

SPECIAL REPORT

of the

**ACADEMIC PRIORITIES COUNCIL
AND THE
RULES COMMITTEE**

concerning

**CENTERS AND INSTITUTES:
COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON APPROVAL AND REVIEW**

Presented at the
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I. INTRODUCTION

The current policies of the University of Massachusetts Amherst with respect to Centers and Institutes are based on Trustee Document T96-096, as revised 10/9/96. This quite general document calls on the campuses to spell out more specific policies and procedures, and Sen.Doc. No. 97-027 is the University of Massachusetts Amherst's response. Although this document contains most of the relevant policies, issues such as "change of name" and "reduction or termination" are dealt with in the Course Approval Procedure Guide, Sen.Doc.No.90-064B and Sen.Doc.No.91.014B. Also, related procedures have been established by agreement between the Rules Committee and the central administration; these procedures are reflected in the relevant pages of the Faculty Senate website pertaining to Centers and Institutes.

In addition, the detailed procedures for terminating a Center or Institute, as distinguished from an academic program, have not been fully established. Although Centers and Institutes are mentioned in Sen.Doc.No.91-014B, Part III ("This section of the Report sets forth the procedures that are to be used when the reduction...of an academic unit [department, program, institute or center, hereinafter, referred to as "unit"] is under consideration...) it is worded as if departments, programs, institutes and centers should be treated similarly. This current report supersedes the above-quoted language by establishing a separate process for establishing the role of the Faculty Senate in the process of terminating a Center or Institute. Because funding, usually external, for Centers and Institutes varies over time, it would be inappropriate to establish a Faculty Senate role in the "reduction" of a Center or Institute. The processes described in this document are not to be construed as applicable to an academic department or an academic program.

This Special Report of the Academic Priorities Council and the Rules Committee accomplishes three goals: it consolidates and supersedes the previous policies and procedures adopted pursuant to T96-096; it identifies the criteria and the processes which should be used to identify Centers and Institutes that might be terminated; and it establishes the processes to be used to arrive at a Faculty Senate recommendation with respect to such a termination. The contents are related to, but different from Senate Document 91-014B, dated May 23, 1991. Whereas the 1991 document focused on the review of all academic programs, the current document focuses exclusively on Centers and Institutes.

As is the case for all other academic and administrative units at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Centers and Institutes are now subject to formal review. The present document provides a comprehensive policy on definitions, scope, creation, approval, name change, review and evaluation, continuation, and termination of Centers and Institutes.

II. Definitions

A. General

Centers and Institutes are organizational units created to foster activities related to research, outreach, or educational support that cannot be accommodated effectively and efficiently within existing structures. Centers and Institutes do not serve as tenure home for faculty, nor do they award degrees or offer courses for regular University credit. They may support the educational mission, however, through activities such as workshops, seminars, training programs, internships or laboratory experiences for students, or exploration of new approaches to teaching for incorporation into regular departmental offerings. Centers and Institutes may make personnel appointments other than for tenure-system faculty. All Centers and Institutes, regardless of their source of funding, shall be created, operated, changed and terminated in accordance with campus policy.

Centers and Institutes share the following characteristics: their activities are linked to the academic mission of the University and its long-range plans; their activities extend beyond the campus in some way, either through public service, funding or other resource arrangements; and their resources are sufficient to carry out their stated mission. While expenditure of campus general operating funds by Centers and Institutes is permitted, normally Centers and Institutes receive external support. Any commitment of personnel, space and other resources must have the prior and continuing approval of the appropriate chair(s), dean(s), and Vice Chancellor.

B. Institutes

An Institute is a distinct unit of substantial size that spans multiple colleges. Institutes may engage in a wide variety of research, public service, and educational support activities, typically in areas of broad concern. Institutes are frequently interdisciplinary in focus. Ordinarily, Institutes on the Amherst campus report to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement or to the Provost.

The mission of an Institute is the promotion of research on some subject of broad concern and, often, the communication of this knowledge to a broader public. Clear reporting lines and structure for responsible oversight must be established and endorsed by the Deans of all colleges participating in the Institute. An Institute often occupies its own identifiable physical space.

C. Centers

A Center is a subordinate unit within an existing department, school, college or institute whose department head/chair, director or dean has management oversight and appointing authority. Centers should make a significant contribution to the unit of which they are a part.

