



INSTITUTIONAL CENTERS AND INSTITUTES POLICY

Authority:	Board of Trustees
History:	Approved by Board of Trustees August 3, 2007
Source of Authority:	UNC Code (UNC Policy Manual, Section 400.5)
Related Links:	Form A Form B Form C
Responsible Office:	Academic Affairs

I. Introduction

This policy sets forth the procedures for the planning, establishment, discontinuation, and review of institutional (single campus) centers and institutes. Inter-institutional centers and institutes (involving more than one campus in the UNC system) must fulfill requirements of the UNC General Administration (see UNC Policy Manual, Section 400.5 (R), at http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/apps/research_cil/procedures.htm).

II. Scope

This policy is intended to facilitate the establishment and operation of appropriate Centers and Institutes, to prevent the creation of units that unnecessarily duplicate existing units or programs, and to give UNCW administrators responsibility for their management. These units are subject to the procedures outlined in this document for establishment and review. Examples of institutional centers include the Center for Marine Science and the Center for Business and Economic Services. *Exceptions* to this policy are university entities and facilities that are named “center” or “institute” but do not meet the criteria for a research, instructional, or public service Center or Institute as defined in this policy. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Women’s Resource Center, and the Student Recreation Center.

III. General Guidelines and Procedures

Centers and institutes are an important means of fulfilling the mission of the university. They strengthen and enrich multidisciplinary programs of research, public

service, or instruction by the faculty and staff. They also provide undergraduate and graduate students with added research opportunities, facilities, and assistance, as well as enhance their involvement in public service and educational activities. Centers and institutes also have a strong positive impact on the economic development of the state by providing job opportunities, supplying technical assistance and training, fostering community development, and missions of the university.

The objective of these policies and procedures is to provide a framework governing the planning, establishment, review, and discontinuation of institutional centers and institutes. Specific types of centers and institutes, as well as the regulations and procedures pertaining to these individual categories, are defined in this document. All inquiries, paperwork, and proposals should be submitted to the Provost or his/her designee.

A. Definitions of UNCW Centers and Institutes

For the purposes of classification within the UNC system there is no technical distinction made between the terms “center” and “institute”. Both typically offer interdisciplinary programs attracting faculty, students, and staff from various academic departments or other structured units. In practice, an “institute” frequently refers to an activity with a broader scope than a “center.” For example, an institute may create centers as separate units within its administrative structure.

Centers and institutes may be either *institutional* or *inter-institutional* in nature, and may be designated as research, public service, or instructional units. They may include the participation of other institutions, agencies, or organizations, such as other colleges and universities, schools, hospitals, industry, foundations, or governmental bodies.

Institutional centers and institutes report to only a single campus within the UNC system. These centers or institutes may collaborate with units or departments from other institutions for specific activities or projects, but fiscal and administrative oversight is limited to a single institution. Institutional centers do not submit planning, establishment, or discontinuation requests to the Board of Governors, but they are subject to the policies and procedures for establishment and review that are established for UNCW in this document.

Inter-institutional centers and institutes involve participation by more than one campus within the UNC system, including shared administrative and fiscal oversight or substantial involvement of more than one UNC institution in on going activities. Centers are also considered inter-institutional if the Office of the President provides fiscal and/or administrative oversight. Each institutional center must designate the unit to provide administrative and/or fiscal oversight. In some cases, these responsibilities may be assigned to two separate institutions or assumed by the UNC office of General Administration. The UNC Board of Governors provides oversight for all inter-institutional centers and institutes. See

the UNC Policy Manual Regulations for Planning, Establishing, and Reviewing Centers and Institutes, at http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/apps/research_cil/procedures.htm for further details.

B. Types of Centers

1. Research

A *research* center or institute has research as its primary mission. Although classified as a research center or institute, such a unit may also provide instruction, training, technical assistance, or public service programs. Such units do not have jurisdiction over academic curricula.

2. Public Service

A *public service* center or institute has public service or technical assistance as its primary mission. Research, instruction, and training activities may also be conducted as secondary components of the mission. Such units do not have jurisdiction over academic curricula.

3. Instructional

An *instructional* center or institute has training or instruction as its primary mission. These units may also conduct research and public service activities. Such units do not have jurisdiction over academic curricula.

4. Membership Centers or Institutes

A *membership* center or institute receives a substantial portion of their funding from membership fees paid by corporate or other private or governmental entities to pursue research, public service, or instructional activities of mutual benefit. Membership agreements are routed through the university using the standard internal processing form for approval of sponsored program requests. Once the agreement is signed and the fees have been paid by the member organization, the agreement is then processed as an external award.

5. General Support Service Centers

Recognized only at UNCW, a *general support service center* is designated by name to provide service or support to the UNCW campus members, including but not limited to, faculty, staff, students, administration, and alumni. Such centers do not generate revenue except specifically for operational needs and are established as a recognized center for assistance.

