progress in addressing the factors that led to the negative review within two years.
  4. The Unit Head will review the self-assessment and make a recommendation to the Approval Authority.
  5. The Approval Authority will make a final determination on actions following the implementation of the plan. The Approval Authority may:
    - a) Remove probationary status and approve the continuation of normal operations;
    - b) Determine whether additional corrective actions are needed;
    - c) Determine whether additional time to address specific issues would be appropriate; or
    - d) Initiate sunseting procedures.
- D. Sunseting procedures may be initiated by the Approval Authority.
1. The Unit Head will develop the sunseting plan, in consultation with the Approval Authority, as appropriate. The Unit Head may engage the Director in the development of the sunseting plan.
  2. The sunseting plan should address, among other things:
    - a) The timeframe of the phase-out period, which may range from a few months to up to two years;
    - b) the reassignment or expiration of faculty/staff appointments;
    - c) plans for ensuring the continued support of graduate students whose research is associated with the entity; and
    - d) how to address remaining grants and other financial matters.
  3. The Unit Head will be responsible for taking any necessary steps to remove a Group, Center, or Institute from any public-facing websites or materials following sunseting.
  4. Upon completion of sunseting processes for Centers and Institutes, notification should be forwarded to the Division of Research for removal of the entity from

public-facing information about Centers and Institutes at the University, and from internal tracking of Centers and Institutes by the Division.

- E. The Approval Authority may initiate termination procedures as specified in Section VIII.

### **VIII. Termination**

- A. Groups, Centers, and Institutes may be terminated at any time due to inactivity, lack of funding, or lack of interest by the faculty.
  - 1. Groups may be terminated by the Unit Head if the faculty within the Group have left the University or are no longer interested in actively pursuing the focus area.
  - 2. Termination may also be initiated by the faculty within the Group, Center, or Institute when faculty support for the entity no longer exists, if there is no interest among the faculty in participating in or leading the entity, or when the entity is no longer financially viable. Requests for termination may be submitted to the Unit Head for consideration.
- B. Centers and Institutes may be terminated as a result of the periodic review process.
  - 1. Termination of Centers and Institutes may be initiated by the Unit Head if at the time of review they determine that a Center or Institute is inactive and has no existing faculty or staff dedicated to its work.
  - 2. Centers and Institutes may be terminated as the result of a negative review or following a negative outcome from a probationary period, at the discretion of the Approval Authority.
  - 3. The process of dissolving a Center or Institute must:
    - a) take into consideration the contractual obligations and employment agreements with the faculty and staff associated with the entity, and determine how these will be fulfilled; and
    - b) ensure the continued support of graduate students whose research is associated with the entity.

### **IX. Implementation**

- A. The requirement for regular reviews of Centers and Institutes applies to all such entities established prior to July 2020, as well as to any new entities created under this Policy.

- B. Centers and Institutes that have an existing five-year review cycle should transition to the new review processes established in this Policy at the time of their next review.
- C. Centers and Institutes that have not been reviewed within the past five years or that do not have a defined review cycle should be reviewed as soon as is practical using the processes outlined in this Policy.

DRAFT

Draft Administrative Recommendations

- The Division of Research should create and maintain a repository of information on centers and institutes. The repository should include an online public-facing list of all centers and institutes, as well as an internal database that can be used to track key details about each center and institute. The database should include information about a center or institute's size, funding sources and levels, administrative structure, last review, upcoming review date. The database will need to be maintained and updated regularly.
- Each Dean should establish a staggered schedule for reviewing existing centers & institutes under the provisions of the revised policy to ease implementation. Schedules should incorporate entities that already have an existing review cycle, but should also establish a review cycle for centers and institutes that have not been reviewed on a periodic basis. All existing centers and institutes should be reviewed under this structure within five years of adoption of the revisions to the policy.
- A standard application form or template should be created to ensure that all proposals for new centers and institutes address key elements outlined in the policy.
- Guidance on establishing and reviewing centers & institutes should be developed to assist Deans and department chairs in conducting review processes that are in alignment with the policy. The Division of Research should provide units with advanced notice of an upcoming review to allow units to prepare for the review process.
- The policy on the review of academic units should be revised to remove the requirement that centers be reviewed with units.
- The University Senate should conduct a review of this policy and its implementation in 2025.
- Unit Heads should consider conducting annual discussions with Center & Institute Directors to broadly assess annual objectives, including the challenges and opportunities that Centers & Institutes face each year and tangible outcomes, where appropriate.