

ESTABLISHMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

A. Introduction

In general, centers and institutes can involve faculty from a single department or from multiple departments. Centers and institutes are useful adaptations that allow institutions to focus resources on a particular problem, or discipline with the result of accelerating discovery and improving health. Strategic investment in centers and institutes is seen as a way of gaining a competitive advantage over other institutions and of attracting and retaining successful investigators. Centers and institutes are seen as complementary to traditional departmental structures and both draw from, and contribute to, the core missions of departments. A "one-person operation," in which activity is carried out by an individual faculty member with limited support, does not qualify as a center and will be designated as a project or program. A center or institute might, however, consist of a group whose activities are strongly shaped by one person and is adequately supported by either grant or endowment funding.

The purpose of this document is to outline the steps in the establishment of a center or institute. It is designed to assist faculty in formulating a sustainable unit and to assist the institution in deciding which units to support. It is not designed to be an obstacle to progress and change.

B. Establishing an Interdisciplinary Institute or Center

Establishing a center or institute is a two –step process. In the first step, an application for three (3) years of provisional status is submitted to the Research Advisory Council, RAC. After a period of successful provisional status, an application for full center or institute status for an initial period of 5 years can be submitted. Renewal of full status will be allowed.

1. The proposer of a center or institute should provide the Council with a draft of the center/institute chartering application that includes an abstract with the critical elements, such as proposed focus, location, planned involvement of faculty in other departments, and governance. The involvement of faculty must be substantiated by letters of support from named faculty members and from their chairs. This should be done well before the charter application will be sent to the Research Advisory Council for review. The Research Advisory Council will then make known any concerns about the proposed center/institute. The proposer should allow a month for a response and finalize the charter application on the basis of any input received via the Dean and Senior Vice President.
2. Department Chairs who are concerned about a proposal that involves faculty within their department, may contact either the proposer or the Research Advisory Council. If discussions between the proposer and the Department Chair cannot resolve an issue, the issue can be brought to the Research Advisory Council through the Vice President and Associate Dean for Sponsored Research Administration for resolution at the time that the charter application is presented to the Council.
3. The criteria for the establishment of Centers and Institutes should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. There should be a critical mass at least 3 or more faculty and other scholars committed to the scholarly goals of the Center or Institute. The primary purpose of the research C/I should be to generate new knowledge by greater interchange within the collective

group. The C/I should not have the provision of service or teaching as its predominant objective or function.

- b. The existing base of faculty and other scholars should have expertise in their fields, as indicated by national or international recognition and external funding for the activity.
- c. The faculty and other scholars should have common goals and an ability to accomplish these collectively better than individually.
- d. A plan should be presented specifying how the success of the Center or Institute will be measured. Included in the plan should be reasonably quantitative criteria for success in areas related to the goals of the Center or Institute.
- e. The formation of the Center or Institute must be approved by the Dean and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs.

C. Governance of Interdisciplinary Institutes¹ or Centers

How a center or institute should be governed will depend on the extent to which it is truly interdisciplinary and on the affiliations and preferences of the principals. Two alternative models are proposed.

1. A center or institute whose work involves expertise that lies primarily in one department would best be based in that department. If a faculty member from another department were to become the center/institute's director, it would still remain in its base department, and its supervising Department Chair would remain responsible for academic and administrative oversight.
2. When a center or institute is truly interdisciplinary and its founders wish it not to be based in any one department, but rather to cut across disciplines, the following option is appropriate:

The center/institute would be chartered with the signatures of all Department Chairs involved, but the Center/Institute Director would then report to the Dean. He/she would provide administrative oversight regarding the budget and scholarly activity; however, oversight of any educational programs would be coordinated with the appropriate Department Chairs.

The individual who will lead the Center or Institute will make a proposal as to which of the two alternative models is feasible. The Dean will refer this to the Research Advisory Council, which will make a recommendation to the Dean and President.

D. Faculty Appointment to Centers or Institutes

All faculty appointed to an Institute or Center shall also have a departmental appointment. Prior to hiring a new faculty member, the center or institute director should discuss, with appropriate chairperson(s), the qualifications of the proposed faculty member, the proposed role he/she will play in the center or institute, and the role to be played in the department (all institute/center faculty should do at least 10% teaching or administrative duties within their department). All scholars within centers/institutes are expected to be actively engaged as full-time members of the faculty in all three major missions of the institution – teaching, research and service. The relative proportion of these activities may vary with career stage, availability of resources and institutional needs. The relative time allocation should be determined by a collaborative consensus between the faculty member, the unit director and the department chair.