Such centers must be approved by the UNCW Chancellor or the Chancellor's designee. These centers are not required to conduct formal cycle reviews.

C. Authority and Lines of Responsibility

Institutional centers and institutes are responsible to the chancellor or, by his or her delegation to another administrative officer. The chancellor appoints the director. If the director's position is that of a senior administrative officer, the appointment is made in accordance with existing policies for such appointments. If a faculty appointment is involved, the regular procedures for faculty appointments are also followed. Associate or assistant directors are appointed by the director, subject to approval of the chancellor or a designated administrative officer of institution.

All centers or institutes must be approved by the Chancellor or his/her designee following procedures and guidelines outlined in this document.

D. Purpose and Scope of Centers and Institutes

Excellence and visibility are key to centers and institutes successfully contributing to the university's mission and strategic goals. Moreover any center or institute consumes scarce organizational resources, whether those resources are dollars or merely reporting and oversight responsibilities. In addition a center's or institute's value should be strategically aligned with the academic plan. The consideration of strategic benefit is intended to be very broad. The degree to which the center/institute adds value would depend, in part, on the resources required for establishing the center/institute. A center that exists within a department and requires few resources outside of the department might not be expected to achieve objectives comparable to a large interdisciplinary center that receives significant university core funding. But in all cases there must be value added, and it must be explicitly identified. Thus there must be good reasons for creating a new center such as:

1. providing an alternative classification structure to what already exists in a department, college, or division in order to bring diverse groups of individuals together;
2. providing more focused administrative or technical support for proposal and project activities beyond that provided by departments; or
3. creating and maintaining better visibility for activities that come under the center's umbrella.

The reasons for creating a center or institute should be sufficiently concrete that they can be expressed in the form of objectives to be achieved over the first five years. Such objectives should be both quantifiable and measurable, and serve two

purposes. First, when compared with current conditions, they define the value to be added by the center or institute. Second, they provide criteria for an evaluation of the center at the end of five years. Objectives can be classified under the five broad performance factors:

1. research/scholarship;
2. external professional recognition;
3. external outreach/service;
4. involvement of faculty and visiting scholars; and
5. student support and involvement.

E. Funding

No single funding model can fit all centers/institutes. Core (administrative) funding may come from a variety of sources including departments, colleges, divisions, and private sources outside of the university. Some centers will be established under agreements with external agencies (public or private) that provide project and/or operating funds. Centers that provide services to non-governmental organizations can also charge administrative fees on top of direct and indirect costs, but government funds (federal, state, or local) cannot generally be used for non-project-related expenses. On the other hand, some centers will have minimal expenses beyond direct project costs and, in addition to external grants, must subsist entirely on funds provided by a department, college, or division.

Centers that propose to add value through increased external funding or increased visibility will usually achieve the increase through some form of special initiative. A center's or institute's director is usually its chief advocate and would therefore be expected to devote considerable time and effort toward expanding the center's or the institute's work. Thus in addition to the director's salary, any costs associated with pursuit of funding (e.g. travel, communications, etc.) would also be borne by the center or institute. External funding commitments to proposed centers or institutes will weigh heavily in the decision to create new centers, under the assumption that external funding is committed on the basis of significant external review or evaluation. Centers requiring internal funding must obviously demonstrate significant value added as well as significant strategic alignment with university objectives.

Proposals to establish new centers and institutes requiring university funds beyond existing department, college, or division resources must be submitted in sufficient time to allow for consideration during the budget allocation cycle.

F. Unnecessary Duplication

Centers and institutes must avoid unnecessary duplication within UNCW.

G. Management of Space, Budget, Personnel

Centers and institutes may be given the authority to manage space, budget, and personnel matters, but in general do not offer faculty appointments. The university recognizes the advantages of enterprising faculty to the institution and the associated possibility of additional compensation to such faculty.

H. Center and Institute Websites

Each UNCW center or institute is required to develop and maintain a website displaying at a minimum the center's name, primary designation (research, public service, instructional), director's name and contact information, and a brief mission statement.

IV. Procedures for Establishing New Centers and Institutes

Individuals wishing to propose a new center should follow one of two procedures depending on the source: 1) centers or institutes at the academic department level, across departments within a college or school, or across a college or schools within academic affairs or 2) within a division other than academic affairs or across divisions (e.g. academic affairs and public service).

A. Proposals for Centers at the Academic Department level or across departments within a College or School or Across Colleges or Schools.

