

POLICY 7.9 – Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups

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| Policy Category: | Research |
| Subject: | Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups |
| Approving Authority: | Board of Governors on recommendation of Senate |
| Responsible Officer(s) | Vice-President (Research) |
| Responsible Office: | Office of the Vice-President (Research) |
| Related Procedures: | <u>Procedures for the Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups</u> |
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A. PURPOSE

1.00 The University is committed to research excellence and innovation. The University's strengths as a research-intensive institution have derived, in good measure, from the efforts of individual scholars within the established scholarly disciplines. Increasingly, however, such areas are expanding to include a wide array of topics of investigation posing challenges best met through the development of more complex models of research. To meet this challenge, the University encourages the formation of collaborative research entities, both within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries. The purpose of this document is to set out the policy and procedures for recognition of collaborative research entities at the University, their intended scope of activities, and their required governance and reporting structures, with the goals of enhancing the functionality of such groups, ensuring coordination of effort within the University, and minimizing the liabilities of the entities and the University.

A central feature of this policy is the establishment of three distinct categories of research organization: Institutes, Centres, and Groups. These categories represent different levels of complexity available to research organizations at Western. As levels of complexity and accountability increase so too does the level of governance required. This Policy, and its accompanying Procedures, provides guidance to faculty who are interested in establishing a research organization, as well as to Directors of already established research organizations regarding their governance, reporting and review obligations to the University.

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B. DEFINITIONS

- 1.00 Research Institutes:** University Institutes will report directly to the Vice-President (Research) through their governance framework. Institutes are the research organizations most closely aligned with the core strategic interests of the University, by virtue of one or more of several criteria: their size, breadth, national and international impact and excellence, and/or their focus and scope of research. Institutes are multi-disciplinary in nature, in most cases are expected to have core membership spanning two or more Faculties, and are supported by major external funding. Institutes may also involve significant research participation, partnerships, funding, and/or administrative participation from outside the University. In some cases, the membership of the Institute, and its core activities, will be based mainly in a single Faculty, in which case the Institute will report to the appropriate Faculty Dean as the Vice-President (Research) designate. Institutes are entities that may have significant financial and other implications for the University that must be sustained by the Institute itself, or with a specific negotiated relationship with the University. Institutes will often be responsible for the operation and oversight of core research infrastructure and facilities.
- 2.00 Research Centres:** Centres report to the appropriate Dean(s) and any University funding for the Centre will come through the Faculty(ies). Centres are collaborative and typically non-departmental research ventures, possibly involving some research participation and/or funding from outside the University, with a director, an administrative structure, a budget, and possibly some assignment of space. Similar to Institutes, Centres undertake collaborative, multi- and inter-disciplinary research and scholarship with national and international impact, but their size, breadth and scope, and/or operational requirements do not warrant Institute status. The scope of interests of a Centre may be largely internal to a particular Faculty, although in most cases their membership will cross two or more Faculties.
- 3.00 Research Groups:** Research Groups report to the appropriate Dean or designate. Research Groups consist of a number of investigators informally organized within and recognized by a Department, School and/or Faculty (or in two or more Departments, Schools or Faculties) with shared research objectives, and possibly, shared facilities and funds. They may be expected to form, grow, and dissolve on a relatively short time scale, although, in some cases, they can also be stable for relatively long time periods.

C. ESTABLISHMENT, RENEWAL AND MODIFICATION

1.00 Establishment of Institutes and Centres

- 1.01 Proposals to establish Research Institutes are submitted to the Vice-President (Research) in accordance with the requirements enumerated in the [Procedures for the Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups](#).
- 1.02 Proposals for Institutes will be reviewed by the Committee on Research Institutes (CRI) which is chaired by the Vice-President (Research) and includes the Provost & Vice-President (Academic), The Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies), the Faculty Dean(s) relevant to the specific Institute, and two members of the University Research Board who will serve as liaison between the URB and CRI.
- 1.03 Proposals for Centres are submitted to the Vice-President (Research) for approval on the recommendation of the relevant Dean(s) in accordance with the requirements enumerated in the [Procedures for the Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups](#). Establishment of Centres will be reported to the University Research Board and through it, to Senate for information.