These faculty members will be subject to the same rules and expectations with respect to appointment and promotion. In cases where the center or institute contributes more than 50 % of salary support, the departmental appointment or promotion committee shall contain

representation from the center or institute. The departmental chairperson and institute director will work collaboratively to document academic productivity for annual review and promotion.

¹ Institutes and Centers that already exist will not need to go through a formal application process but will be reviewed by the Research Advisory Council which may make recommendations to the Dean and President regarding the Center or Institute's status.

E. The Evaluation of Center & Institute Programs

Each Center or Institute shall have an explicit evaluation plan and external review process, which shall include at a minimum the following components:

- 1) An External Advisory Committee (EAC);
- 2) Written reports to the RAC and Dean of feedback from the EAC or other external reviewers at least annually; and
- 3) Explicit outcome measures against which performance is benchmarked.

Centers and Institutes will be evaluated in terms of their ability to achieve their goals.

The objectives and primary subject areas of scholarship done by this unit should be identified. The criteria outlined below will be applied to the focus and mission of the Center or Institute as a whole, not to the accomplishments of individual scholars. A Center or Institute would be expected to show evidence of meeting all four types of criteria below.

1. Evidence of scholarly output, such as:
 - a. publications in refereed journals
 - b. books
 - c. patents
 - d. external funding
 - e. presentations or abstracts at national and international meetings
 - f. conference reports
 - g. technical reports
 - h. talks and colloquia at MSM and elsewhere
 - i. educational or training materials
2. Evidence of national and international recognition, such as:
 - a. invited presentations at national and international conferences
 - b. references in citation indices
 - c. external funding and grants
 - d. collaborations and exchange of personnel (e.g., colleagues on sabbaticals) with scholars from other universities or research institutes
 - e. honors and awards
 - f. holding office in national and international organizations

- g. membership on editorial boards
 - h. membership in government, corporate, or foundation advisory committees and review panels
3. Evidence of scholarly/educational activity, as indicated by:
- a. conducting seminars and new, innovative courses
 - b. hosting visiting faculty and researchers
 - c. hosting conferences, symposia, exhibits, performances, or screenings
 - d. significantly involving undergraduate and graduate students
 - e. providing advanced training opportunities toward graduate students' terminal degrees
 - f. offering training programs
 - g. teaching "master" classes
 - h. offering scholarly or educational consulting services
 - i. providing scholarly or educational materials upon request
4. Evidence of growth and prospects for the future, such as:
- a. increase in personnel, funds, students, output
 - b. approved proposals
 - c. active collaborations
 - d. work in progress
 - e. promise of future funding ; adequacy of funding to meet financial costs
 - f. An endowment

F. Credit for Scholarly Productivity

Scholarly output of individual faculty members will be recorded both in annual report of the Institute/Center as well as in the annual report of the department in which the faculty member belongs.

G. Distribution of Resources/Initiatives

Any incentive payments or bonuses that the institution deems fit to return to departments based on faculty grant awards, as part of the faculty member's work in the center or institute shall be split to reflect the relative support from the department vs. the center or institute. For example, if the center or institute provides 90% support, then, so that 90% goes to the institute or center and 10% goes to the department.

H. Allocation of Space

Requests for research space by the center will be subject to the same policies for space allocation established by the institution's policy and procedure guidelines. Space requests should be made by the faculty member to the center director, who in turn will review the request and if deemed appropriate, submit the request to the Dean, who after review and approval will submit the request to the Institutional Facilities Committee for review. The Institutional Facilities Committee, after review, will advise the Dean and the President concerning approval of the space request.

I. Guidelines for the Chartering of Scholarly Centers or Institutes

The Institution recognizes that research and other scholarly activities contribute significantly to the academic stature of the institution, as well as to the capability of the faculty to fulfill its responsibilities as teachers and public servants. To that end, the Institution seeks to ensure the close integration of research and teaching, including the employment of students in sponsored research projects and the use of research facilities for instructional purposes. Our policy of chartering and periodically reviewing scholarly centers and institutes facilitates the coordinated strengthening of research capabilities throughout the Institution. Becoming chartered confers on a center or institute an Institution seal of approval and results in the unit's inclusion in institutional budgetary considerations and in listings of scholarly units.

For these purposes, a center/institute may be identified primarily with one discipline; it may be clearly multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary; it may have a single focus or it may support research or scholarship in a wide variety of related areas. Some centers/institutes are partially supported from institutional funds; others depend entirely on sponsorship by outside agencies, endowments and foundations. Whatever the source of support, there is a clear need for some number of faculty members to work together in a single administrative unit to carry out a more effective program.

