



POLICY ON CENTRES, INSTITUTES, AND SCHOLARLY CHAIRS

Authorization: Senate
Established: February 26, 2002
Revised: May 30, 2011

1.0 SUBJECT

The following two-part Policy replaces the February 26, 2002 Senate policy on “Centres and Institutes at the University of Guelph”, and adds provisions for the establishment of Scholarly Chairs.

2.0 SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

The *University of Guelph Act*, Section 13, provides that the Senate is “...responsible for the educational policy of the University, and, with the approval of the Board [of Governors] in so far as the expenditure of funds and the establishment of facilities are concerned, may create such faculties, departments, schools or institutes or establish such chairs as it may determine...”

3.0 PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

In order to ensure that this Policy continues to be effective, it shall be reviewed periodically. The Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and the Vice-President (Research) are responsible for initiating this review no less than every five years.

4.0 PART 1: CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

- 4.1 A Centre or Institute provides the University with a structure that helps to align an array of scholarly resources, critical activities and collaborative opportunities in order to address an academic discipline or sub-discipline in a more focused and intensive manner. Centres and Institutes will be established and developed in a manner that is consistent with the University’s strategic directions and with the University’s Strategic Research Plan. The mission of a Centre or Institute may be directed towards research or programmatic activities.
- 4.2 Normally, those proposing to establish a Centre or Institute will request provisional approval for Centre or Institute status when:
- a) A large research project has received a substantial amount of funding and the scale of the project is such that it is necessary to expedite the establishment of a suitable management structure for administering the funds and monitoring the activities of the project.
 - b) A group of researchers have engaged in a collaborative initiative, and in order to expand their research program and attract funding from external agencies or University benefactors, official recognition as a Centre or Institute by the University is required.

- 4.3 The terms “Centre” and “Institute” are often used interchangeably; however for the purposes of differentiation, normally a Centre is established to coordinate and advance the scholarly activities of a number of faculty members across several departments, and is often a vehicle for interdisciplinary research and scholarly activity.
- 4.4 An Institute is established under a similar rationale; however, its mission may include more formal activities, such as offering degree credit courses and programs (e.g. a collaborative graduate program) and/or may involve significant funding and/or collaboration with other universities.
- 4.5 A Centre may evolve into Institute status, with the appropriate approvals as outlined below.
- 4.6 The President is delegated authority from Senate to make decisions concerning the establishment or decommissioning of Centres or Institutes in accordance with this policy. The President may delegate responsibility for decisions under this policy to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), or to the Vice-President (Research).

5.0 PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING A CENTRE OR INSTITUTE

- 5.1 Each proposal for a Centre or Institute must address the principles expressed in this Policy and must first be presented in writing to the Provost or Vice President (Research) for review and recommendation before it is presented to the President.
- 5.2 Proponents for the establishment of a Centre or Institute must provide evidence of successful collaboration with proposed partners, as well as evidence that there are substantial opportunities to generate funding for the maintenance of a modest administrative infrastructure and a long term program of research and scholarship
- 5.3 The activities of a Centre or Institute must be financially self-sufficient and create no liabilities for the institution.
- 5.4 Every proposal must include a business plan with the following details:
- The proposed name of the Centre or Institute, which should be an accurate reflection of its focus and/or area of activity, and shall comply with the Senate policy “Naming of University Academic Entities and Awards”.
 - The mission of the Centre or Institute including a description of the way in which the mission and activities of the Centre or Institute relate to the University’s strategic directions and priorities.
 - A financial plan that demonstrates that the Centre or Institute will be financially self-sufficient and will create no financial liabilities for the University.

- The composition, membership and terms of reference for the advisory group or scientific board (whichever is appropriate).
- The physical space (if required) identified and approved to house the Centre or Institute A list of the participating partners – internal or external to the University - in the establishment of the Centre or Institute, including a report on any and all contracts or memoranda of understanding or agreement established.
- The terms under which the Centre or Institute may be decommissioned. Where provision for decommissioning of a Centre or Institute is not already incorporated within the establishing documentation, the following process will apply:
 - A plan documenting the rationale for the decommissioning of a Centre or Institute, addressing the impact of the proposed action in terms of the University's institutional goals and priorities, any operational considerations, and the proposed plan to communicate the decommissioning, will be presented in writing to the Provost or Vice-President (Research) for review and recommendation before it is presented to the President.

5.5 All decisions to establish or decommission a Centre or Institute under this Policy will be reported to Senate by the President as soon as is practical following the decision.

6.0 PROCESS FOR REVIEWS AND REPORTS TO SENATE

6.1 Annual Reviews: Every year, on the anniversary date of its establishment, each Centre or Institute shall file an annual report with the Office of the Provost that shall include the following:

- A summary of the activities of the Centre or Institute over the previous year.
- A review and update of the financial plan.
- An updated membership list for the advisory group or scientific board.
- Any changes to the list of participating partners, external or internal.
- Any changes to assigned personnel or (if required) physical space.
- Every ten years, a request for continuation or decommissioning (as appropriate) of the Centre or Institute which will be considered on the basis of the information provided in the previous annual reports.

6.2 Reports to Senate: Senate will be provided with a complete inventory of all Centres or Institutes on an annual basis. The inventory will include information about the next scheduled review for each Centre or Institute. This inventory will be maintained publicly (e.g. on a University website) along with general information about Centres and Institutes including mandates, reports, assigned personnel, etc.

7.0 PART 2: SCHOLARLY CHAIRS

7.1 Scholarly Chairs make an important contribution to the life of the University. Scholarly Chairs fall into two categories:

- 1) Visiting scholars who are appointed to Scholarly Chair, but who do not receive a salary from the University of Guelph (covered by policies outlined in “Policy and Procedures for Nil-Salaried Academics” <http://www.vpacademic.uoguelph.ca/frprocedures/>)
- 2) Scholarly Chairs who receive salaries from the University (addressed in this policy).

7.2 The following definitions for “Scholarly Chair” will apply:

- This term refers to positions of a continuing or time-limited nature that allow the University to assign an individual with specialized expertise to focus on an element of a discipline or sub-discipline.
- Scholarly Chairs engage in activities that include primarily research, teaching, program and curriculum development, community outreach, advocacy or service.
- They must be associated with a particular academic department at the University, and are appointed through the existing policies and procedures for the appointment of faculty (as outlined in the Collective Agreement between the University and the University of Guelph Faculty Association) and the approval processes for research chairs (Canada Research Chairs/University Research Chairs).
- They may be affiliated with a Centre or Institute.

7.3 Scholarly Chairs will be established and developed in a manner that is consistent with the University’s strategic directions and the University’s Strategic Research Plan. Each Scholarly Chair will have a clear mandate that is documented and shared publicly. The mandate will indicate the range of activities and outcomes anticipated to be associated with the Scholarly Chair.

7.4 The process for review of a Scholarly Chair shall be as outlined in the provisions for the review of faculty in the Collective Agreement between the University of Guelph and the University of Guelph Faculty Association. The renewal of term for a Scholarly Chair shall be governed using the same review process as Canada Research Chairs (CRCs) and University Research Chairs (URCs) which shall be posted on the web site of the Office of Research.