

CENTERS AND INSTITUTES POLICY

Approved March 14, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION

Centers and Institutes complement and further enhance the academic, research and service mission of the University of Houston-Clear Lake. This document sets forth the policies and procedures for establishing, operating, reviewing and terminating Centers and Institutes at UHCL.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION AND DEFINITIONS

University Centers and Institutes provide opportunities for faculty, staff, students and community members to engage in multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, instructional and/or public service endeavors.

Even though the terms *Center* and *Institute* are used interchangeably, Institutes may be broader in scope and could contain smaller Centers within.

III. POLICY

- A. A Center or Institute is an organization that engages in scholarly activities (e.g., education, intellectual advancement, and/or research) which support the mission of the University.
- B. A Center or Institute may be identified primarily with one discipline, but can also be multidisciplinary. It can engage in a variety of activities providing opportunities for new interrelationships within the Colleges, the University, community or other educational institutions.
- C. A Center or Institute may be established at the College or University level, as approved by the President's Office.
- D. A Center or Institute may be supported by institutionally allocated funds or depend entirely on funding by outside agencies and foundations (all Centers or Institutes must include a business plan as part of their initial establishment proposal).
- E. All Centers or Institutes must have an Advisory Council that makes recommendations regarding programs or funding priorities, provides assistance with fundraising and general guidance on its functioning. The structure of the Advisory Council shall be outlined in the Center or Institute's proposal. The advisory council does not have financial, governing or hiring authority.
 1. Advisory Councils for University-level Centers or Institutes shall consist of at least one full-time faculty member from at least two Colleges. They may also include any number of additional faculty from associated disciplines, Programs, Departments or Colleges. Community members, alumni, staff and other relevant parties can be included.
 2. Advisory Councils for College-level Centers or Institutes shall consist of full-time faculty from associated disciplines, Programs or Departments. They may also include faculty from other Colleges, community members, alumni, and other relevant parties.
- F. The approval process of a Center or Institute requires that it proceed through the shared governance process and final approval rests with the President of UHCL or their designee. The agreement between a Center or Institute and the President (or their designee) must be in writing and must provide that the President (or their designee) approves of the creation, existence and purposes of the Center or Institute. It must include at least the following:

1. That the Center or Institute may not duplicate the activities of any Department, Program, Center, Institute, or related unit of a component University within the University of Houston System.
2. That the Center or Institute is subject to all policies and procedures of UHCL, the Board of Regents, and UH System Administration, and must submit to reporting and auditing requirements as established by UHCL and/or UH System.
3. That the Center or Institute may not conduct activities that do not, in their entirety, support the mission of the University of Houston-Clear Lake.
4. That the Center or Institute will submit an annual report with updated contact information for its Director and Members by January 15 to the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. College-level Centers or Institutes will submit an annual report to the respective Dean.
5. That every fifth year the Center or Institute will submit a cumulative report on the effectiveness of the Center or Institute in fulfilling its mission. The charter will not automatically renew, but instead will be renewed based upon performance according to the five-year report. As part of the report, the Center or Institute will submit a business plan and analysis relating planned pursuits to actual results.

G. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will maintain a list of recognized Centers and Institutes.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. To establish a new Center or Institute, a University member or team should develop a proposal that will include a business plan with a five-year budget. The proposal should outline the process to establish, and the policies to operate and terminate the Center or Institute. Furthermore, appropriate fiscal controls should be introduced and the plan to oversee the scholarly activities should be shared.

B. The proposal must be approved by the Department Chairs and/or Dean(s) of the Department(s)/College(s) involved and submitted to the Office the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The Provost will act on the proposal and submit it into the shared governance review process within three months.

C. Each Center or Institute must have policies to ensure that the operations conform to state statutes and regulations, Board of Regents policies, UHS administrative memoranda, and UHCL policies.

D. Proposal Content: The proposal must entail a narrative stating the Center's or Institute's mission and objectives (including specific outcomes and criteria used to evaluate progress towards objectives), the leadership positions, a list of faculty and other participants, and an indication of how the center or institute will be funded. The following operational policies and components should be included:

1. Introduction – presents a reason for the existence of the proposed Center or Institute.
 - a. Provide a brief overview of the scholarly and educational area of focus.
 - b. Provide a brief history of the scholarly and educational area in general and at UHCL specifically.
 - c. What other Universities/entities claim this area of scholarly and educational endeavor as an area of expertise?
 - d. How will this Center or Institute be differentiated from its competitors?

- e. How will this Center or Institute respond to needs not currently being addressed by the competitors?
 - f. What are the competitive obstacles to success?
2. Goals and Objectives – the benefits to the University of Houston-Clear Lake should be presented along with the benefits to the faculty involved.
 - a. What are the goals and objectives of this Center or Institute, and how would they be achieved?
 - b. How will this Center or Institute fit into the University, including any connected or associated Departments and Colleges within UHCL?
 - c. How will UHCL’s existing strengths be leveraged in forming this Center or Institute?
 3. Organization, governance, and membership: Membership can include both tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty, as well as staff, students, and community members. The role of the members in the Center or Institute should be defined and standards should be set for involvement. Center or Institute members should be participants in the proposed activities.
 - a. Describe the proposed Center or Institute hiring plan in terms of staffing (e.g., faculty, post docs, students, staff).
 - b. How will the Center or Institute be managed and by whom?
 - c. Describe the administrative organization of the Center or Institute, including:
 - i. the rules governing to whom the Center or Institute reports,
 - ii. how the Director is chosen, appointed and terminated, the role of the Director,
 - iii. how Advisory Council is constituted and the frequency of meetings of the Advisory Council members,
 - iv. rules governing membership of the Center or Institute, how prospective members will join or leave, and the role of the members in the Center or Institute of ensuring that information on work done by members of the Center or Institute is available to the appropriate administrators, Department Chairs and Deans for deciding on increments, salary adjustments, promotions and tenure.
 - d. The composition (titles, affiliations, roles) of the Advisory Board members as well as regular Center or Institute members – a listing along with a curriculum vitae should be submitted.
 - e. Describe any relationship with industry or other organizations, if applicable.
 - f. Describe the procedures for the dissolution of the Center or Institute.
 4. Budget and Fiscal Accountability – The operating budget of the Center or Institute should be submitted for the first year. A five-year budget should be submitted in addition to the operating budget. Provide documentation of financial operations and business practices of the Center or Institute, including statements on financial accountability and reporting responsibilities for operation of the Center or Institute. If the Center or Institute has plans to pursue external funding, it should be discussed with the Office of Sponsored Programs and/or Division of University Advancement. If internal funds are being requested, include the following:
 - a. What positions/faculty lines and amounts are necessary to fund the Center or Institute?
 - b. What additional personnel resources are required?

- c. What startup package (if any) is necessary to fund the Center or Institute?
 - d. Will the Center or Institute be bringing existing research dollars into the University with the targeted hires?
 - e. What funding agencies and opportunities exist for the research generated?
 - f. How will these funding opportunities be pursued (e.g., a strategic research development plan)?
 - g. What are the sources of these funds? (Pay particular attention to sources such as philanthropy, graduate student fund generation, federal initiatives, state line items, etc.)
 - h. Discuss the projected Return On Investment (ROI), if any.
5. Space – Physical space requirements should be identified.
 - a. Where will the new Center or Institute be housed?
 - b. What facilities, equipment, and technology are needed?
 6. Commitments – Departmental or College commitments should be described.
 7. Reporting Point – The proposal should state to whom the Center or Institute will report. If the Center or Institute will be primarily in one Department, then the Center or Institute will report to that Department Chair. If the proposed activity is primarily within one College, then reporting will be to the Dean of that College. A truly multi-College Center or Institute may report directly to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost must be consulted prior to submission of a request for establishment of a multi-College Center or Institute.
 8. Impact – how the new Center or Institute will impact the University of Houston-Clear Lake.
 - a. What are the specific impacts on UHCL’s mission?
 - b. What are the projected impacts on undergraduate and/or graduate student programs (e.g., new degree programs, new tracks in existing programs, increasing student involvement in research, ties in with the SACS QEP)?
 - c. What are the specific impacts on undergraduate and/or graduate student enrollments?

E. Each University-level Center or Institute proposal shall be submitted to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for review. Each College-level Center or Institute proposal shall be reviewed by its respective Dean, and then by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Then, the proposal will go through the Shared Governance process.

V. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Parties: The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every 5 years