Faculty seeking to establish a new organized scholarly unit should submit the attached application form to the Research Advisory Council, after reviewing all additional information on scholarly centers and institutes. After reviewing the request, the Research Advisory Council will forward the application to the Dean and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, who, after review, will then forward a recommendation to the President.

J. Sample Application for Chartering of Scholarly Centers of Institutes

The applicant should submit a business plan for the proposed academic unit, forecasting revenue, expense, and the expected return on investment over a 5 year period. Other essential elements of the application should include the following:

1. The purpose and need for this scholarly unit in general terms and on this campus;
 2. The activities and accomplishments of the unit to date;
 3. The proposed administrative organization, including the role of regular members of the faculty;
 4. The financial support required to sustain scholarly activity at a significant level (at least 75% salary support for participating faculty members) and the source(s) of these funds at the present time;
 5. The personnel involved;
 6. The importance of the unit to graduate education at this institution;
 7. Any external service functions of the unit and/or any formal external relationships; and
 8. Space needs and how they are to be met.
- Provisional charters are given for three (3) years. Review is conducted prior to the expiration of the charter to determine whether a renewal of the charter is in order based on a report of the status and productivity of the unit. Units will be rechartered for periods of five years. Following due process, an organized scholarly unit may be terminated by the President at any time.

**APPLICATION FOR SCHOLARLY CENTER OR INSTITUTE CHARTER/RECHARTER
at Morehouse School of Medicine**

month/day/year

Name of Proposer(s):

Title(s):

Name of Center/Institute:

Proposer's Signature/Date: _____

**PLEASE FORWARD 5 COPIES OF THE COMPLETED APPLICATION
TO:**

Research Advisory Council

**c/o Research Wing, Room 130
720 Westview Drive**

Approved: _____
Dean and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Date

- 1. Describe the objectives and primary subject areas of research or scholarship by this unit.**

2. Summarize the unit's achievements and contributions to the field and to the Institution.
(Refer to the Guidelines for Formation and Evaluation of Centers and Institutes; for newly proposed units, convey the credentials of participating faculty and any achievements to date as a group; for chartered units, summarize activities and list publications and other accomplishments, making clear how the unit benefits MSM).

3. Outline the administrative organization of this unit. Answer such questions as these:

- Is the unit headed by a department chair or a director?
- How is the unit leader appointed and what is the proposed reporting hierarchy?
- Is there a letter of support from an academic department chair(s) who will collaborate on faculty appointments in the center/institute?
- Is the unit governed by an advisory committee? If so, how is it appointed? Does it include non-institutional personnel as well as faculty?
- If the proposed unit will be outside of a currently established department, center or institute; please provide a compelling rationale for why this is an essential organizational structure for achieving the unit's objectives.

4. Explain the funding arrangements for this unit.

- Source(s) of funds (e.g., institution general accounts, sponsored research, endowment, other
- for the most recent year, list each funding source, annual amount, duration of funding and purpose of funding):
- Simplified annual budget for this fiscal year. (Fill in below or attach a separate sheet. If the unit has no internal operating budget of its own, make that clear.)

In the center/institute's business plan, what changes in funding do you anticipate for the next fiscal year, next three years and next five years?

5. **Personnel: Please list all faculty affiliated with the unit.**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Departmental Affiliation</u>	<u>Sources of Salary</u>	<u>Percent of Effort in Unit</u>	<u>Percent of Effort in Research, Teaching and Service</u>
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6. **Personnel: Please list all personnel affiliated with the unit.**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Departmental Affiliation</u>	<u>Sources of Salary</u>	<u>Percent of Effort in Unit</u>
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7. **Describe the relationship of research done in this unit to specific academic programs of the Institution.**

- o In general terms.
- o How will the proposed center/institute enhance the overall MSM research enterprise? What are the potential synergies between the proposed unit and existing departments, centers and institutes?
- o Describe potential overlap or redundancy between this center/institute and similar scholarly activities going on in other academic units within the institution.
- o List courses taught by members of the unit that relate directly to the subject matter of research done.
- o Theses and dissertations underway or recently completed that might be supported by the unit's funds.

8. **Describe any important categories of related activities such as conferences or publication series sponsored or to be sponsored by the unit.**

9. **Where is this unit housed? Do external sponsors contribute directly to costs if rental space is occupied?**

10. **Thinking ahead, how will you assess the success of the Center/Institute over the next two years? Please outline a plan for self-evaluation that includes reasonably quantitative criteria for success in areas related to the goals of the Center/Institute (e.g. in areas of scholarship, education, service, and external funding, as appropriate).**

11. **Other relevant information.**