

University of Prince Edward Island		Policy Number:
Policy Title: Research Groups, Centres and Institutes		Page 1 of 12
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform set of guidelines for the establishment and review of university research groups, centres and institutes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all University research groups, centres and institutes.

3. Responsibility

- 3.1 Responsibility for establishment and amendment of this policy resets with the Research Advisory Committee.
- 3.2 General responsibility for this policy rests with the Vice President Research & Development.

4. Policy

4.1 Definitions:

- 4.1.1 A **Research Group** is an association comprised primarily of UPEI researchers and scholars or a collaboration lead through UPEI who:
 - share research interests
 - engage in collaborative or closely related research activities include, for example, joint publications and applications for funding.

Research Groups are constituted to:

- promote and facilitate collaboration and communication among members
- establish the group’s legitimacy both within and outside the University

- facilitate external recognition of areas of demonstrated research expertise at UPEI

4.1.2 A *Research Centre* or *Institute* is:

- a formally structured organizational unit of UPEI
- established under the authority of the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of Senate

The purpose of a Research Centre/Institute is to:

- focus and sustain research and research training in specific areas
- encourage research collaborations among disciplines and between Departments, Faculties and Schools
- facilitate multi-sectorial research
- enhance external recognition of areas of proven trans-disciplinary research expertise anchored at UPEI
- serve as a valuable information source for the community at large.

4.1.3 Research Centres/Institutes normally provide for the strengthening, coordination or facilitation of research and scholarly activities not readily undertaken within the University's department structure. These entities capture and build upon the expertise, competence and staff interest existing at the University. Institutes typically will have a broader, more multi-sectorial mandate than Centres and a Centre may be established within an Institute.

4.1.4 Research Centres/Institutes are generally expected to:

- have clearly identified goals and objectives;
- have some degree of permanence, transcending collaboration on a particular, limited project;
- bring together scholars from different disciplines and/or from areas of specialization within a particular discipline;
- maintain high levels of research productivity;
- foster the training of future researchers, especially in regard to research skills;
- attract post-doctoral fellows, visiting professors, and other scholars;
- cooperate with scholars at other universities and/or institutes; and
- obtain external funding in order to operate on a cost recovery basis. Institutes, to a greater extent than Centres, are expected to be

supported by sources external to the University.

In pursuit of their objectives, Research Centres/Institutes may establish communication links inside and outside the University, and organize seminars and symposia.

4.2 Establishment & Recognition of Research Groups

- 4.2.1 A group of faculty may form a Research Group to further their research or scholarly activities and may seek recognition by application to the Vice-President, Research Development. Any appropriate name reflecting the activities of the entity may be selected, excepting Centre and Institute (and the names of academic units, i.e. Department, Faculty, School, etc.) A *Letter of Proposal* seeking recognition of the entity should be sent to the Vice-President, Research Development and include the following information:
- proposed name of the Research Group
 - rationale for the establishment of the Research Group
 - a short description of the planned research or scholarly activities
 - the names of faculty who are supportive and active participants
 - the name of the Coordinator and the means by which this person was selected
 - mode of operation
 - a statement of its obligation to conduct its activities in accordance with University policies
 - signature of Coordinator and date
- 4.2.2 Research Groups will not normally have special requirements (space, staffing, university funding, release time, etc.). If there are any such, these must be specified and the means for meeting these special requirements outlined in the letter of proposal.
- 4.2.3 The Vice-President, Research Development will review this information, consult with the academic administrative units involved, and discuss with the proponent(s) any aspects that are unclear. The *Letter of Proposal*, amended if necessary, will then be submitted to the Research Advisory Committee (RAC)..
- 4.2.4 The proposal will be considered by the RAC at its next meeting. If

approved, the Research Group will normally be established and recognized for a period of five academic years subject to annual review.

- 4.2.5 Upon approval, the Research Group may use the University's name, address and symbols in connection with its activities and the approved research group name on letterhead, in promotional material, in applications to external agencies, etc.
- 4.2.6 The entity shall submit a brief annual report to the Vice-President, Research Development by January 31st each year. The following information shall be included:
- summary of major activities and accomplishments over the past academic year
 - any changes in the mode of operation
 - the name of the Coordinator for the next academic year
- 4.2.7 Any Research Group not reporting in this manner shall be considered inactive and may have its recognition withdrawn if a report is not submitted within 30 days of a reminder being sent. The RAC will review the status of each Group every five years and, if appropriate, approve the continuation of the Group for an additional five academic years.
- 4.2.8 The RAC will include a listing of recognized Research Groups in its report to Senate each year.

4.3 Establishment & Recognition of Research Institutes/Centres

- 4.3.1 Every Research Centre/Institute within the University is accountable through its director to a University officer - Dean, or the Vice-President, Research Development, as appropriate. Financial responsibility for the Centre/Institute is vested with this University officer.
- 4.3.1 a) The director of a Research Centre/Institute is administratively responsible for that research unit. Directors will exercise general supervision over the operation of the unit with specific responsibilities varying with the size of the unit as well as the complexity of its policies and operations.