A Center should be established for the purpose of concentrating research, educational support and/or outreach efforts within a clearly defined academic area. It should have an adequate concentration of talent to carry out its mission. All documents, publications and websites should clearly identify the Center as being part of the parent unit.

III. Scope of Campus Authority Concerning Centers and Institutes

A. Scope

Every Center or Institute, whether a free-standing unit or a sub-units of a school, college, department or other organizational unit, and regardless of its source of funding, shall be included within the purview of campus policy.

B. Exceptions

There are three exceptions that involve the use of the name Center or Institute that do not conform to the definitions described here. The first are entities called "Centers" whose purpose is to provide various services to the campus community, such as day care centers or computer centers, the Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, the Fine Arts Center and the Learning Resources Center. The second involves names that have been "grandfathered" because of historical usage. The third involves names that have been specifically permitted, when required as a condition of support by an external agency.

IV. Creation and Approval of Center and Institutes

A. General

Campus approval of new Centers and Institutes shall be based, at minimum, on the appropriateness of the Center or Institute to the mission and goals of the campus, and adequacy of resources, including both capital investment and operating funds. The establishment of a new Center or Institute shall require the approval of the University President upon recommendation of the campus Chancellor and the Provost or other Vice Chancellor, following review and recommendation by the Faculty Senate.

B. Interim Approval

Interim approval can be granted, temporarily, pending confirmation of funding, by the Chancellor and Provost, based on a written request by the proposers that includes all information necessary for Faculty Senate review. Interim Approval is conditional, and it requires subsequent formal Faculty Senate

recommendation and formal approval by the Provost and Chancellor. Interim Approval shall expire at the end of 3 years, at which time the Center or Institute shall automatically be terminated unless Full Approval has been granted.

C. Proposal Content (General)

A proposal to establish any Center or Institute may be initiated by one or more faculty members or by the University administration. All proposals should provide the information described in the Institutes and Centers Approval Form (Form T). If responses to the items in Form T do not do so, other parts of the proposal should clearly address:

1. the purpose to be served and the needs to be met by the proposed entity;
2. the existence of an adequate concentration of talent;
3. the consistency with department, college, and or campus long-range plans;
4. the proposed relationship with other academic units on the campus, including the use of faculty on released time;
5. the potential resource needs of the proposed unit, including personnel, equipment, office and other space, telephones, library resources and use of the central computing resources.

D. Approval Procedure

The formal approval process begins with the submission of a detailed proposal (Form T: New Institutes & Centers Approval Form plus Form S: New Institutes and Centers Signature Sheet) to the Rules Committee of the Faculty Senate and a brief executive summary that will be incorporated in a 30-Day Letter. The proposal must then be reviewed at the following levels:

1. the Faculty Senate governance structure, including appropriate Faculty Senate councils and/or committees as determined by the Rules Committee, culminating in approval by the full Faculty Senate. (If the proposers have not named a department or college affiliation for the new unit, Faculty Senate councils or committees shall consult the relevant academic department(s) and obtain the approval thereof.)
2. the Provost.
3. the Chancellor.
4. the President.

If the proposal is approved, a copy of the signature sheet (Form S) and any conditions of formation will be forwarded to the originators of the proposal and all signatories. If the proposal is not approved, a written statement will be sent by the Provost to the originators and all signatories. In either case, all memoranda, the original proposal and the signature sheet will be placed in the permanent file for this proposed entity, held in the Provost's Office.

If any Institute or Center is proposed to be housed on the Amherst campus by some outside agency, legal body, or office (persons other than faculty members or administrators on the University of Massachusetts at Amherst campus), the date and circumstances must be recorded in writing, along with an official submission to the Faculty Senate as described above, and records relating to it placed on file in the Provost's Office.

E. Appointments

Regardless of the source of funds, all faculty appointments affiliated with Institutes, Centers or similar organizations that carry academic rank shall be reviewed and recommended by appropriate faculty peer groups (i.e., Departmental Personnel Committees and School or College Personnel Committees). For other professional appointments, the appropriate school or college administrator and department administrators shall be advised of the appointments.

F. Allocation of Space

The allocation of space for Institutes and Centers shall be treated in the same manner as other academic units.

V. Name Change

A. Name change to a name that more accurately describes the activities of the Center or Institute, those activities being essentially the same as those engaged in prior to the name change.

