

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**  
**GUIDELINES - CENTERS AND INSTITUTES**  
**March 17, 2008**

## **I. Introduction**

Centers and Institutes focus on domains of knowledge that reside within a discipline or are cross-disciplinary in scope. These are organizational mechanisms that can be used to provide greater depth in teaching and/or research to a focal area within a discipline, or to apply a broader vision to problems that cross traditional knowledge boundaries. Centers may help develop new areas of research that enhance faculty development, encourage interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to teaching and research, provide relevant focus for service to external and internal constituencies, and/or promote sharing of resources (e.g., equipment, labs) and collaboration across departmental and college boundaries.

## **II. Definitions**

**Institutes:** With some exceptions, an institute is an umbrella organization providing administrative support for two or more academic units that are working on related subjects. Institutes provide an array of services to a broadly defined population.

**Centers:** A college or university-wide unit that provides services to a specific population.

## **III. Types of Centers/Institutes**

Centers and Institutes are classified either as (1) State of Florida centers or institutes or (2) University of Florida (UF) centers and institutes.

(1) State of Florida centers or institutes have a state-wide mission, and receive state funds. In some instances they are established as a result of Legislative intent.

The State of Florida centers housed at UF are:

- University Press of Florida

For information on the State of Florida centers and institutes refer to Board of Governors Regulation 10.015 ([http://www.flbog.org/about/\\_doc/regulations/RegsChapter10.pdf](http://www.flbog.org/about/_doc/regulations/RegsChapter10.pdf))

(2) University of Florida (UF) centers and institutes have a University-wide mission. UF centers and institutes may receive state funds based on the discretion of the Dean of the college to whom they report.

## **IV. Guidelines for Proposals to establish New Centers and Institutes**

It is appropriate and desirable to create centers when the resources are available and when the establishment of a center is consistent with the long-range plans of a college and/or the University. **The departments, colleges and the University should be selective in creating new centers.**

A. A University sanctioned center or institute is an extension of the University. It requires some degree of oversight to maintain mission concurrence within the organization. State of Florida Centers (receiving state funds) require Florida Board Of Education (FBOE) approval since state funds are expended by the Center.

B. The center/institute should be closely tied to the research and educational mission and, when possible, to the strategic plan of UF (<http://www.president.ufl.edu/workPlan.html>). Proposals for new centers and institutes must facilitate the academic mission of UF by enhancing its teaching and research functions, fostering external fund raising, and/or facilitating interdisciplinary cooperation. These activities should be facilitated in ways that a current structure (department or college or existing center) cannot. In particular, UF expects that a proposal for a new center or institute will demonstrate how it will enhance UF's mission in a manner not being accomplished by existing programs.

The proposal should be no more than 10 pages in length. Appendix material may be provided as specified. The following information should be included in the text of the proposal:

C. **Mission Statement and Goals:** The mission of the center should be defined and the goals for research, teaching and public service explained. All three elements are not required for a center to be established but should be identified when they are anticipated to be part of the mission.

D. **Proposed Activities:** Describe the activities that are planned for the center (e.g., collaborative research on the topic of (X); the intent to generate interdisciplinary resources, to design courses, to develop an interdisciplinary graduate program, attract postdoctoral fellows, create a lecture series; to establish a core service facility, provide greater focus and depth to a research area, etc.). Explain the plans to apply for external funding and identify the relationship of the center's activities with those of departments and/or other centers. Describe the advantages of the center over current structure (what unmet needs will be satisfied by having the center?) and the value of the center to the University and to the reporting unit. Describe, where possible, the synergistic and collaborative efforts existing amongst the members of the proposed center. Also describe their record in successfully garnering extramural funds.

E. **Reporting Structure:** The proposal for a new center or institute must include a reporting structure and describe the logic of that structure at UF. In particular, the proposal should outline to whom and through whom the center or institute reports. The proposal should demonstrate appropriate levels of commitment and interest from relevant departments, colleges, or other stakeholders.

A new center or institute will in general, report to the dean of the college unless it is a campus-wide center or institute in which case it would report to the relevant Vice President (Vice President Health Affairs, Vice President IFAS, Vice President for Research or the Provost ). Any campus-wide centers should be discussed with the relevant vice president(s) prior to producing a proposal.

F. **Administrative structure:** The position of the center/institute within the University/college/department must be explained with the lines of accountability and responsibility clearly indicated. Each center should design its own administrative structure in consultation with the relevant department chair(s) and dean. However, it is expected that each center/institute will have at a minimum, a director and an advisory committee.

1. The director must provide leadership and guidance for the direction of the research and facilitate interaction among faculty, staff and students. He/she should seek effective means of communication and collaboration, create an efficient organizational structure, and work to identify funds to sustain and expand upon the center's activities. The director is expected to be the primary contact between the center and the reporting authority. The director for a new center will be considered acting until officially appointed by the reporting official (dean or vice president).
2. The functions of the advisory committee will vary according to the mission of the center/institute, needs of the director and the requirements of the unit to which the center reports.
3. Large centers that involve several colleges and departments should form an executive committee of the involved chairmen and/or deans; in certain cases, outside advisory groups are desirable. The roles that these committees will play should be clearly specified in the proposal.

