



NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

SEC. V—CENTERS 1.0

CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

UNIT POLICY -- DORED

A. INTRODUCTION

Creating and developing partnerships with private and corporate sponsors, educational institutions, and federal and state agencies is an important pathway to fulfill the mission of the University. University centers and institutes are representative of how this cooperative and collaborative process is maximized. Centers and institutes are particularly effective structures when efforts require cross-disciplinary or cross-unit coordination. University centers and institutes are nearly exclusively multidisciplinary, have an important educational component, and may be established when a group of faculty from two or more Colleges/Schools or departments at North Carolina A&T State University (hereafter "A&T") have secured long-term funding commitments to pursue unique translational research, public service, and/or instructional endeavors.

The objective of the Centers and Institutes Policy is to provide a uniform framework governing the establishment, review, and discontinuation of centers and institutes to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources. Specific types of centers and institutes, as well as the regulations and procedures pertaining to these individual categories, are defined in these regulations (adapted from UNC Policy Manual 400.5[R], entitled "Regulations on Planning, Establishing, and Reviewing Centers and Institutes in The University of North Carolina.")

B. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

Centers and institutes are established within the University to strengthen and enrich multidisciplinary programs of research, public service, or instruction conducted by the faculty and staff. They also may provide undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral students with added research opportunities, facilities, and assistance, as well as enhance their involvement in public service and educational activities. Centers and institutes also have a strong positive impact on the economic development of the state by providing job opportunities, supplying technical assistance, fostering community development, and enhancing the transfer of new technologies.

Centers and institutes must avoid unnecessary duplication within A&T. Each unit seeks to differentiate its mission, activities, and/or clientele from other A&T units, including individual Schools/Colleges, departments and programs, and to make its facilities available to members of the University community and other constituent institutions for cooperative activities as appropriate.

To make a significant contribution to A&T's strategic goals, centers/institutes must build and maintain a level of excellence and/or visibility and provide an on-going contribution to the University community. As an exemplary, but non-exhaustive list, a center/institute may provide:

- an enhanced environment and intellectual matrix for addressing complex and interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary issues;
- University-wide access to specialized facilities or instrumentation;
- a structure for the engagement of external communities; or
- a focal point for national or international excellence.

C. DEFINITIONS FOR SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

1. Types of Centers and Institutes

A University center or institute is one that receives designation in accordance with application and approval processes covered in this policy. Centers or institutes that report directly to the "school" or "college" or to a senior administrative level are considered University centers and are subject to these regulations. University centers or institutes are multidisciplinary, have separate administrative structures and/or budgets and do not depend on the direct support of a single department. University centers or institutes may have research, public service or instruction as their primary mission.

2. Centers versus Institutes

No distinction is made between the terms "center" and "institute." Both offer interdisciplinary programs attracting faculty, students, and staff from various academic

departments or other structured units. In practice, an "institute" frequently refers to an activity with a broader scope than a "center." For example, an institute may create centers as separate units within its administrative structure. Also, an "institute" may engage in training and delivery of certificate programs in cooperation with academic units.

3. Research

A research center or institute has interdisciplinary research as its primary mission. Although classified as a research center or institute, such a unit may also provide instruction, technical assistance, or public service programs. Although such units do not have jurisdiction over academic curricula, they may offer courses in cooperation with academic units.

4. Public Service

A public service center or institute has public service or technical assistance as its primary mission. Research and instruction may also be conducted as secondary components of the mission. Although such units do not have jurisdiction over academic curricula, they may offer courses in cooperation with academic units.

5. Instructional

An instructional center or institute has instruction as its primary mission. These units may also conduct research and public service activities. Although instructional centers and institutes do not have primary jurisdiction over academic curricula, they may offer courses in cooperation with academic units.

6. Inter-institutional

Inter-institutional centers/institutes are established, monitored and discontinued pursuant to UNC Policy Manual 400.5[R], "Regulations on Planning, Establishing, and Reviewing Centers and Institutes in The University of North Carolina."

7. Project

A Project center is led by a principal investigator, who may also serve as director, and reports directly to "department" chairpersons. Project centers typically are formed as a result of awards in response to sponsors' solicitations, and are governed by the stipulations of the grant or contract. Project centers do not require Board of Trustee approval for establishment or discontinuation, but instead are eligible for accelerated approval by the Vice Chancellor DORED when the scope of external funding justifies establishment of a center that will sunset at the end of the original award, providing a pre-defined discontinuation date. An approved project center and its director are subject to regular internal reviews as outlined herein.

8. Exception to These Regulations: Other Designations for Centers and Institutes

Membership

Any center or institute may also be defined as a membership center or institute. These units receive a substantial portion of their funding from membership fees paid by corporate, private or governmental entities to pursue research, public service, or instructional activities of mutual benefit. Membership agreements are routed through the institution using the standard internal processing forms for approvals of sponsored program requests. Once the agreement is signed and the fees have been paid by the member organization, the agreement is processed as a sponsored program award by the institution. Membership Centers are exempt from these regulations.

