

## 11.02.99.R0.01 Centers and Institutes

Approved September 1, 1996  
Reviewed June 23, 2014  
Revised May 2, 2017  
Next Scheduled Review: May 2, 2022



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### Procedure Statement

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Texas A&M University-Commerce is authorized to establish centers and institutes as they pertain to the academic, research, and service mission of the institution. A center or institute is an integral part of the University and has no standing apart from the University. Each unit must conform to system policies and A&M-Commerce rules and procedures relating to personnel, property, and accounts, as well as to state statutes and regulations.

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### Reason for Procedure

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This procedure sets forth the process concerning the establishment, operation, and evaluation of centers and institutes. This procedure supplements System Policy 11.02.

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### Procedures and Responsibilities

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- 1 Each center and institute must be established with the approval of the Academic Dean/Director of School and Provost; concurrence of the President and upon recommendation by the Chancellor; approval by The Texas A&M System Board of Regents.
- 2 According to the system regulations, the general guidelines for determining whether a unit should be titled a center or institute are as follows:
  - 2.1 A center is a smaller, interdisciplinary, collaborative effort, revolving around a specific research or educational activity, whose participants are involved in more than one academic department or unit. It is administered by a director or agency director or someone holding a lower title. A center is focused largely on externally supported research or educational activities broader than those interests of an individual department or administrative unit.
  - 2.2 An institute is a large integrative unit, housing intercollegiate or interagency activities. It is administered by a director reporting to a dean or agency director or above. An institute is focused on largely external supported research or educational activities much broader than those interests of a given department or administrative unit.

- 2.3 Programs, laboratories, faculties and facilities (which may have been referred to as 'centers' prior to the existence of a board policy) are defined as lesser administrative, educational or research entities, usually residing within an academic department or unit and do not require approval by the Board of Regents to be established.
- 2.4 These guidelines do not apply to administrative centers (e.g., counseling center; professional development and continuing education centers; computer centers; training centers; etc.) within the University.
- 3 Major criteria for the formation of centers and institutes are:
  - 3.1 Relevance to the university's academic, service, and research mission, and
  - 3.2 Potential benefits to be gained by the formation of such a unit.
- 4 Formal proposals for establishment of a center or an institute will include a completed Request for Establishment of Centers and Institutes (see Appendix) and will submit the request to the President for approval via administrative channels. Once approved by the President, the request will be submitted to System Offices for approval by the Chancellor and Board of Regents.
- 5 The center or institute director shall develop internal guidelines and/or agreements concerning the property developed or used by their unit. These agreements should cover possible questions involving:
  - 5.1 Use of equipment and space;
  - 5.2 Copyrights, patents, royalties, and other intellectual property rights; and
  - 5.3 Commissions, consulting, and service arrangements based on work developed under the auspices of the center.
- 6 An approved center or institute must have written operating procedures. These procedures must be agreed to by its members, the Academic Dean/Director of School with which it is associated, and the Provost. The written operating procedures must include:
  - 6.1 Procedures governing reporting lines.
  - 6.2 Rules and procedures for financial accountability and responsibility of employees, members, and directors.
  - 6.3 Procedures to be followed in the appointment and termination of employees, members and directors.
- 7 Centers and institutes administratively located within a college/school will undergo an annual review and a more intensive review at least every five years.

7.1 Annual Review: The Academic Dean/Director of School within which the center or institute is housed will follow the institutional effectiveness process which will require submitting a report on the activities of the unit for the previous calendar year, including the director's own professional achievements. The annual review provides the Academic Dean/Director of School with a means to monitor the progress of the center or institute and the director's effectiveness.

7.1.1 Annual reviews will be used by the Academic Dean/Director of School to make decisions about unit resources of all types and about center or institute director compensation. Annual reviews are retained by the college/school and provided to university officials upon request.

The following information should be included in the annual review:

7.1.1.1 An account of research and/or other activities;

7.1.1.2 A financial statement;

7.1.1.3 A copy of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan and Results.

7.2 Five-Year Review: At least six months prior to the formal evaluation process, the Academic Dean/Director of School will ask the director of the center or institute to prepare a report describing and assessing the unit's activities over the previous five years.

7.2.1 Elements of the director's five-year report:

7.2.1.1 The center or institute's current mission statement: The mission statement should be consistent with the purpose of the unit as approved by the Board of Regents and should broadly define the criteria against which the unit is evaluated.