- 1. Procedures for such a name change should follow the procedures for the change of name for an academic program, with consideration of the change being conducted by the appropriate Councils of the Faculty Senate, as determined by the Rules Committee.**

B. Name change to a name designed to recognize a change or changes in the activities of the Center or Institute.

- 1. Procedures for this type of name change should include an evaluation of the proposed new entity by an Evaluation Committee similar to that used to review an existing Center or Institute, in addition to the procedures described in V. A1. above.**

VI. Review and Evaluation of Centers and Institutes

A. General Guidelines

Trustee policy (T96-096, as amended) requires that, beginning with academic year 1997-98, all Centers and Institutes shall be reviewed at least every five years by the Provost, on an initial schedule established by the Provost, with the results sent to the Faculty Senate as a Report for review and recommendation. Centers shall be evaluated on their success in meeting their own goals and objectives, as well as their substantive contribution to the campus mission.

B. Continuation of a Center or Institute

Once a Center or Institute has been reviewed, a recommendation to continue said Center or Institute must be approved by the President, upon recommendation of the Chancellor and Provost. Notice of such action shall be provided to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate.

C. Termination of a Center or Institute

Academic administrators may request termination of a Center or Institute for reasons such as a prolonged period of inactivity, insufficient level of funding, inconsistency between campus mission and stated purposes of the Center or Institute, misconduct of employees, and disappearance of clientele served. The campus administration shall review the proposed termination and forward it to the Faculty Senate for review and recommendation. The termination of a Center or Institute must receive approval of the Chancellor upon recommendation of the Provost; final action is the responsibility of the President.

D. Detailed Guidelines for Periodic Evaluation of an Existing Center or Institute

Periodic review of existing Centers and Institutes is conducted under the direction of the Provost in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement. They, together with faculty appointed from each School and College, comprise an Evaluation Committee that conducts the review, using a Self-Study as a basis for their work. The sequence of events is described below. A report is submitted by the Provost to the Chancellor making a recommendation concerning continuation of each Center or Institute. The Chancellor, in turn, makes a recommendation to the President of the University.

The general rubrics within which campus review takes place shall include:

- Confirmation that the Center or Institute meets the tests of appropriateness of the Center or Institute to the mission and goals of the University of Massachusetts Amherst;
- Considered judgment concerning the quality and effectiveness of the activities carried out by the Center or Institute.
- Assessment of the adequacy of resources available and the efficiency of expenditures carried out to achieve the organization's stated purposes.
- Recommendation regarding continuation, continuation with conditions, or termination.

E. Evaluation Committee

The following describes the composition and functions of the Evaluation Committee in completing the process of reviewing Centers and Institutes.

1. The Centers and Institutes Evaluation Committee shall include the Provost (Chair), the Vice Chancellor for Research (Vice Chair), and one faculty member from each college and school headed by a Dean on the Amherst campus.
2. Each faculty member shall be appointed by the respective Dean (after consultation with the relevant Department Head/Chair) and shall be a full-time member of the faculty with the rank of Associate Professor or higher.
3. Faculty members shall serve for a two-year term; faculty members may be reappointed for a maximum of five terms (10 years).
4. A faculty member appointed by a Dean to serve on this Committee shall not be a current Director of any existing Center or Institute; however, faculty participants in the activities of one or more of the campus-based Centers or Institutes are not excluded. Care should be taken in these appointments to avoid conflict of interest situations, and any faculty member who finds him/herself in a conflict of interest situation should immediately disclose the conflict to the Chair and Vice Chair, who will take appropriate steps to eliminate any real or perceived conflict of interest on the Evaluation Committee.

F. Duties and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Committee

A timetable for the review cycle will be established by the Provost's Office each academic year. Instructions for the Self-Study to be conducted by the Director of each Center or Institute under review will be sent to the Center/Institute Director by the Provost's Office at least four months in advance of review. On a case-by-case basis, individual evaluation criteria for the Self-Study and review may be added or waived at the discretion of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement.

1. A pair of Evaluation Committee members will be designated by the Chair as the Review Team to conduct the primary review of an individual Center or Institute. One Review Team member shall serve as the principal reviewer of a Center/Institute and the second member shall serve as the secondary reviewer. Each faculty member will normally be expected to serve as primary reviewer only once during each two-year term on the Evaluation Committee.

