Western Washington University
REVISED DRAFT Policies and Procedures for Academic Centers and Institutes

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I. Purpose of this Document

Academic centers and institutes are important entities that support the mission and goals of the University. Their many objectives include: enhancing the conduct of faculty and student research, creative activities and scholarship, supporting the instructional programs of the university through external funding and outreach, enhancing the university’s ability to obtain external funding, and providing for and coordinating public service programs. By supporting the scholarly and service interests of the faculty, librarians, staff, and students of the University, centers and institutes make significant contributions at the local, regional, national, international and/or global levels.

The effective administration of academic centers and institutes requires that there be standard policies and procedures for their creation, supervision, operation, and continuation. The purpose of this document is to set forth some guidelines for administering academic centers and institutes at Western Washington University. Section II presents an overview, including some definitions, purposes, and principles of governance for centers and institutes. Section III outlines the process for preparing and reviewing proposals for new centers and institutes. Existing centers and institutes are subject to review and evaluation as outlined in Section IV. Key questions for review of new or existing centers and institutes are given in Section V. Finally, Section VI discusses the termination of centers and institutes.

II. Overview of Academic Centers and Institutes

A. Definitions [the three center directors I consulted disagree with the definition of centers and institutes below, though they recognized that there should be a definition to avoid the proliferation of same. In their experience, centers tend to be broad, and institutes more narrowly focussed. I found that there are many different definitions in use in universities around the globe. There's no right answer but that which is acceptable at WWU. I made some minor adjustments in the language.]

Academic centers and institutes are units established to support and complement the academic programs of the University over a number of years. Their activities must fall within the mission and goals of the University and of the academic unit(s) with which they are associated. The following definitions apply to all newly developed centers and institutes. (The definitions are elaborated in Attachment A)
1. “Center” is a designation reserved for entities within a single department or college, with a narrow focus, which could be any of the three basic functions—research/creative activities, curriculum/pedagogy, or outreach.

2. “Institute” is a designation reserved for entities at the collegiate or university level, and entities in partnership with external agencies, that are broadly focused, with a mission that includes multiple functions across research/creative activities, curriculum/pedagogy, and outreach.

The current WWU entities below (effective fall 2009), titled as centers or institutes, would not be required to change their names. It is important to note that they may not conform to the above criteria and should be examined to determine whether they would be covered by this guideline.

1. Center for Economic Education, CBE
2. Small Business Development Center, CBE
3. Center for Economic Vitality, CBE, community partners
4. Center for International Business, CBE
5. Center for Economic and Business Research, CBE
6. Border Policy Research Institute, VP-Research
7. Center for Canadian American Studies, CHSS
8. Ralph Munro Institute, CHSS, Political Science
9. Center for Cross-Cultural Psychology, CHSS, Psychology
10. Western Institute for Social Research, CHSS, Psychology
11. Critical Junctures Institute, CHSS, Sociology, partnership w Peace Health
12. Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, CHSS, History
13. Center for East Asian Studies, CHSS
14. Vehicle Research Institute, CST, Engineering Technology
15. Mount Baker Volcano Research Center, CST, Geology
16. Northwest Consortium for Technological Innovation and Development, CST, Chemistry
17. Internet Studies Center, CST, Computer Science
19. Shannon Point Marine Center, Provost
20. Karen W. Morse Leadership Institute, Provost
21. Center for International Studies, Provost
22. Center for Law, Diversity and Justice, Fairhaven
23. Institute for Watershed Studies, Huxley
24. Institute of Environmental Toxicology, Huxley
25. Resilience Institute, Huxley
26. Institute for Spatial Information and Analysis, Huxley
27. Educational Institute for Democratic Renewal, Woodring
28. Northwest Center for Holocaust, Genocide and Ethnocide Education, Woodring
29. Center for Education, Equity and Diversity, Woodring  
30. Ershig Assistive Technology Resource Center, Woodring  
31. Northwest Children’s Literature Clearinghouse, Woodring

In addition, the university maintains ongoing, internally funded faculty and administrative units that support academic programs and student life. Such programs have other mechanisms of review and hence are not subject to the terms of this document. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Center for Instructional Innovation, Center for Service Learning, the Counseling Center, the Center for Education, Equity and Diversity (Woodring College), Professional Development Resource Center (Woodring), the Career Services Center, University Archives and Records Center, WWU Student Health Center, Student Technology Center, Child Development Center.

Academic centers and institutes may also perform certain functions ordinarily carried out by other academic and administrative units, such as organizing conferences and meetings, conducting research and public service activities and managing training programs.

Centers and institutes do not typically confer academic degrees or certificates, have jurisdiction over courses or curricula, or offer formal courses for credit. However, they may participate in development and/or supervision of related interdisciplinary, cooperative or joint minors and majors.

Centers and institutes are expected to generate support from external grants, contracts, participant fees, and other sources of revenue. The proportions of University and external support expected are determined by the Provost after consultation with the Dean and the President, at the time that the center or institute is established, and are subject to revision at the time of reviews.

Centers and institutes must have ongoing programs of activity that extends beyond a few projects of limited duration and have the potential for diverse sources of support over an extended period of time. A timeline for projects and financial support must be submitted when the center or institute is proposed and must be reviewed annually once the unit is established. The continuation of University support is contingent on satisfactory progress toward meeting the proposed goals and timelines.

**B. Functions of Academic Centers and Institutes**

Applications to create new centers and institutes and review of existing centers and institutes will include an assessment of the extent to which the following functions are fulfilled:

1. To provide programmatic efforts that give identity and focus not fully embodied in specific undergraduate or graduate programs.
2. To provide a mechanism and platform for outreach activities.

3. To facilitate and improve the ability of faculty members’ to obtain external funding.

4. To stimulate interdisciplinary scholarship, research, creative activity, and interactions.

5. To support student engagement in community, regional, or global issues.

6. To enhance the University’s visibility and identity in strategic areas.

C. Governance

1. Director. A director of a large institute or center may hold a full time administrative exempt appointment as well as a back-up tenured appointment in the faculty. However, a full time faculty member may head an academic center or institute as a director for a portion of his/her assignment, subject to the provisions of the UFWW collective bargaining agreement. Each director reports to an Administrative Authority designated by the Provost. The Administrative Authority serves as the supervisor for the professional responsibilities assigned to the director, and monitors and evaluates the performance of the center or institute. For centers and institutes whose core faculty and staff come primarily from one college, the Administrative Authority is generally the Dean of that college or a designee. In cases where the center or institute draws on faculty and staff from multiple colleges, the Administrative Authority is generally a vice provost. In all cases, the Provost has final responsibility for assigning the Administrative Authority and approving the director. The Provost’s review will help to reduce redundancy and to facilitate intercollege and off campus partnerships.

While there is no limit on the length of service for a director, annual reappointment is at the discretion of the Dean or Provost. If appropriate, directors may receive course release time and/or stipend upon the recommendation of the Administrative Authority and with the approval of the Provost in accord with the WWU-UFWW Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Directors prepare a report of their activities at the end of each academic year and are evaluated by the Administrative Authority. And if the director is a faculty member, the evaluation shall be in accord with Section 17.3 of the CBA. The documentation of activities should include specific measures of the accomplishments for that period, including relevant quantitative data on activities and outcomes (e.g. participation in center programs). Attachment B provides General Guidelines for Directors of Centers and Institutes.

2. Advisory Board or Council. Centers and institutes may be directed to establish advisory boards or councils. Prior to inviting external people to participate on such
boards or councils, the director must discuss the proposed board or council members with the Administrative Authority and Vice President for Advancement to avoid overuse of the same individual and other possible conflicts of interest. Advisory boards and councils are subject to all relevant University policies and procedures.

Centers and institutes must comply with all applicable University policies. Centers and institutes that receive federal funds must also comply with federal policies.

III. Proposals for New Academic Centers and Institutes

A. Procedure: The following procedure will be used to review proposals for new academic centers and institutes.

1. Faculty interested in establishing a new center or institute shall write a two-page pre-proposal and submit that to the appropriate Department Chair(s). After discussion and refinement, the pre-proposal will be forwarded to the appropriate Dean(s), and if the pre-proposal is deemed to warrant further consideration, to the Provost. This pre-proposal shall include:
   a. Proposed center or institute name.
   b. Names of the faculty members proposing the center.
   c. Statement of purpose (one paragraph) as it relates to the functions of centers and institutes in Section IIB.
   d. Brief justification and expected impact.
   e. List of goals for the center.
   f. Example of activities.
   g. Expected budget and funding sources.

2. In consultation with the proposing faculty and their Department Chair(s), the Dean(s) and/or the Provost will decide whether to encourage the development of a full proposal.

3. If encouraged to proceed, the interested faculty members will then prepare a proposal according to the guidelines below.

4. If the center or institute proposal requires resources for operation, the proposal will also be sent to the UPRC and to Budget Planning for review and consideration for funding.

5. The Provost’s Council (Provost, Deans, Vice Provosts) will meet and consider whether to support the proposal considering the key questions provided in Section V.

6. If the Provost decides in favor of establishing the proposed center or institute, s/he will bring the proposal and the endorsement to the President and cabinet
for final approval.

B. Proposal Content: A proposal for the establishment of a new center or institute must address the key questions in Section V, below. The proposal must include the following sections:

1. **Purpose and Justification.** A statement of purpose and justification, including the significant local, regional and/or national contributions the center or institute intends to make, and why creating a center or institute best serves the purpose.

2. **Goals and objectives.** These should be sufficiently concrete to serve as criteria for evaluation of the performance of the center or institute.

3. **Distinguishing characteristics.** Distinguishing activities and/or approaches to problems and issues.

4. **Organizational structure and governance plan** (eg: Director, Administrative Authority, Advisory Board, if any), including a list of current faculty, staff, and other key personnel, both University and non-University, directly involved.

5. **Partner Organizations.** For centers and institutes formed in partnership with other public or non-profit external entities the proposal must specify the responsibilities of the sponsoring organizations, including for financial resources, personnel and space.

6. ** Proposed Budget,** including projected sources and amounts of income, university support, and expenses.

7. **Assessment Plans:** Description of the measures that will be used to assess the success of the center or institute in meeting its goals and objectives, how the information will be collected, and a schedule for assessment and plan for dissemination of the results.

8. **Support.** Letters or expressions of support from interested external constituents and on-campus faculty or Chairs in departments with programs related to the center or institute.

IV. **Review and Evaluation**

An annual report must be prepared and submitted to the Administrative Authority. The reports should present accomplishments relative to the goals and objectives specified in the proposal to create the center or institute as described in Section III, or as subsequently modified.
Centers and institutes must participate in a program review after each of the first two years, and then at least once every five years. For existing centers and institutes the Provost will establish a schedule for the reviews so that a five-year cycle of review is established. The program review shall address the key questions in Section V and consist of two parts.

1. Highlights of the center’s or institute’s activities, outcomes, and accomplishments since the previous review (if any). This may include relevant data such as participation in the center or institute’s programs, perspectives from people outside of WWU who are impacted by the center or institute, documentation of revenue and expenses, and other evidence associated with the center or institute’s activities, including external evaluation that assesses its contribution to the field of study.

2. A strategic plan that addresses the future attainment of goals and any changes in mission or scope.

Following the submission of the annual reports and the program reviews, the director meets with the Administrative Authority to discuss any changes in the mission, goals or objectives of the center or institute and plans for addressing problems and concerns including long-range financial viability. The Administrative Authority makes recommendations to the Provost for continuation, modification, or termination of the center or institute. The Provost will consult with the President prior to determination of final disposition.

V. Key Questions for Review of New and Existing Academic Centers and Institutes

1. Does the center or institute fulfill the required purposes and at least one of the other purposes listed in Section IIB?

2. How does the center or institute strengthen the university’s activities and contribute to the mission?

3. How feasible or successful is the plan for attracting external funding or revenue?

4. What are the measures of success, how are they monitored, and how well are they achieved?

5. Are faculty involved in more than one discipline? If so, what is the organizational structure for facilitating this collaboration?

6. How does the center or institute interface with other centers and institutes and/or academic departments on campus? To what extent is there
communication with all interested parties including the Department Chairs?

7. What are the costs associated with startup or maintenance of the center or institute?

8. What are the space requirements for the operation of the center or institute?

9. What impact does the center have on other programs?

10. What is the likely impact on university services? (eg: IRB review, Environmental Safety, Risk Management)

VI. Termination of Centers and Institutes

Centers and institutes exist with the approval of the Provost and President and may be terminated for any reason at the discretion of the Provost and President. The agreements creating Centers or Institutes in partnerships with non-university entities must address the parties’ responsibilities and authority to terminate. Continuation of a center or institute does not guarantee continuation of University funding or other support. Centers and institutes that do not undergo a five-year program review will be automatically terminated.
Attachment A

General Definition of WWU Centers and Institutes
[Requires review and consensus]

1. Centers
   a. “Center” name reserved for entities within a single department or college
   b. Centers should have a narrow focus, which could be any of the three basic functions—research/creative activity, curriculum/pedagogy, or outreach
      i. Centers should materially contribute to the mission of the unit of which it is a part, on the assumption that the overall unit contributes to the mission of the university
   c. Centers should be funded by the unit of which it is part (or with private money, with the responsibility for raising of such funds at the departmental or collegiate level)
   d. The reporting relationship for centers should be as decentralized as possible
      i. Departmentally housed centers report to the chair, who reports to the dean as necessary.
      ii. Collegiate centers report to the dean
   e. Decisions on the approval of centers also should be as decentralized as possible

2. Institutes
   a. “Institute” name reserved for entities at the collegiate or university level
   b. Institutes should be more broadly focused, with a mission that includes multiple functions across research/creative activity, curriculum/pedagogy, and outreach
      i. Institutes should materially contribute to the mission of the university in ways that are not possible with the current organizational structure
   c. Institutes should be funded at the collegiate or university level, with decision-package and/or private money sought
   d. The reporting relationship for institutes should be inclusive of the university units contributing to the institute
      ii. If one college, the institute reports to the dean
      iii. If more than one college, the institute reports to multiple deans, who report to the provost as necessary, with the provost or designee providing coordination
      iv. If the institute is broadly based, it should report to the provost or designee
   e. Decisions on the approval of institutes should be inclusive of the university units contributing to the institute
      v. Specific criteria should be established for the approval of institutes
1. In particular the link with the university’s mission and funding sources should be well established for approval.

3. General
   f. Faculty should not have primary or joint faculty appointments in centers or institutes, although faculty functioning as directors (see below) should have administrative appointment in the organization, with the faculty line remaining in the home department.
   g. Centers and institutes should not offer degrees as entities but should facilitate the offering of degrees.
      vi. Cross-college institutes in particular can facilitate joint and dual degrees.
   h. Institutes and centers housed at the collegiate level should have staff/infrastructure separate from the entity in which they are housed.
   i. Centers and institutes should be reviewed for continued relevance of their mission and effectiveness in fulfilling their mission every five years.

Center or Institute Director

1. Centers and institutes should have at their head a director with faculty rank.
2. The director may hold an administrative exempt appointment or an “Academic Program Director” appointment within the meaning of the CBA. The terms and conditions of employment for the director, including whether covered by the faculty contract or treated as academic administrators, will be specified in the appointment documents.
3. In general, directors of centers or institutes are responsible for directing the activities of an institute or center either full-time or part-time in addition to other faculty duties. Academic program directors are “responsible for leadership of the program, including planning, curriculum, staff development and evaluation, managing the program’s resources, developing and maintaining program records, providing information to the Provost or dean in a timely manner for use in personnel and program resource decisions, and facilitating the harmonious functioning of the program.” (CBA, Sec. 17.2).
4. While a director may report to an Academic Administrator (e.g., President, Dean) regarding budgetary or other administrative matters, s/he functions independently regarding other matters affecting the direction of the research/creative activity of the center or institute.
5. In larger centers and institutes a Director may supervise professional staff and/or research staff.

In addition to academic program directors, there may be a need for faculty to coordinate small centers or institutes, or programs or functions within centers or institutes. Faculty assigned these responsibilities may be given the working title of “academic program coordinator”; the definition of this title is below: [NOTE: we need to address the status of this “working title” within the context of the CBA].
Title Definition: Academic Program Coordinator

1. A working title of Academic Program Coordinator (eg: Coordinator of _____) may be appropriate when the center or institute to be managed is not large and/or complex enough to justify an Academic Program Director title, or for a large and/or complex center or institute which may require a Coordinator to supervise programs or support staff.

2. Such a working title may be used for a faculty member who manages a coordinated, defined set of services or activities usually focusing on a single objective, possibly reporting to a department chair or director rather than to a dean or Provost.

3. The working title should be applied to positions where the program managed typically is recognized as a distinct and free standing program, requiring the coordination of work within the unit and/or across a number of academic units.
General Guidelines for Directors of WWU Centers and Institutes

1. All moneys paid to or through a center or institute or held by or for its use or benefit are moneys of the University and are in all respects subject to and governed by the University’s systems for financial management and control as those are established from time to time by the University’s chief financial officer.

2. All documentary or like materials, in whatever form created or maintained and including all electronic versions thereof, that are created by or for or in connection with the establishment or management of a center or institute or the conduct of its affairs, including any logos, service marks or trademarks and including all copyrights therein, are and shall remain the property of the University subject only to any supervening rights of third parties and any partners in the center or institute.

3. All persons employed to render services to or for a center or institute are and shall remain employees of the University and shall be and remain subject to those policies and agreements of the University that are of general application to persons in its employ—provided only that, with the prior written approval of the Provost, and on such terms as s/he may authorize, persons may be engaged as independent contractors to render services to the center or institute.

4. A faculty member who is assigned to be director of a center or institute shall receive additional compensation (released time and/or stipend) only upon determination of the dean or Provost, for the performance of duties as defined in a written approval, in accord with the Secs. 17 and 22 of the CBA. All assigned services during such assignment are required to be performed as a condition of employment as a member of the faculty of the University.

5. The University, at its discretion and on such terms as its Provost may prescribe, may engage the director to render services as such to a center or institute during the summer break between spring and fall quarters. Any stipends approved for summer duties are subject to review on an annual basis.

6. A faculty director of a center or institute shall be evaluated in accordance with provisions of the Section 17.3 of the CBA.

7. The director serves at the discretion of the Provost or his/her designee.