A center or institute within academic affairs will always be dependent on chairs and deans encouraging their faculty to participate in center activity. Faculty wishing to propose a new center or institute should fill out **Form A** in its entirety. A review committee will be assigned by the provost and shall consist of the dean of the Graduate School and Research (or like position over research), two department chairs from non-participating departments, and two faculty members at least one of whom will be outside the school or college, and the associate vice chancellor of Business Affairs-Finance. The provost will appoint the committee chair. The committee will evaluate the proposal and make recommendation to the provost. If the proposal addresses wholly or in part a public service center or institute the vice chancellor for Public Service and Continuing Studies will also serve on the committee. The provost, will make a recommendation to the chancellor (or his/her designate) for approval. No member of the review team shall be associated with the center or institute under review.

B. Proposals within a division other than academic affairs and/or across divisions.

The individual(s) proposing a center or institute should fill out **Form A** in its entirety. The proposal is then submitted to the vice chancellor(s) of the division(s) affected. If granted preliminary consideration by all vice chancellors' affected, a full review will be conducted by two representatives from each division not affected by the proposal, the associate vice chancellor of Business Affairs-Finance, and a representative from the provost's office to be designated as chair of the committee. If the proposal is approved it is forwarded to the chancellor for approval. No member of the review committee will be associated with the proposal under review.

C. Proposals for Inter-institutional Centers or Institutes

For proposals for inter-institutional centers or institutes regardless of origin (UNCW or another institution) Process B above must be followed for internal approvals prior to forwarding the proposal to the UNC General Administration office. No member of the review team will be associated with the proposal under review.

V. Procedures for Evaluating Centers and Institutes

A. New centers or institutes initial review

New centers or institutes will be approved for a three year period. At the end of second year the center will prepare a report summarizing the progress toward its goals (performance factors) based on the center's initial five-year plan. The review committee, formed in either A, B, or C options above, will be composed of the same individuals originally reviewing the proposal or, if necessary, substitutes reflecting the same representative mix. This committee will consider the report and recommend to the chancellor that the center or institute receive a two-year extension (to five years) or that the center be terminated at the end of the initial three-year approval period. Authority for the two-year extension shall rest with the chancellor (or his or her designate). If the center or institute is to be terminated after the third year **FORM C** must be filed. All inquiries and paperwork should be submitted to the provost or his/her designee.

The two year progress report shall be a two-three page document addressing the following specific questions:

1. Is the current funding of the unit sufficient to continue its operation? If the unit was originally given start-up funds from the university or other granting agencies, has it been able to attract sufficient external funds to continue without major additional institutional support?
2. Are the unit's stated goals and objectives being met?

3. Do financial assessments and professional evaluations demonstrate that the unit is being managed appropriately?
4. Are facilities adequate for continued operation of the unit?
5. Are the unit's clients being served and is it generating sufficient visibility?
(The clients may include students, faculty, university administration, practicing professionals, the general public, the North Carolina General Assembly, or funding agencies, as may be appropriate considering the unit's mission.
6. Is the unit meeting or exceeding its original plan?

B. Ongoing Centers and Institute Review

For centers and institutes that have been granted five year renewals, both institutional and inter-institutional, **FORM B** must be filled out entirely in the second quarter of the fourth year of the five year cycle. The review committee will be composed of the same individuals originally reviewing the proposal or, if necessary, substitutes reflecting the same representative mix. If the committee finds that the center or institute should be continued, it may renew the center or institute for another five years. If the center or institute does not clearly pass review, the committee can grant another three-year cycle, with a required interim review in the second year of the new three year cycle following the format described under section A: New Centers or Institutes Initial Review above. If the review committee determines that the center or institute must be terminated **FORM C** should be filed effectively terminating the center or institute after the fifth year.

If the center or institute contests the findings, at the discretion of the chancellor (or his or her designate) another review committee may be formed to re-consider the findings. The findings of the second review committee supersede those of the first committee. Such review should occur under very rare and exceptional conditions.

Under all conditions above, the recommendations must be approved by the chancellor.

VI. Termination of a Center or Institute

If a center or institute is deemed ineffective through the review processes identified in section 6, **FORM C** must be completed and filed.

Should a center or institute determine independently that it can no longer exist **FORM C** must be submitted and approved prior to termination.

VII. Centers and Institutes in Existence at Initiation of Policy

For those centers or institutes in existence at the date of the initiation of this policy that wish to continue to operate as centers or institutes, Form A must be filled out in its entirety. These center and institutes will be allowed to continue to operate and will begin the cycle of reviews as follows:

The first review cycle for these centers and institutes will begin:

Instructional	4 th quarter of year two from policy inception
Public Service and Membership	4 th quarter of year three from policy inception
Research	4 th quarter of year four from policy inception

All subsequent reviews will follow the cycle identified in the policy for ongoing centers or institutes immediately after the initial review.

General Service Support Centers are deemed usual operating units and are annually reviewed by their division vice chancellor as a part of regular annual review processes.