2. Each Review Team (primary and secondary reviewers) will meet with the Director, faculty members, and staff of the Center/Institute under review at the beginning of the process to discuss the Evaluation Committee's procedures and evaluation criteria.
3. The Review Team will review all written materials submitted by the Center/Institute under review, and it will draft a report to the Evaluation Committee concerning the strengths, challenges, and viability of the Center/Institute. The primary reviewer will have the principal responsibility for organizing the activities of the Review Team, calling meetings, conducting interviews and briefing sessions, and drafting a report to the full Evaluation Committee. The Review Team is expected to include one of the following recommendations in the report: a) approval for continuation; b) conditional approval for continuation, subject to certain requested changes; c) conditional termination, reversible upon the implementation of specified changes; d) termination.
4. After completing its Evaluation Report, but prior to its presentation to the Evaluation Committee, the Review Team shall meet with the appropriate Center/Institute Director(s), as well as the relevant Dean(s) and Department Head(s)/Chair(s) as appropriate, to discuss the Evaluation Report and whatever recommendation the Evaluation Team intends to submit. The Director(s), Dean(s) and Department Head(s)/Chair(s) may submit their own comments in response to the Review Team's report, and these comments will accompany the Review Team's report to the full Evaluation Committee.
5. After the Review Team has presented its report to the Evaluation Committee, a Center/Institute Director may request to meet with the full Evaluation Committee. That request should be made in writing within 14 days following the Evaluation Committee's discussion of the Review Team's report. The Chair of the Evaluation Committee may then schedule a meeting for the Center/Institute Director with the full Evaluation Committee. This meeting shall take place prior to a final decision by the full Evaluation Committee.
6. In cases where there is a positive report from the Review Team and a poll of all Evaluation Committee members reveals unanimous approval for continuation of the Center/Institute under consideration, the Chair may forgo a scheduled meeting with the Director.
7. The Evaluation Committee, after receiving the report of the Review Team, shall make a recommendation to the Provost regarding the future of the specific Center/Institute under review.
8. As specified in Sen. Doc. No. 97-027, the Provost then submits a summary report, with a recommendation, concerning the review of each Center or Institute to the Faculty Senate for its further deliberation and recommendation; copies should also be sent to the Director and relevant Deans and Heads/Chairs.
9. Recommendations to continue a Center or Institute must be approved by the President upon recommendation by the Chancellor and Provost, and such actions shall be reported to the Faculty Senate.
10. Recommendations to terminate a Center or Institute are subject to the additional procedures described in Section VII below.

G. Criteria and Measurements for Preparing the Self-Study

The Self-Study shall respond to the following topics, as they apply to the Center/Institute under review, with respect to its operation over the past five years. (It is recommended that no item's response should exceed a page or two; most should be handled as an executive summary.)

1. How does the Center/Institute under review contribute to the mission of the University of Massachusetts Amherst?
2. How successful has the Center/institute been in meeting its own mission, goals and objectives? Comment on the type and scale of activities or other accomplishments, and, if appropriate, in terms of organizational structure or change.
3. Have financial and other resources been adequate over the time period for the activities pursued? Are the operations running a deficit, and, if so, other than money, what other resources

has the campus provided (space, in-kind labor, access to phone, computer, other office machines and equipment, etc.)?

4. Have any investments from the campus operating budget leveraged other resources, financial or otherwise? If no direct campus funding resources are involved, have the external funding resources served to supplement campus funding for research, graduate support, or anything else?
5. Describe those you would identify as users, clients, or beneficiaries of the activities of the Center/Institute (such as students, private sector CEOs, other faculty, general public, etc.), and provide some sense of scale in terms of numbers for each grouping in a typical year.
6. Comment briefly on how you expect those users would evaluate the quality and impact of activities of the Center/Institute.

VII: FACULTY SENATE REVIEW OF THE PROVOST'S RECOMMENDATION FOR TERMINATION OF A CENTER OR INSTITUTE

This report establishes two sets of procedures for Faculty Senate review of a recommendation by the Provost for the termination of a Center or Institute. The first is a streamlined, fast-track procedure for non-controversial situations where there is no timely articulated objection concerning the Provost's recommendation to terminate a Center or Institute. The second procedure applies when there is an interested party or parties who articulate objections the Provost's recommendation. The Rules Committee, in consultation with the Academic Priorities Council, shall determine which procedure applies in any specific case.