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1.04 Proposals for Institutes that are supported by CRI are forwarded to the URB for review. The URB shall consider whether the proposal is consistent with the academic priorities of the University and whether the resource requirements and sources of funding have been appropriately considered. If the proposal is endorsed by the URB, it will recommend it to the Senate. If approved by Senate, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Governors for final approval.

2.00 Terms and Renewal for Centres and Institutes

The initial term of a Centre or Institute shall normally not exceed five years. Upon application, additional terms, each normally not exceeding five years in duration, may be granted by the Vice-President (Research) in consultation with the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and the relevant Dean(s), and subject to the satisfactory review of the objectives, operation and budget of the Centre or Institute. The Vice-President (Research) will notify the URB of any renewal or expiration of the term of a Centre or renewal of an Institute.

3.00 Requests for Modifications to an Institute

Changes to the objectives, administration, operation, and/or funding of an Institute prior to the end of its term must be approved by the Vice-President (Research), the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and, as appropriate, the University Legal Counsel.

4.00 Requests for Modifications to a Centre

Changes to the objectives, administration, and/or operation of a Centre prior to the end of its term, are submitted to the Vice-President (Research) for approval on the recommendation of the relevant Dean(s).

5.00 Establishment of Research Groups

A proposal to establish a Research Group requires the approval of the relevant Dean(s). A brief description of the Group, accompanied by a letter of support from the Dean(s) of the Faculty(ies) involved and a list of its members must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President (Research) for information. Research Development Services (RDS) shall maintain a record of all such Groups.

6.00 Request for Modifications to a Group

A letter of explanation from the relevant Dean(s) to the Vice-President (Research) for information and maintenance of records by RDS is required.

D. GOVERNANCE AND REVIEW

1.00 The University's Institutes and Centres are expected to adhere to general practices of good governance with administrative structures that utilize expert national and international advice and which ultimately inform the Vice-President (Research) and the Faculty Dean(s) as to their activities and standing within the national and international research community. In the case of Institutes, the Vice-President (Research) will report on the status, progress, and plans of Institutes to SCUP and to Senate.

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2.00 Governance – Institutes

2.01 Director

An Institute is led by its Director, who is normally appointed for a five-year term. The Director of the Institute reports to the Vice-President (Research) in all aspects related to the Institute and its function. The Director will normally hold an academic appointment and reports to the appropriate Dean and Chair with respect to his/her academic responsibilities.

The Provost & Vice-President (Academic) will appoint the Institute Director on the recommendation of the Vice-President (Research) as advised through a representative selection committee constituted by the Vice-President (Research). An appointment letter will be issued for the full-term appointment. Directors will normally be qualified to hold an academic appointment.

2.02 Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

The Director establishes a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) whose purpose is to provide advice to the Director and the members of the Institute with regard to scientific or scholarly priorities and direction for the Institute. The RAC is chosen by the Director and is consulted at least every year, or more frequently at the discretion of the Director.

2.03 Governing Board (GB)

The Governing, or Management Board comprises, at a minimum, the Vice-President (Research) (or designate) along with the Deans (or designates) from the Faculties that have principle roles in the success of the Institute. The GB oversees the overall function and direction of the Institute and will meet at least once a year. The GB will receive an annual report from the Director on the status, progress and immediate future plans of the Institute. Such reports will be transmitted to the Vice-President (Research) for submission to Senate for information. The GB, in consultation with the Director, the RAC and members of the Institute, is responsible for constituting an External Review Board (ERB) at least every five years, and normally coincident with the final year of the Director's term

3.00 Governance – Centres

3.01 Director

Typically, a Centre is led by a Director who is appointed for a five-year term. The Director is chosen by the appropriate Dean(s) following consultation with members of the Centre.

3.02 Structure

The Director of the Centre reports to the appropriate Dean(s). The Dean reports to the Vice-President (Research) for information only. In all other respects, a Centre's governance structure is that of an Institute which resides principally within a single Faculty. However, it is recognized that in certain cases, the establishment of a formal governing/management board may not be justified. In cases where the Centre maintains a formal governing body, the Centre's GB is normally chaired by the appropriate Dean (or designate) and is composed of the Chairs (or designates) of the Departments that have a principle role in the success of the Centre.

