

Organization & Administration of Centers

Policy No.: 150-60

Effective: 2/11/13

POLICY:

A. Purpose & Functions of Centers:

To facilitate the accomplishment of its regular instructional function, the basic administrative organization of the university consists of colleges, departments, and interdisciplinary academic programs. These arrangements are appropriate to the primary mission of the university. However, there are other appropriate research, creative, and service functions that may be handled better by alternative administrative structures, such as centers or institutes in both academic and non-academic areas of the university. If center activities result in proposals for new degree or credit-bearing courses, the normal process for course development, adoption, and approval should be followed as specified in University policy.

The university has established the following guidelines for the formation, operation, monitoring, review and dissolution of centers. The term "center" applies to any alternative administrative structure whether the unit is known as a "bureau," "institute," "research station," "field station," or any other preferred terminology. The "appropriate administrator," referred to in these guidelines, is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean, or designee, or the appropriate division Vice President in the case of centers that report outside of Academic Affairs.

B. Types of Centers:

(There are 3 types of centers)

- **University center:** A university center is concerned with subject matter of sufficient breadth to involve disciplines and/or services from two or more colleges, or a college(s) working in conjunction with a non-academic area of the university. Administration of a university center may be assigned to an individual college or administrative unit head as determined by the appropriate Vice President.
- **College center:** A college center is concerned with subject matter and/or services confined primarily to disciplines or services organized within a single college.
- **Department center:** A departmental center is concerned with subject matter and/or services confined primarily to a single discipline or service area represented by an academic department or other non-academic area of the university. It is recommended that, in units where two or more centers are formed, consideration be given to establishment of a unit center in which each of the individual centers would operate as a sub-unit. Normally, these will be college centers.

C. Procedures for Formation of Centers:

A center is formed by the development of a charter by interested faculty and administrators and by the ultimate approval of that charter by designated University officers. A proposal to form a center should contain the following:

- the proposed name of the center appropriate to and descriptive of the its purpose;

- a comprehensive statement of the center's purpose, including its relationship to the mission of the University;
- identification of the “appropriate administrator” who shall be responsible for oversight of the center as discussed in this policy;
- a description of the responsibilities of the director of the center
- a statement of how the director and advisory group, if any, will be selected;
- a statement of the manner in which funds, which may accrue to the unit, will be accounted for and handled, and of the purposes for which any surplus will be expended;
- a statement of the resources required for the center, including space, personnel, and funding and the proposed sources of those resources;
- an outline of the report of the center's activities;
- the period of operation; without renewal a center charter cannot extend beyond June 30 of the fifth year following the center's establishment.

In consultation with the appropriate administrator, an advisory board may be established.

D. Approval Process:

Charter or re-charter proposals will be submitted for review and approval using the following process:

- The proposal will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate unit committee and the Dean.
- The proposal must be reviewed and approved by the Provost’s Council and the appropriate administrator.
- The proposal is then forwarded to the President, who has final authority of approval for all centers. As necessary, the President may consult with units prior to approval.

E. Responsibility for Handling Center Funds:

All funds must be received and expended in a manner consistent with the center's charter and with the regulations of the department, college, division, and university. Funds received in support of all center activities must be deposited in appropriate university accounts. Implementation of these requirements is the responsibility of the appropriate university administrator.

Center directors should provide financial information to the appropriate administrator (or unit financial manager) to allow for the timely preparation of management reports. Directors must authorize all center expenditures. Collection and expenditure of funds must be handled through the appropriate university accounting entity. Centers should provide sufficient resources to offset the costs incurred for center activities, including administrative and overhead costs, in accordance with campus cost recovery policies. Compensation of center directors and the assignment and compensation of faculty and staff supporting centers must be consistent with university policies and procedures.

F. Responsibility for Center Activities:

The appropriate administrator will be responsible for reviewing and approving center activities to ensure that they:

- contribute to fulfillment of the mission of the CSU and the campus;
- are consistent with generally accepted tenets of scholarship (e.g. subject to peer review);

- are in conformity with all applicable laws and regulations and with the campus risk management policy;
- are consistent with the charter of the center;
- do not compromise the autonomy of the University;
- adhere to University policy governing research misconduct (See: Policy for Responding to Allegations of Scientific Misconduct).

Center activities that necessitate the formation of an alliance or partnership with an external unit or agency must receive prior approval of the appropriate administrator before such activities are undertaken.

G. Authority and Responsibility of the Director:

The director shall be responsible for:

- submitting an annual report;
- oversight of center's activities to ensure achievement of agreed upon goals;
- provide consultation with advisory group, if any;
- the operation and management of the center, the proper handling of funds, and the financial soundness of the center;
- the review and approval of all expenditures;
- the approval of all payments of salaries, wages, or consulting fees; directors cannot approve their own salaries;
- managing the budget;
- insuring that the rates of pay for particular activities by employees, including faculty members do not exceed those allowed by University or Trustee regulations;
- making temporary substitutions of personnel in programs and obtaining prior approval from the appropriate administrator;
- managing all space, physical arrangements, production of marketing materials, and other support of programs and scholarly projects.