7.2.1.2 Center or institute activities and accomplishments per relevant criteria: Variations across center or institute with respect to mission mean variations in the criteria against which they will be evaluated. The following illustrate the types of criteria which are directly relevant to centers or institutes.

7.2.1.2.1 High quality scholarship produced or sponsored evidenced by demonstrably high visibility/impact publications, conferences, workshops, programs, and projects.

7.2.1.2.2 External funding (grants, contracts, fellowships, philanthropy).

7.2.1.2.3 Graduate and undergraduate students taught, supported and/or served.

7.2.1.2.4 Interdisciplinary and international activities.

7.2.1.2.5 Benefits to the community, state, or nation.

7.2.1.2.6 Relevant comparisons with similar centers or institutes nationally.

7.2.1.2.7 Effective governance and administration.

7.2.1.2.7.1 Clearly articulated vision;

7.2.1.2.7.2 Evidence of effective leadership;

7.2.1.2.7.3 Strategic planning;

7.2.1.2.7.4 Depth and scope of faculty involvement; and

7.2.1.2.7.5 Advancement of diversity.

7.2.1.3 Case for continued support as a center or institute:

7.2.1.3.1 Documentation that the center or institute's activities advance the goals/strategic plans of the college/school and the University.

7.2.1.3.2 Statement of future plans for the unit.

7.2.1.3.3 Statement of and justification for resource needs (fiscal, facility, space, personnel).

7.2.2 External Review:

7.2.2.1 The Academic Dean/Director of School will appoint a Review Committee.

7.2.2.1.1 A&M-Commerce faculty members with expertise relevant to the center or institute's mission.

7.2.2.1.2 One committee member may be a faculty member from a peer university.

7.2.2.1.3 Committee members may be suggested by the center or institute director but final appointments will be decided by the Academic Dean/Director of School.

7.2.2.2 Review Process:

7.2.2.2.1 In the early spring prior to the academic year in which the review will take place the Academic Dean/Director of School will notify the center or institute director of the upcoming review and request the self-assessment of the center or institute.

7.2.2.2.1.1 Committee will be formalized early the following fall semester.

7.2.2.2.1.2 The committee will receive the director's self-assessment of the center or institute.

7.2.2.2.1.3 A campus visit will follow.

7.2.2.2.1.4 The committee will submit the assessment report and recommendations to the Academic Dean/Director of School.

7.2.2.2.2 The committee should receive the director's report two weeks prior to the on-campus evaluation visit.

### 7.2.2.3 On-campus visit by Review Committee

7.2.2.3.1 The Review Committee will arrange to be on campus for approximately two days to inspect physical facilities, review relevant documents and conduct interviews. Interviews will include at least the center or institute director, key members of the staff, the Academic Dean/Director of School, relevant faculty, administrators in the college/school and beyond, as appropriate, and possibly project sponsors.

7.2.2.3.2 At the end of two days the Committee will meet with the center or institute's director and the Academic Dean/Director of School to discuss observations, gain clarification and offer preliminary reactions.

### 7.2.2.4 Review Committee report submission:

7.2.2.4.1 The Committee will submit its final report to the Academic Dean/Director of School.

7.2.2.4.2 The Academic Dean/Director of School will share the report with the center or institute director who will examine the report for factual errors.

7.2.2.4.3 The Academic Dean/Director of School will then submit the report to the Provost who will in turn share it for comment with other appropriate university officials.

7.2.2.4.4 Final acceptance of the report rests with the Provost.

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## **Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements**

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System Policy [\*11.02 Creation of Centers and Institutes\*](#)

System Procedure for [Approval of a Center or Institute](#)

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## **Appendix**

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*Request for Establishment of Centers and Institutes*

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## **Contact Office**

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Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
903.886.5410

Request for Establishment of Centers and Institutes

Complete the following, using additional pages when necessary.

1. Name of Center or Institute \_\_\_\_\_

2. Person Responsible \_\_\_\_\_ Title (Director, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Reports to \_\_\_\_\_

4. Relevance to the University: academic, service and/or research mission.

5. Goals (Attach copy of Institutional Effectiveness Plan/Results as required for the support unit).

6. Potential benefits to be gained by formation of such a unit.

7. Budget Request:

a. Operating.

b. Personnel (Identify full-time and part-time employees).

c. Funding Source.

8. Description of activities.

9. Evaluation process to determine the success and effectiveness of the unit.

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title Date

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head/Associate Director Date

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Dean/Director of School Date

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Provost Date

\*Attach a copy of the Operating Procedures.