4.00 Governance – Groups

Research Groups may establish such governing structures as they deem appropriate.

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5.00 Review – Institutes

An External Review Board (ERB) will review each Institute every five years or sooner at the request of the Institute's GB. The members of the ERB will normally be three internationally recognized distinguished scholars, and one internal reviewer, who must be arms-length to the Institute, and will be appointed by the GB. The ERB will assess the performance of the Institute's Director and its scientific program using performance indicators established by the GB. The ERB will report in confidence to the Vice- President (Research). Its report will include recommendations respecting the renewal of the incumbent Director and the performance of the Institute overall. Normally, the Vice-President (Research) will share the ERB's report or major recommendations from the ERB's report with the GB.

6.00 Review – Centres

Responsibility for monitoring the status, progress and plans for Centres resides with the Dean(s) of the Faculty within which the members (or the majority of members) reside. Each Centre will be reviewed at least every five years. The composition of the ERB will be determined by the Dean(s) (or Vice-President (Research) if appropriate), and will consist of external and internal reviewers. In cases where the Centre maintains a formal governing body, the composition of the ERB will be determined by the GB. The ERB will provide a report to the Dean, copied to the Vice-President Research).

7.00 Review Outcomes

The review of a Centre or Institute may result in any one of the following outcomes: renewal of the Centre/Institute (perhaps with specific recommendations to be implemented over the next term); termination/non-renewal of the Centre/Institute; restructuring of the unit to transition it to another type of unit (e.g., from centre to institute or vice-versa); in addition, the review will result in renewal of a Director or search for a new Director if the centre or institute is to be renewed.

An external review may conclude that the performance of an Institute or Centre is inconsistent with previously agreed to expectations. The final decision as to whether to disband the Institute or to transition it to a Centre is made by the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of Senate through the URB

The decision as to whether to disband a Centre, or to transition it to a Group, shall rest with the Dean or Vice-President (Research), on the advice of its Governing Board (if one has been established), and the recommendations of the relevant ERB.

In order to transition from a Group to a Centre or from a Centre to an Institute, the procedures for establishing a Centre or Institute must be followed.

E. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1.00 Relationship with Academic Programs

As part of the University's commitment to linking research and education, Institutes may be involved in the delivery of academic programs. While the approval of research and academic programs may be linked, the approval of the academic component of such programs will follow the normal University procedures for approving academic programs. All academic programs and faculty appointments will reside within Departments. Administration of academic programs will be carried out through the appropriate Dean or Vice Provost.

2.00 Existing Centres and Institutes

The effective date for this policy is the date of approval by the Board of Governors. Existing Centres and Institutes will be subject to this policy at the time of the expiry of their current term or by 2016, whichever is sooner. Institutes or Centres that do not meet this policy's requirements and definitions will not be renewed. There may be circumstances where it is more appropriate to "grandparent" specific existing Centres and Institutes, in which case the Vice-President (Research) may waive this requirement.

3.00 Adherence to University Policies

All Institutes, Centres and Groups are expected to adhere to all applicable university policies and procedures, financial and otherwise, as established or amended from time to time.

4.00 Incorporation

Requests for incorporation by Centres or Institutes will be entertained only in the most exceptional circumstances, and must be approved by the Board of Governors of the University. Should such approval be granted, a formal Affiliation Agreement shall be established between the Centre or Institute and the University, the terms of which are subject to the approval of the Board of Governors. In any incorporated entity, the members of the governing board of the Centre or Institute shall be approved by the University's Board of Governors, and/or a majority of the members of the governing board of the Centre or Institute shall be appointed by the University.

5.00 Fundraising

All fundraising activities proposed by Centres or Institutes shall be undertaken in consultation with, and subject to the approval of the Vice-President (External) of the University. All charitable income tax receipts will be issued in the name of the University and by the University.

6.00 Contracts

The University shall be solely responsible for the negotiation and approval of research contracts involving the Centre or Institute or its members, unless stipulated otherwise under the terms of existing Affiliation Agreements.