H. Annual Report:

Annually by September 15th, the director shall issue a written progress report, including a financial statement of operations. In a university center, the report must be distributed to the advisory group, the appropriate department chairs, the administrator in direct line of authority above the director, the Provost's Council, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or the appropriate division Vice President in the case of centers that report outside of Academic Affairs, and the President. In a college center, the report must be submitted to the advisory group, if it exists, all department chairs in the college, the college dean, the Provost's Council, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. In a department center, the report must be submitted to an appropriate department committee, the college dean, the Provost's Council, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or the appropriate division Vice President in the case of centers that report outside of Academic Affairs.

The Annual Report must include an executive summary of the center's programs and activities sufficient to make clear the nature of the various projects and activities. An appendix should include data on breadth and extent of involvement of faculty, administrators, and others (including students and off campus personnel) in its operation.

An income statement and balance sheet for the year must also be included in each Annual Report. In addition to the income statement and balance sheet prepared for the prior academic year, the annual report must also include a business plan for the upcoming academic year. Reviews of Annual Reports will involve comparison of reported activities and the stated goals of the center. Each reviewing authority must provide to the President a rationale for the approval or denial of the report. After the review, the reviewing authority will send written acknowledgment of receipt of the report and appropriate commentary to the director.

I. Responsibility and Authority of the Advisory Group:

The advisory group is expected to recommend general guidelines for all center programs and activities as specified in the original approval document for the center. The advisory group is expected to recommend to the director any activities that it determines will benefit the center, the university, or the community. In general, the advisory group will be a resource group to which the director can bring problems for discussion and recommendation. The advisory group is expected to conduct a pre-review of the center's programs and activities to determine whether or not they conform to the purposes stated in its charter and a post-evaluation.

J. Resources of Centers:

The University receives no special state funding for the operation of centers, which are adjuncts to the state-supported instructional program. Centers will be supported from external sources or through normal university budget processes. Reassigned time for center personnel may be used to the extent it is consistent with University and CSU policies, with the approval of the dean of the school in which such personnel have their academic appointments. In the case of a university center, reassigned time requires the approval of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Reassignment of employees reporting outside of Academic Affairs requires approval of the appropriate division Vice President. All space allocations are subject to review by the appropriate administrative officer.

K. Dissolution of Centers:

A center's charter must contain a termination date, which cannot extend beyond June 30 of the fifth year following its establishment or most recent renewal. In the absence of any action to renew the charter, it will expire on the termination date and its resources will revert to the next largest administrative unit (department for a departmental center, college for a college center, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for a university center, and appropriate division Vice President for centers reporting outside of Academic Affairs) for appropriate disposition.

Notwithstanding the specified termination date, a center may be dissolved at any time through the same process outlined in Section D above for approvals. In the event a center's operation should become inimical to the interests of the University, the President, after appropriate consultation, may terminate it at any time.

L. Renewal of Centers and Requests for Approval of Charter Modification:

Centers whose charters have expired may not continue activities. Centers seeking re-charter must:

- submit a proposal PRIOR to the charter termination date;
- provide updated information on each point listed in Section C of this document;
- include a justification for the proposed renewal and a new date of termination if renewal is approved;
- circulate the re-charter proposal for approval in the same manner as proposals for original charters, as described in Section D above.

Criteria for renewal include:

- evidence relating the extent to which the center fulfilled its original and subsequent objectives, and the extent to which operation of the center has conformed to these guidelines;
- information on the extent to which the center is not redundant or performing activities provided by other units within the University. Redundancy is a criterion for non-renewal of the center charter. At any time a charter modification is desired, approval must be obtained from all parties identified in Section D above.

M. Identification of Non-Profit Organizations:

An annual review by the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance of all non-profit 501(c) (3) organizations, which purport any affiliation with California State University, Northridge will be completed by August 15 of each year. This review will be conducted by using the non-profit organization search features found at Guidestar.com or a similar service. Following this review the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will be notified of all non-profit organizations that reveal any affiliation with California State University, Northridge.

Organizations using the name or trademark of the university will be required to implement a Memorandum of Agreement with the university detailing specific activity and services, administration and financial resources. All affiliations with non-profit 501(c) (3) organizations will be dissolved if such organizations do not become a campus-sanctioned entity under the provisions of the policy on the organization and administration of centers. Each Dean will be required to certify all non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations and any other enterprise or organization that are affiliated with their college to the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

N. Reporting of Centers and Institutes to the CSU Chancellor's Office:

All centers and institutes at CSUN will be listed in a directory on the Office of Research and Graduate website and will be maintained and overseen by the Associate Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies. The directory will indicate location of center, whether the center is active or inactive, date of charter ratification and the expiration of the charter. Annually the AVP of RGS will request Deans to verify the accuracy of the directory and changes will be incorporated as necessary. By September 15 of each year college deans will submit to the Vice Provost the completed annual reports of all centers in their college that comply to the mandated template. Any entity, regardless of division, that is affiliated with the campus and offers non-credit instruction, information, or other services beyond the campus community, to the public or to private agencies or individuals must be registered as a center and thus is mandated to be chartered according to campus procedures and must be identified in the directory. The Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies will provide a list of Centers and Institutes to the CSU Chancellor's Office when such a list is requested.

POLICY HISTORY:

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APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT