RESEARCH CENTERS AND INSTITUTES GUIDELINES

1. References
   
   a. Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 2.7  
      (www.usg.edu/policymanual/section2/policy/2.7_organization_structure_and_changes/), University System of Georgia.

   b. Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.14  
      (www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section2/handbook/2.14_research_centers_and_institutes/), Board of Regents, University System of Georgia.

2. Definitions

   Research Centers and Institutes are organizational units designed to further the university’s instructional, research, and public service missions in ways that cannot be addressed through traditional structures, such as departments, schools, and colleges. Although Research Centers and Institutes are an integral part of the university, their respective missions should not duplicate those of departments, schools, and colleges. Instead, they should offer programs or opportunities that cannot be offered at least as well through existing structures. The key ingredient of any Research Center or Institute is “value added.”

Both Research Centers and Institutes provide an organizational base for university mission-related activities in one or more academic areas. The personnel working in these Research Centers and Institutes pursue activities that may include, but are not limited to, interdisciplinary research involving faculty and students from a variety of internal administrative structures, offering continuing education activities related to their area(s) of interest, or facilitating efforts of the department, school, college, or university to obtain extramural funding in specific areas. Both serve as a formalized link between the academic community and the professional community in the area(s) of interest.

Neither Research Centers nor Institutes may include “UWG” in their names unless they are administered at the university-level. If they are administered by a college or department, and they are university-level entities, approval to use “UWG” in the title must first be received from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

A Research Center cannot be involved in the independent offering of credit courses or degree programs, while a Research Institute may be involved in the offering of credit courses and may offer degree programs.
3. Administration of Research Centers/Institutes

a. Administrative Unit

Research Centers and Institutes may be administratively located within a department, school, college, or other unit or report directly to a vice president.

b. Appointments

Research Center and Institute Directors will be appointed with standard review processes depending upon the executive officer to whom the Director reports.

4. Establishment of Research Centers/Institutes

a. Criteria

To establish a Research Center/Institute:

1. Describe a defined program that has the following elements:
   a. Measurable outcomes
   b. Defined policies and operating procedures
   c. A defined review process

The establishment of a Research Center/Institute is justified when it is clear that its mission supports and enhances the programs of the university. It must be demonstrated that the mission of the Research Center/Institute cannot be accomplished in an efficient and effective manner by existing departments, schools, colleges, centers, institutes, or other units.

b. Proposal Information

The creation of Research Centers/Institutes requires the submission of a proposal to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. Proposals must include the following:

1. A statement of the Research Center/Institute goals and describes how the criteria outlined above will be met.
   a. The statement of goals should include specific outcomes and criteria that will be used to measure progress toward those goals.

2. A statement of the administrative unit and the leadership position within that unit to which the Research Center/Institute reports.

3. A description of the process by which the Research Center/Institute will be reviewed. A review and report focusing on progress toward meeting the goals and outcomes must be completed annually. Thorough review of the viability of the Research Center/Institute must occur no less frequently than once every three years.
The Research Center/Institute may be reviewed:

- As an independent unit in Program Review;
- As part of the Program Review of the administrative unit;
- By the administrative unit; or,
- In another specified approved manner.

4. A statement of Operating Procedures and Policies. The policies and procedures should include a description of the structure, the roles and responsibilities of any participating units, an advisory committee structure, and the processes for appointment or reappointment.

5. A description of amounts and sources of anticipated income. Anticipated financial arrangements between the Research Center/Institute and other units, if any, should also be described. A projected budget covering the first three years of operation needs to be included and should detail expenditures and expected income.

6. A description of the faculty and staff necessary to initiate its programs and maintain its Projects for the first three years.

7. A description of the physical resources that the Research Center/Institute will occupy and utilize during its first three years.

8. A list of participating faculty, their home units, and their roles in the Research Center/Institute, including a description of the formal arrangements through which faculty will participate in Research Center/Institute activities, will be evaluated for promotion, tenure, and salary increases, and the extent to which each affiliated faculty member will have his or her salary contained in its budget.

9. Letters of support from affected departments, schools, colleges, or other units, and the administrator who will have oversight responsibilities.

10. A description of the responsibilities of any participating units.

5. Procedure

A proposal may be originated by any interested staff or faculty member but, prior to submission for formal review, should be submitted for recommendations and comments to the heads of those units whose faculty and staff are involved. It is recommended that the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects be consulted at the beginning of the process of establishing a Research Center/Institute for aid in developing the proposal. The route of review will depend in part on the originating source. For example, a proposal originating within a single college would need to be reviewed by the dean of that college. If a proposal originates from a faculty member crossing school or college lines, then it must be reviewed at the college level in each of the respective schools and colleges. If a proposal originates outside of the typical school or college structure and is linked to units within a school or college, it would be reviewed first at that school or college. From the
dean of the school or college, the proposal would then be sent to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects for review, then routed to the relevant vice president(s). The proposal would then be routed to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs who will make a recommendation to the President. If a Research Center or Institute proposal is approved, a copy of the proposal, with approvals, is required to be sent to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects for its records.

6. Annual Reports and Reviews

a. Annual Reports

Annual Reports are required to be submitted according to the accepted practices of their administrative units for all Research Centers and Institutes.

b. Reviews

Research Centers and Institutes that exist at the time of this policy, and have undergone reviews in the past, are required to review (and consider revising) their existing goals to specify how they are meeting the criteria specified above in 3a. The statement of goals must include specific outcomes and criteria that are being used to measure progress toward those goals (see 3b). In addition, existing Research Centers and Institutes are required to file annual reports as described above following their next review.

Research Centers and Institutes that exist at the time of this policy, but have never been reviewed, are required to undergo an initial review by the administrative unit, to be completed within three years of this policy. In preparation for this review, the Research Centers or Institutes must revise or create the statement of goals and select the review process as detailed above. Following the initial review, these Research Centers and Institutes will be required to file annual reports as described above. Review will occur no less frequently than once every three years.

Research Centers/Institutes created after July 1, 2011 will be reviewed as part of the normal cycle review as specified in their initial proposals (see 3b above). Review will occur no less frequently than once every three years.

The review report for a third year or normal cycle review of a Research Center or Institute is required to include a statement that continuation of the Research Center or Institute is either recommended or not recommended. If continuation is not recommended, the administrative unit head will decide whether to invoke the process for dissolution, described below.

c. Documentation

The annual report and all reviews of a Research Center or Institute will be made available to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects.
7. Recommendations for Changes or Dissolution

Recommendations for dissolution of a Research Center or Institute may be made either:

a. As a result of periodic institutional review that is consistent with program review guidelines; or,

b. Through typical department, school, college, or institutional processes.

Recommendations for dissolution will be made if a Research Center or Institute fails to meet the substantive conditions for its establishment or does not provide the “value added” requisite. Any such recommendations will include a statement on how affected faculty, staff, and students will be reassigned.

Recommendations for either significant changes in the mission or for the dissolution of Research Centers and Institutes will be reviewed by personnel in the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects who in turn will make a recommendation to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. All recommendations for change or dissolution require approval by the President before implementation.