4. Center Membership All members of the center, their academic affiliations, and area(s) of expertise, should be listed in an appendix document.

G. The proposal should describe the adequacy of the space and facilities for the center or institute and address needs for additional space required to achieve the goals of the center or institute.

H. The proposal should include a budget plan. Particular attention should be given to the long-term financing, particularly if start-up funds are being requested.

1. For all centers and institutes, the proposal should indicate the source of funds utilized – whether from the state budget, grants and contracts, and/or fees. The proposal should indicate whether the funding is currently in place or if new funding is needed. If new funding is needed, the source of the new funding must be identified.
2. For all centers and institutes, the proposal should indicate whether the center wishes to receive indirect cost return. The proposal must provide adequate justification for indirect cost return. The return mechanism will be in accord with established University of Florida policy. Centers that have been approved by Deans of the participating colleges, the VP for Research, and the Provost, but are awaiting final approval, are also eligible to receive indirect cost dollars, for a period not to exceed 2 years.
3. Indirect cost returns to the center must be agreed upon by the chair of the department, Dean of the College, the Provost and the Vice President for Research. Indirect cost returns may vary, with a maximum of 7.5 percent. Please be aware that because indirect costs are returned to the colleges, returns to the center are charged as a cost to the college in which the Director/PI has their academic home. The dean of the Director/PI's college must approve the indirect cost return to any center.

I. Requirements for State of Florida and UF Centers and Institutes vary and information regarding their differences and lines of formal approval can be obtained by contacting the Provost's Office. Generally,

1. State of Florida Centers and Institutes must be approved by the relevant Dean(s), the relevant Vice President(s), the Vice President for Research, the Provost, Council of Academic Vice Presidents, and the Council of Presidents. The Chancellor shall consider the deliberations of the Council of Presidents in requesting institute/center approval from the Board of Education and in requesting Legislative funding for the institute/center.

2. UF Centers and Institutes must be approved by the relevant Dean(s), the relevant Vice President(s), the Vice President for Research, the Provost, and the President. Because centers and institutes require a formal proposal process and review and approval by the participating departments, the college and the offices of the Vice President for Research and Provost, only those entities that have gone through this process may call themselves a 'center' or 'institute'.

Exceptions such as federal awards that require the naming of the activity as a "Center" should be discussed with the appropriate administrators.

J. Forms to apply for a center or institute can be obtained from the web at [www.ir.ufl.edu/centers/guidelines.htm](http://www.ir.ufl.edu/centers/guidelines.htm).

## **V. Guidelines for Submission of Annual Reports by Centers and Institutes:**

The Office of Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Research and the Florida Board of Governors require that all centers and institutes submit an annual activity report. When more than one university is affiliated with a center/institute, the host university is responsible for submitting a comprehensive report.

## **A. Annual Reporting requirements to the Florida BOG (for All Centers /Institutes)**

An annual report (July 1 through June 30) is to be submitted for each Center/Institute. All reports are to be filed electronically through the Florida Board of Governor's (BOG's) Expertnet system at the end of each calendar year for the previous fiscal year. The annual reports will be coordinated through the University of Florida's Office of Institutional Planning and Research. Each Center/Institute will be issued a username and password to enable the updating of information.

### 1. Directory Information and Mission and Areas of Focus

- a. Provide the name of the institute/center. Provide the name and title of the director, the address, telephone number, SUNCOM number, fax number, e-mail address, and web site address for the institute/center.
- b. Indicate the Type of institute/center.
- c. Indicate the academic discipline(s), by 5-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code(s), most closely affiliated with the center/institute.
- d. Provide a list of all universities that are affiliated with the center/institute.
- e. Provide a brief mission statement for the institute/center (75 words or less).
- f. Identify key terms/phrases that indicate the major areas of focus for the center/institute. These terms will be used as identifiers in a searchable database.

### 2. Staffing and Budget Information

- a. Provide actual expenditures, number of positions, and rate for the prior fiscal year. (Separate position and budget data should be submitted for each university when more than one university is affiliated with an center/institute).
- b. Provide estimated expenditures, number of positions, and rate for the next fiscal year. (Separate position and budget data should be submitted for each university when more than one university is affiliated with an center/institute).

## **B. Additional Reporting Guidelines for State of Florida Centers /Institutes**

In addition to the information submitted through the Expertnet system to the Florida BOG, in general annual reports for State of Florida Centers /Institutes must include the following information:

### 1. Mission and Areas of Focus for the Center/Institute

Summary of how the Center/Institute coordinates intra- and/or inter-institutional research, service, and training activities that supplement and extend existing departmental instruction, research, and service programs--that is, how the institute/center allows faculty/staff/students to do what they could not do solely in a departmental or divisional setting.

