

<b>Policies of the University of North Texas</b>	Chapter 6
<b>06.046 Centers and Institutes</b>	<b>Faculty Affairs</b>

**Policy Statement.** Centers and Institutes provide a framework to advance UNT in the critical areas of service, outreach, interdisciplinary scholarship and externally funded research and development. This policy outlines processes for the establishment, annual reporting, review, and discontinuation of centers and institutes, ensuring alignment with UNT’s mission and strategic goals.

**Application of Policy.** All University

**Definitions.**

1. Academic Instructional/Training Center. “Academic Instructional/Training Center” means a center where the primary function is training and/or instruction.
2. Academic Research Center. “Academic Research Center” means a center where the primary function is research, creative endeavor, or facilitation of research.
3. Center. “Center” means an internal organization with a primary mission designated as either a non-academic center or an academic center.
4. Institute. “Institute” means an internal organization that contains constituent units (centers, labs, etc.) grouped under a single administrative structure.
5. Non-academic Membership Center. “Non-academic Membership Center” means a center that is primarily funded by membership fees or dues.

**Procedures and Responsibilities.**

- I. Overview of Centers and Institutes. The mission of a center or institute must be consistent with and supportive of UNT’s mission and strategic goals.
  - A. A center or institute housed in one or more departments within a single college/school reports to the dean of that college/school. If housed in more than one college/school, the center or institute reports to a lead administrator, designated by the provost and vice president.
  - B. A center or institute may involve interdisciplinary efforts encompassing a combination of research, instruction/training, service, and membership. A center or institute may also be narrower in scope and focus on research, instruction/training, or service in a particular discipline.
  - C. Academic centers and institutes are under the authority of the Office of the provost while a non-academic center or institute are under the authority of the respective vice president.

- D. An Executive Council of Center and Institute Directors (ECCID), appointed by the provost, reviews center proposals, conducts five-year reviews, and makes recommendations on policies and procedures. The ECCID consists of 5-7 members, including a representative body of center/institute directors and deans, the vice president responsible for research (or designee), and the provost (or designee). In certain circumstances, the provost may appoint an outside expert to serve on the ECCID.

Responsible Party: center/institute directors, deans, ECCID, and provost (or designee)

- II. Establishment of Centers and Institutes. The establishment of a new center or institute requires careful evaluation and justification of need and potential for contributing to UNT's mission and vision. New centers or institutes typically promote interdisciplinary activities and involve no fewer than five faculty members. Care should be taken not to duplicate the activities of other university units.

- A. Formal applications for establishing a center or institute require a proposal which includes, but is not limited to, contribution to UNT's mission and vision, anticipated outcomes, resource requirements, and anticipated return on investments.
- B. Proposals for the new centers or institutes must be approved by the ECCID and the provost (or respective vice president).
- C. A new center or institute may begin activity immediately once approved by the provost.

Responsible Party: Faculty and staff involved in the establishment of a center or institute, deans, ECCID, and provost (or designee)

- III. Annual Reporting of Centers and Institutes. Centers and institutes are required to engage in a systematic and systemic cycle of planning, assessment, analysis, and implementation; demonstrating a data-informed decision process.

- A. Directors of centers and institutes must report results annually in a university-wide database. Institutional Research is responsible for facilitating the collection and storage assessment plans and results.
- B. All plans must include copies of assessment instruments and the criteria used to measure successful attainment objectives.
- C. Centers and institutes must link unit outcomes to the University's Strategic Plan goals within the database environment in order to provide the supporting linkage to the mission of UNT.

Responsible Party: center/institute directors, deans, Institutional Research, and provost (or designee)

- IV. Continuation or Discontinuation of Center and Institutes.

- A. On a 5-year cycle, the provost or designee will schedule a review of a center or institute after conferring with the appropriate vice president or the lead dean (or other administrator) of the college or school who has budgetary responsibility for the center or institute. When feasible, institutional reviews should coincide with any external reviews that are required of the center.
- B. Directors of centers and institutes must submit a comprehensive report for the 5-year period.
- C. The provost or designee will conduct the review and make a determination on continuation or discontinuation. The review process is completed when the provost acknowledges such actions in a letter to the appropriate vice president, dean(s), and director of the center or institute.

Responsible Party: center/institute directors, deans, and provost (or designee)

- V. Policy Exceptions. The provost may make exceptions to this policy when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the institution.

Responsible Party: provost

**References and Cross-references.**

**Forms and Tools.**

Procedures for Establishment, Annual Reporting, and Review of Centers and Institutes

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