Procedures for the Establishment of Research Centres and Institutes

Preamble

For maximum impact, it is important that University of Ottawa research centres and institutes be restricted to groups of researchers that fulfill well-defined criteria, have been approved after a rigorous selection process, can be held accountable and have clearly defined expectations. The designation of a group of researchers as a research centre or research institute will require compelling evidence that such centre or institute will generate benefits to the University not possible within existing academic structures.

The University of Ottawa does not sanction the naming of any research group as a research centre or institute unless such a group has followed the procedures outlined in this document. Alternative terms such as “research group” or “research program” may be used to describe a group of investigators who have chosen not to apply for the designation “research centre” or “research institute.”

I. Classifications

a. Research Centres

The main role of a research centre is to foster excellence in research. Centres function outside existing academic units. They are, with few exceptions, interdisciplinary in character. They do research that can be more effectively accomplished outside a traditional graduate program.

b. Research Institutes

Research institutes have two main functions: to pursue excellence in research, and to maintain first-class teaching programs at the graduate and/or undergraduate level. Institutes function outside existing academic units and may be discipline-based or interdisciplinary. In either case, they must involve activities that can be more effectively accomplished outside a traditional graduate program.

II. Procedures for the Establishment of Research Centres

Recognition and designation of a centre follows review and approval, first by the faculty or faculties involved and then by the Research Commission. After approval by the faculty or faculties, proposals for the creation of a centre are submitted to the Vice-President, Research, for transmission to the Research Commission, Administrative Committee and Executive Committee of the Board of Governors.

Proposals should address the following:
1. Name of Centre

2. Description and Justification

Identify the scope of planned activities (such as research, graduate education or seminar programs) for the first five-year period, as well as the anticipated benefits. Clarify the advantages to be derived by the researchers, the University and the community at large from the creation of such a centre and include a list of objectives. (Maximum length – 1000 words)

3. Structure and Management

Describe the organizational structure and function, as well as the operational plan and roles of proposed committees, including external advisory committees, if appropriate.

4. Membership

Faculty, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students may be members of a centre. Normally, a research centre should have a minimum of five faculty members. The founding members of the centre should be listed, with their specific roles indicated, if these roles differ from those of an ordinary member, and a résumé should be provided for each faculty member. (Upon approval of the centre, a director will be selected. See the procedure for selection outlined below).

5. Supporting Resources

Provide an inventory of available space and research resources, identifying strengths and weaknesses. You should include a list of future requirements and a strategic plan for obtaining the necessary infrastructure.

6. Visibility

It is important that establishing a research centre also benefit both the University of Ottawa and individual members of the centre by enhancing their visibility. Present an action plan to rapidly achieve global visibility for the centre (whether through Web pages, advertising, conferences, consultation services or so on). Web pages must conform to University standards and you must include a plan for maintaining the site. The name of the centre as well as the logo of the University of Ottawa must appear prominently in the Web pages and in all publications issued by or from the centre.

7. Budget

Provide a detailed budget plan for the first five years of operation, specifying any income expected from all sources, as well as anticipated expenditures. If funds are requested from the University budget, explain how the centre fits within the priorities of the Strategic Areas of Development of the University of Ottawa.
8. Letters of Commitment

Obtain letters of commitment signed by those authorized to make such commitments, and include this with the list of future requirements and the strategic plan for obtaining the necessary infrastructure (space; administrative support such as personnel and/or stipends, subject to approval by the Administrative Committee; teaching relief; maintenance; library resources; and so on).

9. Reporting Mechanism

Identify whoever will be responsible for submitting an annual report to the Vice-President, Research. This report will be copied to any deans from any participating faculties. The contents and format of the annual report are described in the document entitled *Guidelines for the Review of Research Centres, Institutes and Facilities*. The report will be reviewed by the Research Commission, which reserves the right to take appropriate measures, including the closure of a centre, in cases where performance fails to meet expectations. Centres will be assessed more thoroughly every seven years (see *Guidelines for the Review of Research Centres, Institutes and Facilities*), as well as whenever the director asks for a review.

10. Sunset Clause

Include a protocol for the closure of the centre, in the event such action is required or desired. The protocol must include plans for disposing of furniture, research equipment and anything else obtained by the centre.

11. Letters of Approval

Include letters from the deans of any participating facilities, in which participating deans approve the establishment of a research centre.

III. Procedures for the Establishment of Research Institutes

An institute is recognized and designated following review and approval, first by the faculty or faculties involved and then by the Research Commission (which considers the research components of the proposal), the Academic Planning Committee (which considers the teaching component of the proposal), the Administrative Committee and the Senate. After approval by the participating faculties, proposals to create an institute are submitted to the Vice-President, Research, for transmission to the Research Commission, Academic Planning Committee, Administrative Committee and Senate.

*Proposals should address the following:

1. Name of Institute*
2. Description and Justification

Identify the scope of planned activities (such as research, graduate education and seminar programs) for the first five years, as well as the anticipated benefits. Clarify the advantages to be derived by the University from the creation of such an institute and include a list of objectives. (Maximum length – 1000 words)

3. Structure and Management

Describe the organizational structure and function as well as the operational plan and roles of relevant committees.

4. Membership

Faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students may be members of an institute. Normally, a research institute should have a minimum of five faculty members. The founding members of the institute should be listed and their specific roles indicated, if these roles differ from those of an ordinary member, and a résumé should be provided for each faculty member.

5. Supporting Resources

Provide an inventory of available space and research resources, identifying strengths and weaknesses. Include a list of future requirements and a strategic plan for obtaining the necessary infrastructure.

6. Visibility

It is important that establishing an institute also benefit both the University of Ottawa and individual members of the institute by enhancing their visibility. Present an action plan to rapidly achieve global visibility for the institute (whether through Web pages, advertising, conferences, consultation services or so on). Web pages must conform to University standards and you must include a plan for maintaining the site. The name of the institute as well as the logo of the University of Ottawa must appear prominently in the Web pages and in all publications issued by or from the institute.

7. Budget

Provide a detailed budget plan for the first five years of operation, specifying any income expected from all sources, as well as anticipated expenditures. If funds are requested from the University budget, explain how the institute fits within the priorities of the Strategic Areas of Development of the University of Ottawa.

8. Letters of Commitment
Obtain letters of commitment signed by those authorized to make such commitments, and include this with the list of future requirements and the strategic plan for obtaining the necessary infrastructure (space; administrative support such as personnel and/or stipends, subject to approval by the Administrative Committee; teaching relief; maintenance; library resources; and so on).

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10. Sunset Clause

Include a protocol for the closure of the institute, in the event such action is required or desired. The protocol must include plans for disposing of furniture, research equipment and anything else obtained by the institute.

11. Letters of Approval

Include letters from the deans of any participating facilities, in which participating deans approve the establishment of an institute.

IV. Selection of a Director for a Centre or Institute

Within six months of approval of the centre or institute, the Vice-President, Research, will strike a committee to select its Director. The Selection Committee will be composed of the vice-rector, research (or a delegate), who will be the chair, as well as the deans of two of the participating faculties and at least two faculty members, at least one of whom has been designated by the members of the centre or institute and the remainder of whom will be picked by the Vice-President, Research.

Each director for a centre will serve for a three-year term, which may be renewed once, while directors of institutes serve five-year terms, which may also be renewed once.

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