- 4.3.1 b) For any joint Faculty/School initiative, the director shall be responsible to whichever Dean or the Vice-President, Research Development is so designated either in the initial proposal to create such a unit, or as subsequently recommended and approved. In general, only those units which cannot appropriately be administered at the faculty level shall be the responsibility of the Vice-President, Research Development.
- 4.3.1 c) All Research Centres/Institutes shall be financially secure with core funding derived from either the University or other sources. In this regard, while the University may support Research Centres/Institutes through its operating budget, Research Centres/Institutes are generally expected to be financially self-sufficient through external cost recovery (i.e. through grants, contracts, or donations).
- 4.3.1 d) Research Centres/Institutes shall be based in the research of UPEI academic faculty. Ordinarily, the director shall hold an appointment in an academic department at UPEI. If release time is required for the director, this should be negotiated by the Research Centre/ Institute under terms and conditions agreeable to the appointee's department and faculty. Confirmation of the appointment of a Research Centre's/Institute's proposed director is the responsibility of the University officer to whom the director will report.
- 4.3.1 e) While the organizational and administrative structures, processes and categories of membership of Research Centres/Institutes vary as a function of their objectives, size and funding arrangements, all Research Centres/Institutes shall normally have an advisory committee. The specific terms of reference of such committees may vary from one entity to another; however, the general purpose of these committees is to provide advice on the Centre's/Institute's activities and programs.

4.3.1 f) All University Research Centres/Institutes must conform with University policies and procedures.

4.3.2 Procedures for Establishing a Research Centre/Institute

4.3.2 a) Approval Process

The authority to establish Research Centres/Institutes resides with the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Senate of the University. Proposals and recommendations on the establishment of Research Centres/Institutes are normally transmitted from the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to Senate for its consideration. Prior to their submission to RAC, proposals for the establishment of Research Centres/Institutes are normally supported by departments and faculties/schools, as appropriate.

It is expected that those initiating a proposal to establish a Research Centre/Institute will already have discovered the advantages of collaborative research and academic interchange before proposing the formal establishment of a Research Centre/Institute.

4.3.2 b) Contents of Proposal to Establish a Research Centre/Institute

Proposals must be comprehensive enough to allow the merits and feasibility of establishing a Research Centre/Institute to be assessed, and shall include the following:

- i Proposed Name of Research Centre/Institute.
- ii Description and Justification. This shall include:
 - ▶ a concise statement of the mission and objectives of the proposed Research Centre/Institute and their relationship to the mission and goals of the University;

- ▶ an identification of the scope of activities envisaged; and
- ▶ a description of the research benefits and opportunities likely to result from the establishment of the Research Centre/Institute, including an indication of how the proposed Research Centre/Institute would facilitate research among scholars within the University and in the wider community.

iii Structure. This shall include a description of:

- ▶ the organizational structure of the proposed Research Centre/Institute, including the roles and responsibilities of its various committees, and the source of any administrative support;
- ▶ procedures for identifying a proposed director;
- ▶ the categories of membership and the criteria of each of these categories;
- ▶ procedures whereby appointments will be made for each membership category; and
- ▶ the privileges and responsibilities of membership.

iv Management.

This should identify the management structure of the proposed Research Centre/Institute and the University officer to whom the Centre/Institute would report and in whom financial oversight would be vested.

v Proposed Membership.

This shall include a listing of the proposed members of the Research Centre/Institute by the various membership

categories, where applicable. For each proposed member, a brief curriculum vitae shall be provided which details the following information: degree held, employment experience, professional activities, research interests, research funding record (last five years), and record of research achievements (eg., publications, presentations, patents) (last five years).

vi Physical Resources. This shall include:

- ▶ a listing of research facilities available to support the proposed Research Centre/Institute (e.g. library holdings, laboratories, space, equipment), including an indication of current strengths and weaknesses of these facilities; and
- ▶ an indication of future requirements, including a proposed strategy for obtaining those physical resources.

vii Financial Resources.

This shall include a detailed proposed budget for the Research Centre's/Institute's first three years which itemizes the anticipated revenue from all sources (i.e. University, government, industry, royalties, etc.) and proposed annual operation costs, as well as plans for achieving financial self-sufficiency through external cost recovery.

viii Statements of Support and Commitment.

Letters of support and commitment should be signed by the appropriate University administrator(s) (i.e. Department Chair, Dean) or officer(s) of any partnering entities. Any commitments or agreements to provide funding, space, teaching release time or other resources, including the recovery of indirect costs from contract research, should be documented and signed by those authorized to make such commitments. In the absence of such statements, it will be

assumed that no such commitments or agreements have been made.

