Guidelines for the Review of Research Centres, Institutes and Facilities

1. **Purpose**

The review described in this document assesses to what extent the centre, facility or institute concerned has achieved its objectives, and judges its potential for future contributions. The review will also ascertain whether or not: 1) the reasons for establishing the unit remain compelling; and 2) the research and teaching (if any) activities of the unit are well developed.

2. **Timing**

Centres and facilities will undergo both an internal review annually and an external review every seven years. Institutes will also undergo an annual review, but their main or “seven-year review” will coincide with one of the periodic undergraduate or graduate program (OCGS) assessments, if not with both. The Office of the Vice-President, Research, should get the annual reports by June 30. The vice-president will give notice of the external review to directors of the unit at least 12 months before the review is due.

3. **Administrative Annual Report**

Administrative annual reports, covering January to December of the previous year, will be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President, Research, for review by the Research Commission, by June 30. Comments and suggestions will be forwarded to directors no later than October. An annual report should be no longer than five pages and should adhere to the following format. (An electronic template follows these guidelines.)

The report should:

i. List members of the centre, facility or institute by category (whether, for example, the members are faculty, post-doctoral fellows or students), and provide an indication of their administrative contribution to the unit, if any. It should include the support staff employed by the unit. (Two-page maximum)

ii. Describe the most important scholarly activities undertaken by the unit during the preceding year. It should emphasize progress towards achieving the seven-year objectives of the unit, rather than the activities of individual members. It is essential to provide information on publications, research support, prizes and awards, patents, licences, research infrastructure, organization of scholarly events, involvement of visiting scholars and so forth. (Two-page maximum)

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' Hereafter referred to as “the unit” unless special considerations apply

' Ontario Council on Graduate Studies
iii. Provide a financial status report of the unit, within the context of the original seven-year budget. Appendices are discouraged. (One-page maximum)

4. Seven-year Review

1.0. Review Committee
In the case of centres and facilities, the Vice-President, Research, will appoint the Review Committee in consultation with the Research Commission. For institutes, the vice-president will appoint the Review Committee in consultation with the Academic Planning Committee (APC). The Review Committee will base its review on the self-assessment submitted by the centre or institute (see 4.2 below) as well as on the report of the external appraisers. Undergraduate and/or graduate program evaluations will also be considered when reviewing an institute.

2.0. Report of the Centre, Facility or Institute
The director of the centre, facility or institute will submit a self-assessment report to the Review Committee in three parts.

1.0.0. Main Report
a) Describes the original purpose of the centre, facility or institute. Includes a list of the specific objectives established at the previous seven-year review (if any) or when the unit was established. If the original purpose of the unit has changed substantially, it explains the nature and reasons for the change.

b) Summarizes the activities of the unit during the preceding seven years. Provides information on the following.

  . Research activities:
    • Lists research projects of the unit, accompanied by summary tables of relevant grants and contract funding (both active and pending);
    • Lists publications related to the activities of the unit.

  . Teaching activities:
    • Describes the contribution made by the unit to the training of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, and is accompanied by summary tables listing the names of the trainees, their supervisors, dates of training, dates of receipt of degrees and names of current employers, if appropriate. Includes a list of the thesis topics of graduate students and of the research projects of postdoctoral fellows;
    • Provides a brief account of the undergraduate and/or graduate programs associated with the institute, together with a summary of enrolment figures per year. These programs are normally subjected to periodic evaluations (OCGS or
UPRAC) and detailed information will be available in the relevant assessment briefs;
c) Provides an administrative budget statement for the period under review, including resources provided by the University, as well as other sources of support for administrative purposes;
d) Describes emerging trends that may affect the future activities and operations of the unit, and provides a brief seven-year plan identifying future research directions and development strategies;
e) Appends statements or comments from appropriate faculty deans and other stakeholders indicating continued support for the unit.

2.0.0. Updated List of Members of the Unit:
Members to be listed by category (faculty, postdoctoral fellows or students). List will include support staff, if any, and up-to-date résumés of faculty members.

3.0.0. List of Experts
After consulting with the members of the centre or institute, the director will submit, under separate cover, a list of six to 10 external appraisers who are deemed competent to assess the work of the unit and who normally have not collaborated with any member of the unit during the past three years. The director will also submit a list of any individuals the University should not contact.

5. External Appraisers

The vice-president, research, will select and appoint external appraisers in consultation with the Review Committee. The external appraisers will visit the campus as a team and meet with the director of the centre, facility or institute as well as with research groups, faculty deans, departmental chairs, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and support staff connected to it.

The external appraisers will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the centre, facility or institute as a research or, if applicable, teaching unit, and, within eight weeks, provide a written report addressing the issues listed below.

Note: The Review Committee reserves the right to ask the external appraisers to address additional issues that it considers pertinent to the unit under review.

1.0. Research
The primary contribution of a research unit resides in the quality and quantity of research generated by its members above and beyond what they would produce if the unit did not exist. The following points will be taken into consideration when judging the quality of research:

i. Publication of original work in any of the following: . quality refereed journals;
. books, subject to refereeing and/or subsequent review in professional and/or academic publications; or
. refereed proceedings of major national and international conferences, particularly when someone from the unit was invited as a plenary or keynote speaker

ii. Research support: grants and/or other sources of financial assistance related to the members’ association with the institute or centre

iii. Prizes/awards

iv. Patents and licensing

v. Organization of international scholarly events

vi. Participation of visiting scholars

vii. New research infrastructure (such as laboratories, equipment, libraries and databases).

2.0. Contribution to Teaching

5.2.1 Teaching programs (institutes only)

i. The undergraduate program review and/or the OCGS report will be used as a basis for assessing the teaching programs. The external appraisers will be asked to consider how the teaching programs compare in quality with those of similar institutes elsewhere.

ii. Research supervision: Of particular interest in assessing the value and relevance of a research centre or institute is its contribution to research supervision of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. This contribution should be on a par with, or superior to that of, a good graduate department. For research facilities, contribution to research supervision may or may not be one of its goals and thus this section may be omitted by those research facilities for which research supervision is not a goal. The following criteria will be used to evaluate research supervision of a research centre or institute.

. Does the centre or institute enhance opportunities for discussions and meetings between research supervisors, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows?

. Has the centre made resources available to students beyond those accessible through their graduate program? . Does the centre create and support opportunities for students to publish or speak, for example talks at centre-organized events? . Does the centre improve employment prospects for students, for example through networking events and services?

3.0. Public and Professional Activities

Public and professional activities include sponsoring or participating in conferences and symposia; editing academic journals and books; acting in an advisory capacity on public commissions, boards and task forces; preparing special reports and working papers; being a member of an editorial board of a refereed journal; and so forth. The
nature and type of service to the community will vary depending on the area of interest of the centre or institute.

**Note:** While community service is important, it will be ranked below the main functions of the centre or institute, which are academic research and teaching.

### 4.0. External Relations

The assessors will consider whether the unit maintains appropriate links with other units within the University and, externally, with agencies, institutions and organizations. The assessors will review the Web sites of the unit and assess whether they are meeting the expectations of the University, the scientific community and the public at large with respect to presentation, organization and information. They will assess the effectiveness of the external advisory committee if one exists.

### 5.0. Infrastructure

The assessors will verify that the infrastructure of the unit (such as its equipment, technical support or library holdings) is adequate to support research programs of high quality.

### 6.0. Administrative Efficiency

i. The administrative organization must be satisfactory and the leadership strong and effective. Sufficient support staff should be employed to ensure the effective running of the centre, facility and institute.

ii. The unit's offices and installations must be appropriate to its work.

iii. The administrative budget, including all external and internal sources, should be adequate.

### 7.0. Overall Appraisal

Using the above criteria, the University will seek the opinion of the external assessors on the following.

i. How well do the research programs (and teaching programs in the case of institutes) compare with those of similar units elsewhere?

ii. How would the unit under review be rated in terms of international reputation when compared to similar units in Canada?

iii. Should the unit be renewed or terminated?

### 6. Meetings with the Review Committee

The report of the external appraisers will be forwarded to the director of the unit for distribution to the members. The director should send comments on the appraisal to the Review Committee within one month of the receipt of the report. Additional meetings and consultations may be held, if necessary.

### 7. The Report of the Review Committee

The chair of the Review Committee is responsible for preparing the final report. This report will consist of the following:
i. A summary of the present status of the unit, including a feasibility assessment of future projects and activities.

ii. One of the following recommendations, supported by a detailed explanation: . Continuation of the unit in its present form or with enhanced support, for a further seven years.

   . Continuation of the unit but with a strong recommendation for improvement; this recommendation may be accompanied by budget reductions, until a second review in one, two or three years.

   . Closure of the unit (through amalgamation, phasing out or termination).

iii. The place of the unit within the overall research effort of the University of Ottawa and suggestions for evolution (such as upgrading a centre to an institute).

The Review Committee will assign one of the following ratings to the unit under review.

1. Exceptional – having a high international reputation
2. Excellent – comparable to the top 20 per cent of similar institutions in Canada
3. Potentially good but with serious deficiencies, which need to be addressed
4. Seriously flawed/unsatisfactory (Termination)

8. Procedure for the Adoption of the Recommendations from the Review Committee

The Review Report on the unit (together with the self-assessment report, the report of the external appraisers and the director’s comments) will be submitted to the Vice-President, Research, who will forward it to the Research Commission and the Academic Planning Committee. Their recommendations will be transmitted to the Administrative Committee and the Senate for ratification and final approval.

Approved by the Executive Committee of the Senate on March 24, 2003.