

Eastern Michigan University

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Procedures for Establishing and Reviewing Organized Research Units: Centers and Institutes

Introduction

Eastern Michigan University encourages the development and operation of Organized Research Units that provide unique contributions or services and align with or compliment the University's mission and address a demonstrated need. These Organized Research Units, in the form of Centers and Institutes, are established in order to promote interdisciplinary research, promote and facilitate collaboration with external partners, and attract external funding. This procedure establishes the process at EMU by which Centers and Institutes are established, reviewed and continued or discontinued.

Definitions

Organized Research Unit: A formal organizational entity within EMU that exists chiefly to serve the research, scholarly, or service mission, is set apart from the academic department or school, and includes faculty from more than one department or school. Organized research units do not offer for-credit, academic programs, nor confer degrees. At EMU, Organized Research Units are established as Centers or Institutes.

- **Centers:** Centers involve two or more faculty from one or more departments, colleges, or units who are engaged in a dedicated research or service activity. Centers are interdisciplinary and single focused. Centers present a short-term prospect for sustained external funding (less than 10 years).
- **Institutes:** With research or service missions that are broader than Centers, Institutes involve faculty and staff from multiple disciplines and academic units who depend upon a common set of facilities and resources to support their research. Institutes are interdisciplinary and address a broad societal or technological need. Institutes present a long-term prospect for sustained external funding (more than 10 years). Often Institutes can be viewed as a collections of Centers.

Administering Unit is the permanent organizational unit under which the Center or Institute is housed. This is identified in the proposal, approved at the time of inception, and reflects the involvement of participating faculty. For example, in cases of Centers where faculty from only one department are involved, establishing a center with the department as the administrative unit is logical. In the case of a larger, integrative Institute involving faculty from multiple colleges, identifying Graduate Studies and Research as the administrative unit is logical.

Designated Administrator: The Designated Administrator will provide all administrative and fiscal oversight, such as monitoring budgets and evaluating personnel. Designated Administrator must be an AP and the position serving as the Designated Administrator must be identified in the proposal.

Research Director: A tenured or tenure-track faculty member or AP who is responsible for providing leadership in setting Center or Institute priorities, obtaining external funding for research and other sponsored activity, establishing and managing internal and external relationships, and preparation and submission of annual reports, self-study results, and proposals for reauthorization.

Establishment

Establishing Organized Research Units is intended to attract externally sponsored funding for research and other activity. Individuals or groups who want to establish an Organized Research Unit should discuss the idea with appropriate Department Heads/School Directors, Deans, and other appropriate academic administrators. It is helpful at this early stage to develop a brief concept paper, documenting the need, the operational methodology, resource requirements and the anticipated availability of external funding around which discussions can be had.

To establish the Organized Research Unit, a written proposal must be developed and approved. The proposal must contain the following elements:

1. **Statement of Purpose:** The request to develop a Center or Institute must clearly and succinctly define the purpose of the Organized Research Unit.
2. **Mission Statement:** Include the mission statement using concise language. It will become the basis upon which future evaluation will be made.
3. **Proposed Activities:** Include a description of activities that will be undertaken, along with the Organized Research Unit's relationship with academic units and programs, including degree programs, if appropriate.
4. **Evaluation Criteria:** The proposal should establish goals, along with qualitative or quantitative measures by which performance towards achieving those goals will be assessed.
5. **Participating Faculty:** Include the names of faculty with their home departments, along with, a narrative description of relevant expertise and contributions to the Organized Research Unit.
6. **Rationale:** Provide a rationale for establishing the Organized Research Unit, including the anticipated benefits and expected outcomes from its creation.
7. **Governance Structure:** Please address the following questions:
 - a. What unit will serve as the Administering Unit?
 - b. Who will be the Designated Administrator?
 - c. How is the Research Director chosen? By whom?
 - d. What is the length of the Research Director's term?
 - e. To whom does the Research Director report?

- f. What are the duties and responsibilities of the Research Director?
 - g. Is there a committee structure of some sort? If so, please describe the charge of each committee, and its membership.
 - h. Is there an Advisory Board? If so, please describe the duties, responsibilities, and membership.
 - i. How are members to the Advisory Board selected?
 - j. What is the term of membership for the Advisory Board?
8. Facilities and Equipment Needs: Provide a description of existing laboratory and office facilities that are required. Utilized space must be approved by the appropriate administrator.
 9. Funding: Please describe the necessary resources for establishing the Organized Research Unit. Include a list of current externally funded projects that will contribute to Center or Institute's activities. Include a list of externally funded project opportunities and possible funding agencies. A general discussion of the direct and indirect costs **is required**, explaining how each will support the activities of the Organized Research Unit. A statement regarding the specific allocations of IDC revenues to department/school, college, and the Organized Research Unit must be included. Describe the portion of time the Research Director will dedicate to the needs of the Center or Institute. Any need for an Assistant Research Director, or other administrative, clerical, or technical staff must also be described. This funding section must also include the proposed method for funding these costs. Any proposed resources from the Department, School, College, or University must be approved by the appropriate administrator and indicated in a letter of commitment.
 10. Signatures: The proposal must be signed and jointly submitted by Department Heads/School Directors and Deans Department of all participating faculty and APs.
 11. Optional Appendix: Curriculum vitae of participating faculty members may be included in an appendix.

Proposals requesting the creation of a Center or Institute are submitted to the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research who will make a recommendation to the Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs.

Approval

Organized research units have implications for the Departments, Schools and Colleges with participating faculty, and therefore, require approval of all involved departments and colleges. Because having a Center or Institute status confers the endorsement of the University, approval of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research, the Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, and the University President are also required.

Charter

Following approval, each Organized Research Unit will develop a charter during its first year of existence, or the first year following reauthorization. The Charter will describe the mission, proposed activities and governance structure. It will include a strategic plan describing the means of addressing the mission of the unit. The plan will describe specific goals regarding the number of graduate students to be supported, external funds to be generated, faculty release time

to be paid from Center or Institute projects, and indirect costs to be recovered. The charter will be approved by the Research Director, the Designated Administrator, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Research, and the Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs.

Proposals for Sponsored Activity Submitted by Organized Research Units

Proposals for externally sponsored projects must follow the normal EMU proposal submission procedures. Proposals that originate in an Organized Research Unit must have explicit approval of the Research Director, Designated Administrator, and the person to whom the Research Director reports. Resources administered by Departments/Schools and College can only be committed by Department Heads/School Directors, and Deans and therefore require the approval from these administrators.

Review and Evaluation

Each Organized Research Unit will submit an annual report to the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research by August 1 of each year. The annual report shall summarize the activities of the Center or Institute for the past year, and address the mission of the unit and progress towards its goals. Updates or modification to its strategic plan for the upcoming year shall accompany the annual report.

Each Organized Research Unit will be established for a fixed period of time, usually five years, unless there are prevailing reasons for a shorter term. Requests for shorter terms must be explicitly stated in the proposal. In the final year of authorization, the Organized Research Unit will conduct a self-study, and complete a thorough review and evaluation of its activities, accomplishments, and organizational leadership and its success achieving the unit's goals.

Disposition: Reauthorization/Termination

At the end of the authorized period, the existence of the Center or Institute will terminate unless it is specifically reauthorized to continue following its review and evaluation. The period of reauthorization will be specified in the reauthorization approval, but will not exceed five years. The Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research will convene a meeting of all units party to the proposal to determine disposition of facilities, equipment, and other nonexpendable supplies when Center or Institute status is being terminated.

A request for reauthorization is made by submitting a proposal that follows the same format for establishing a Center or Institute as outlined above. It is suggested that the Research Director prepare a proposal, share it with the relevant Department Heads/School Directors and Deans, and then, schedule a meeting to discuss the proposal before obtaining signatures. Fully signed proposals are then submitted to the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research.