4.3.2 c) Review of Proposal

Proposals shall be submitted to the Vice-President, Research Development, who will review this information, consult with the academic administrative units involved, and discuss with the proponent(s) any aspects that are unclear. The letter of proposal, amended if necessary, will then be submitted to the Research Advisory Committee (RAC).

On the receipt of a proposal to create a new Research Centre/Institute, the RAC will review the proposal, seeking external input as necessary and will submit a summary report and recommendation to the Senate. In favourable cases, the RAC will recommend the establishment of the Research Centre/ Institute for a period of three to five years, with continuation subject to a review process.

Following Senate's review, its recommendation on the proposed Research Centre/Institute would be forwarded to the Board of Governors for consideration.

- 4.3.3 Upon The Board of Governors' approval of the establishment of a Research Centre/Institute, that Research Centre/Institute may use the University's name, address and symbols in connection with its activities and the approved Research Centre's/Institute's name on letterhead, in promotional material, in applications to external agencies, etc.

4.3.4 Annual Reporting Procedures

To facilitate the conduct of periodic review of Research Centres/Institutes, the director of each Research Centre/Institute shall provide, no later than 31 January each year, an annual report to the University officer to whom he/she reports as well as to the Vice President, Research & Development. This report should cover the previous year and detail: the activities of the centre and its personnel, including research accomplishments, graduate training and other research-related activities (e.g. conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.); and the Research Centre's/Institute's financial status. Each

Institute/Centre may choose to base its report on either the calendar, academic or fiscal year as best suits its activity cycle.

4.3.4 Procedures for Reviewing Research Centres/Institutes

In order to ensure that all research is consistent with the goals of the University and that Research Centres/Institutes reflect positively on the general reputation of the University, all Research Centres/ Institutes shall be reviewed by the RAC on a periodic basis but not less often than once every five years.

a) Review Process

- i Notice of the review will be communicated to the director of the Research Centre/Institute by the Vice President Research & Development at least nine (9) months prior to the end of the mandate of the Research Centre/Institute.
- ii In response to this notification, the director of the Research Centre/Institute shall submit to the Vice President Research & Development a report which contains the following:
 - a description of how and why the Centre/Institute has achieved or revised its original objectives; a detailed listing of its research and training accomplishments; a current membership list; and a detailed financial statement;
 - a five-year plan which identifies future research directions and development strategies;
 - letters indicating continued support for the Research Centre/Institute from appropriate Department Chairs, faculty/school Deans/Directors and partnering entities; and

- the names of individuals who could provide external assessments of the Research Centre/Institute.
- iii On the basis of this report as well as a review of annual reports, the RAC shall determine whether a formal, independent review committee should be struck to conduct a full review of the Research Centre/Institute. If a full review of the Research Centre/Institute is not warranted, because it is clear that the Research Centre/Institute either qualifies for continuation or that it does not, the RAC will recommend to Senate that the Research
- Centre/Institute continue for a period of three to five years, or that it be terminated, without further review. Any legal agreements that affect the status of the Research Centre/Institute must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation.
- iv In the event that a full review is required, a Review Committee will be appointed by the Vice President Research & Development in consultation with the RAC at least six (6) months prior to the end of the mandate of the Centre. The membership of the Review Committee shall normally include: a senior researcher with administrative experience and no direct involvement in the Research Centre/Institute (preferably a former Dean or Department Chair) who shall act as Chair of the committee; the director of another Research Centre/Institute; a researcher who is not affiliated with the Research Centre/Institute but is knowledgeable in the field of its research activity; the Vice President Research & Development or his/ her designate to assess financial and institutional concerns; and other members as deemed appropriate.
- v The mechanism by which the Review Committee elects to conduct the review shall be at the discretion of the committee in consultation with the Vice President Research & Development. Notwithstanding, the primary focus of the review shall be an assessment of:
- the extent to which the Research Centre/Institute has fulfilled its objectives;
 - the appropriateness of its future goals; and
 - its current and projected financial viability.

The review process should involve meetings with the director and

members and should also include the solicitation of external assessments as well as discussion with non-members of the Research Centre/Institute from related departments/fields.

- vi The Review Committee shall provide a written report to the Vice President Research & Development within four months of being established. Before submitting this report, the Chair of the Review Committee shall provide a copy of the report to the director of the Research Centre/Institute under review to ensure that the report contains no factual errors. The director may submit a written commentary on the report to the Vice President Research & Development.
- vii The RAC will consider the report of the Review Committee, consulting with the Committee and director of the Research Centre/Institute as necessary before making a recommendation to Senate concerning the future of the centre/institute. The recommendation may be:
 - continuation with review in 5 years;
 - continuation with review in 1, 2 or 3 years;
 - or termination.Any legal agreements that affect the status of the Research Centre/Institute must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation.
- viii In the event an Institute/Centre is to be terminated, the Institute/Centre shall have up to three months from the date of notification of the decision to conclude its activities.

5. Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Research Advisory Committee every three years. The Vice President, Research Development shall be responsible for seeing the review is undertaken.