Units or programs that are not considered university centers or institutes under these policies include the following:

- Those whose mission is to provide focused services to specific university or community constituencies. Examples include the University Writing Center and Center for Leadership and Organizational Excellence.
- Buildings that are called centers, e.g., NC A&T University Alumni-Foundation Event Center.
- Centers embedded within larger centers or institutes.
- Entities within single departments that would be more appropriately considered research, public service, or services programs of individual faculty members. Such entities require little to no structure, funds or management to function.

D. AUTHORITY AND LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY

A center or institute is established or discontinued at the recommendation of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development (VC-DORED) and with the approval of the Provost, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees; the Board of Trustees can delegate authority to the Chancellor for the discontinuation of a center or institute. The policies outlined herein will be followed to govern the planning, establishment, and regular review of the University centers and institutes. These policies are consistent with the guidelines provided by the UNC System.

Centers or Institutes that comprise faculty from a single School or College fall under the purview of the appropriate Dean. Centers or institutes that comprise faculty from more than one School or College fall under the purview of the VC-DORED.

Each center or institute must identify a director. Center and institute directors are responsible for the day-to-day programmatic, fiscal and personnel decisions associated with the center/institute mission and core personnel. The director of a center or institute is confirmed by the VC-DORED,

with the approval of the Chancellor. If the director's position is that of a senior administrative officer, the appointment is made in accordance with existing policies for such appointments. If a faculty appointment is involved, the regular procedures for faculty appointments are also followed.

E. ESTABLISHING A UNIVERSITY CENTER OR INSTITUTE

The process to establish a University center or institute follows a two step procedure: involving first a Request for Authorization to Plan and then a Request to Establish each submitted to the VC-DORED.

Within 60 days of receipt of the Request for Authorization to Plan, the VC-DORED will evaluate the Request, provide feedback on deficiencies, and after receipt of an acceptable final version submit the Request to the Provost with recommendation for approval. On the Provost's approval, the Request for Authorization to Plan a Center or Institute will be submitted to the Chancellor for approval; the Board of Trustees will receive a report of said Authorization to Plan. If permission is granted, the VC-DORED will communicate an expected timeline for submission of a Request to Establish a University Center or Institute and will provide notification to the UNC GA Office of Research and Graduate Education.

When a center approved for planning is ready and able to demonstrate its viability, a formal Request to Establish is submitted to the VC-DORED. If he/she agrees with the establishment of the center/institute, he/she will make recommendation to the Provost for approval. On the Provost's approval, the Request to Establish a Center or Institute will be submitted to the Chancellor and then the Board of Trustees for final approval. The VC-DORED will notify the center director and provide notification to the UNC GA Office of Research and Graduate Education prior to establishment of the new center or institute.

F. PERIODIC REVIEW OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

A review of each center or institute must be conducted periodically by VC-DORED to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the center as an academic and administrative entity. Each center or institute is also required to provide information to DORED necessary for the submission of formalized periodic reports to oversight agencies. The initial center/institute review will occur two years after the center or institute is established and subsequent reviews will occur at least every three years thereafter. Criteria for center/institute review are provided in the associated Procedures. Particular attention should be paid to the relationship between the objectives of the center or institute and the mission of the University.

G. DISCONTINUATION OF CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

The University may discontinue a center or institute at the recommendation of the VC-DORED and Dean of the relevant College/School and the approval of the Provost, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the UNC president or Board of Governors may initiate

consideration of discontinuation of a center or institute according to UNC Policy Manual 400.5[R], "Regulations on Planning, Establishing, and Reviewing Centers and Institutes in The University of North Carolina." This decision may be made on the basis of a number of factors, such as, but not limited to:

- a loss of funding, key faculty or facilities;
- the mission, goals, or objectives of the established center or institute are superseded by a new one;
- the center or institute has failed to achieve its stated mission goals or objectives;
- the mission, goals and objectives of the center or institute are no longer congruent with those of the University.

The adequacy of funding sources is a critical element in determining whether a center or institute should continue operations. There are, of course, instances where the continuing operation of the center is of sufficient importance to warrant some additional financial assistance from the institution on an interim basis. However, if the external sources of support have been lost, discontinuation is strongly advised unless alternative long-term prospects for funding can be identified.

The "phase-out" period for centers or institutes that are to be discontinued shall be sufficient to permit an orderly termination or transfer of contractual obligations and to allow an effort to find alternative employment for full-time staff. Normally, the "phase-out" period shall be no more than one year after the end of the academic year in which final approval is given to discontinue the center or institute.

If the VC-DORED and the Dean agree with the discontinuation of the center/institute, the VC-DORED will make recommendation to the Provost for approval. On the Provost's approval, a request to discontinue the center or institute will be submitted to the Chancellor and then to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

In the event a decision is made to discontinue a center or institute, the VC-DORED or his/her designee provides a letter to the center director detailing:

- the reason for discontinuation;
- proposed activities for the "phase out" period; and
- the effective date for discontinuation.

The VC-DORED will also notify the UNC GA Office of Research and Graduate Education of the discontinuation.

Approved by the Chancellor

Date Revision is Effective: Upon approval

First approved: February 13, 2015

Revised: February 29, 2016