A. Criteria for Selecting the Procedure to be Applied

1. Whenever the Provost recommends in favor of terminating a Center or Institute, the Provost will forward such a recommendation to the Faculty Senate Rules Committee; as an appendix, the Provost will provide the Evaluation Committee Report, as well as any formal communications received from Directors, Heads, Chairs, or Deans relating to this recommendation. The Rules Committee will seek advice from the Academic Priorities Council and, at its discretion, such other Councils as the Rules Committee deems appropriate, such Council(s) being requested to reach a decision as quickly as possible as to whether or not to endorse the Provost's recommendation.
2. Based on the information it has received, the Rules Committee, after consultation with the Academic Priorities Council, will determine whether the Provost's recommendation is non-controversial (i.e., there are no articulated objections), and thus eligible for the fast-track procedure, or whether the Provost's recommendation will be referred to the Normal Procedures (Section VII.B below).

B. Fast-Track Procedure for Faculty Senate Recommendation on Termination of a Center or Institute

1. If the Provost's recommendation has been deemed non-controversial by the Rules Committee, after consultation with the Academic Priorities Council, final Senate action on the Provost's recommendation for termination shall be taken by a formal vote of the Rules Committee, acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate, and specifically recorded in the minutes of the Rules Committee.

C. Normal Procedure for Faculty Senate Recommendation on Termination of a Center or Institute

The "normal" procedure for terminating a center or institute is given below in Steps 1-10. The entire cycle, from Step 1 to Step 9, is expected to be completed within a ninety-day period. In all instances, the references are to calendar days. The timetable provided in this document shall be advisory rather than prescriptive; it is intended to provide a framework for the process to be carried out.

- Step 1. Based on the Evaluation Committee Report, the Provost shall propose the termination of a Center or Institute by developing a comprehensive brief setting forth the reasons why termination is being proposed.

- Step 2.** The Center or Institute in question shall be given 14 days to provide an initial written response and to convene a meeting with the Provost and Dean to discuss the proposed termination. In preparing the initial written response to the Provost's brief, the affected Center or Institute shall address each of the issues listed in the brief, and label them accordingly.
- Step 3.** After the Center or Institute's response has been received, and if the Provost decides to proceed, he or she shall, within 7 days, cause an executive summary of the brief and the Center or Institute's response to be distributed to all faculty members within the relevant departments for Centers, and all faculty members within the relevant Schools or Colleges for Institutes. Individual members of the faculty may send comments to the Provost, within 7 days of receiving the executive summary.
- Step 4.** The Provost shall consider all the materials received and shall determine whether to proceed with a Faculty Senate review. Should the Provost decide to proceed with a Faculty Senate review, he or she shall, within 14 days of receiving the Center or Institute's response, forward the brief, the Center or Institute's response, and the comments submitted by other parties to the Faculty Senate Secretary.
- Step 5.** The Secretary shall forthwith advise the Rules Committee of the Provost's request and shall forward all relevant documents to the Academic Priorities Council.
- Step 6.** The Academic Priorities Council shall conduct a review, which shall include, but not be limited to, the use of all the criteria listed in "Criteria and Measurements for Self-Study Report" section of this report, and such special criteria as may be suggested by the unit. Relevant Directors, Heads, Chairs, and Deans, and representatives of the Center or Institute, shall be invited to meet with the Council.
- Step 7.** Within 42 days of the Council's receipt of the Provost's request, the Council shall prepare a preliminary report, which shall be sent to the Center or Institute involved. The Center or Institute shall be given 7 days to provide a response.
- Step 8.** Within 7 days of receiving the response, the Council shall prepare a Faculty Senate Special Report, which shall include a synopsis of the Center or Institute's response, if one has been submitted, and an appropriate motion, which shall be in the form of a recommendation to the Provost.
- Step 9.** The Academic Priorities Council shall submit its Special Report to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, who will transmit it immediately to the Rules Committee, together with a request that it be placed on the agenda of the next Faculty Senate meeting.
- Step 10.** Any Special Report or motion duly adopted by the full Faculty Senate shall be immediately transmitted as a recommendation to the Provost and Chancellor.

VIII. Final Disposition by the Chancellor and President

As provided in T96-096, as amended 10/9/1996, final authority to approve, continue, or terminate a Center or Institute resides with the President, upon recommendation of the Chancellor.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Special Report of the Academic Priorities Council and the Rules Committee concerning Centers and Institutes: Comprehensive Policy on Approval and Review, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 14-032.
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