### 2. Activities - Prior Year

Provide an evaluation of accomplishments related to the prior year's goals and any recommendations that emanated from a review of the Center/Institute. Include an overview of the prior year's research, service, and/or teaching and training activities. Attach any supporting documentation (e.g., scholarly activities and published research by primary authors, external funding sources, non-funded outreach, conferences).

Note: Goals/Activity information should be included for each university when more than one university is affiliated with an center/institute.

### 3. Activities - Coming Year

Provide a statement of proposed goals and activities for the next fiscal year--for example, proposed research and scholarly activities; teaching and training activities; service and outreach; internal (e.g., with departments, colleges, or other university units) or external networking (e.g., with other universities, community colleges, public schools; public-private partnerships); opportunities for students (e.g., assistantships, service learning); or financial goals (e.g., levels of external funding, potential contracts).

Note: Goals/Activity information should be included for each university when more than one university is affiliated with an institute/center.

#### d. Position Data

Provide an organizational chart that delineates the functions of all faculty and staff and includes any advisory boards. Provide a list of current advisory board members. Also provide copies of relevant governance documents. For proposals involving more than one institution, include such information for each participating institution as well as giving the Statewide structure.

Annual Reports for the State of Florida Centers/Institutes should be sent to the appropriate State agency with a copy to the Office of Institutional Planning and Research.

### C. Additional Reporting Requirements for University of Florida Centers/Institutes

In addition to the information submitted through the Expertnet system to the BOG, UF Centers /Institutes are required to provide annual reports as required by the Dean of the College to whom they report. The format and information required for these reports are specified by the Deans of the respective colleges.

## VI. Guidelines for Evaluation of Centers and Institutes

The University administration will evaluate Centers/Institutes on a cyclical basis. The Provost and Vice President for Research will evaluate each State of Florida Center/Institute every three (3) years. Deans will evaluate the University of Florida Centers/Institutes assigned to their respective colleges every five (5) years.

The submission **DEADLINE** for all evaluations will be approximately April 15 of each year. The Office of Institutional Planning and Research maintains the schedule of evaluations of all Centers and Institutes, and will coordinate the process with the respective deans and the office of the Vice President for Research. Completed evaluations should be uploaded to the evaluation web site <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/oirapps/centersandinstitutes/>. (Please note, this differs from the annual reporting coordinated by the Office of Institutional Planning and Research).

Evaluations will focus on the mission and stated objectives of the Center/Institute. The evaluator should consider the following items as they evaluate their individual Centers/Institutes. Additional relevant items may be included.

- Funded/proposed teaching/training grants in area of focus
- Funded/proposed research project grants in area of focus
- Investment of C/I funds in generating pilot data for grants
- Promoting and funding seminars with C/I funds (not customary dept seminars)
- Promoting and funding major conferences in area of focus
- Educational Core or Elective Courses offered in area of focus
- Funding graduate students from C/I funds
- Funding travel for students from C/I funds
- Providing core lab support for research of members
- Mentoring junior faculty
- Fundraising accomplishments
- Public programs and results of those programs

- National or international recognition received
- Exchanges, agreements or planning initiated

The evaluation should provide a brief critical review and evaluation of the Center/Institute's progress within the context of UF's mission of research, education, and service; and where possible, to the strategic goals of the Florida Board of Governors (<http://www.flbog.org/about/strategicplan/>). The review should also include an assessment of the return on investment of State dollars, if applicable. The Center/Institute should demonstrate how it adds value to the University that cannot be provided at the college, department, or division level.

Annual reports submitted by each UF Center/Institute to the Board of Governors (Section V.A) will also be used as a component of the evaluation. The most recent review cycle was completed on January 31, 2007. These materials will be made available to the Vice President for Research and the Provost along with your evaluation so they may complete the full review process.

The Vice President for Research (or designee) will review each Dean's evaluations of their respective University Centers/Institutes and will make recommendations on each Center or Institute's continued operation.

## **VII. Guidelines for the Disbanding of Centers and Institutes**

### **Disbanding a State of Florida Center or Institute**

State of Florida Centers and Institutes shall be disbanded at the recommendation of the Council of Academic Vice Presidents and upon the approval of the Board of Governors. In the event that a disbanded Center/Institute has been funded by the Legislature, the university must provide documentation to ensure that Legislative intent has been achieved and that the institute or center is no longer required. Fiscal information must be provided as part of the annual reporting process if the institute or center expends any funds during the fiscal year in which it is disbanded.

### **Disbanding a UF Center or Institute**

UF Centers and Institutes shall be disbanded following an evaluation by and at the recommendation of the Dean of the College to which it reports, with the approval of the Provost and the Vice President for Research. Indirect costs received by the disbanded Center/Institute will then be returned to the college initially charged with the indirect costs.

When a UF center or institute is disbanded, the University shall notify the Board of Governors. If a disbanded center/institute has been funded by the Legislature, the university must provide documentation to ensure that Legislative intent has been achieved and that the institute or center is no longer required. Fiscal information must be provided as part of the annual reporting process if the institute or center expends any funds during the fiscal year in which it is disbanded.