UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA SYSTEM POLICY

Number: 10-063
Subject: Institutes and Centers

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I. INTRODUCTION: (Purpose and Intent)

The Florida Board of Governors Regulation 10.015 addresses the establishment and operation of State of Florida Institutes and Centers. Within the State University System of Florida, Institutes and Centers are classified as either (1) State of Florida institutes or centers or (2) University institutes or centers.

Institutes and centers are entities established to coordinate research, service, and/or educational/training activities that supplement and extend existing instruction, research, and service. Thus, institutes and centers are, by design, entrepreneurial. Although the University or one of its units may commit internal resources to help initiate and support these units, external funding will be expected to provide the largest part of the support for such a unit’s operation and activities. Thus, any proposal to initiate a new institute or center must make a compelling case for its establishment and its ability to attract external funding in a manner that the host unit could not otherwise achieve.

II. DEFINITIONS

An institute is an organized research unit established on a continuing basis primarily for the coordination and promotion of faculty research interests organized around a broad subject area.
Normally, the breadth of research projects and programs transcends department, school, college, or even campus boundaries. The creation of an institute requires clear and strong evidence of service to long-range University goals.

A center is (1) analogous to an institute but is more limited in scope, or (2) an organized research unit that serves a specific purpose within an institute, or (3) a unit that provides specialized capabilities to further research, enhance instruction, or deliver services.

The phrase "organized research unit" refers to collective research enterprises that typically contain in their title the word "institute" or "center" and are defined as follows:

- **University-level organized research units** report directly to a Vice President. These units are large scale, often multi-college, interdisciplinary organizations whose missions are directed toward the strategic strengths and initiatives of the University. University-level organized research units may receive some financial support from the USF System Vice President for Research and Innovation. The USF System Vice President for Research and Innovation will approve proposals for institutes and centers that constitute or are part of a University-level organized research unit, and the Office of Research and Innovation will participate in reviews and evaluations of institutes and centers that fall into this category.

- **College-level organized research units** report to a dean or designee. The mission statements of these units often have an interdisciplinary focus, but they are primarily sponsored by a given college. College-level organized research units may receive some financial support from the college or University.
• **Department-level organized research units** report to and are primarily sponsored and supported by an individual department. A department-level unit reports on a daily basis directly to the department chair.

• **Sponsored-Program Based organized research units** are established by the signatory authorization recorded on the initial proposal to a funding agency, and receive their designation from a grant competition or block funding offered by a federal or state governmental agency or private foundation. These units dissolve at the conclusion of the funding period unless they submit a successful renewal proposal or request status as an institution, college, or department-level organized research unit.

[Note on exclusions: There are entities within the University of South Florida System that use the term “Institute” or “Center” in their titles that are excluded from these Guidelines. Examples include the University of South Florida Health Sciences Center; the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI), but not centers or institutes within the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences that are serving research, teaching and service functions even if they are organized administratively under an FMHI unit; and USF advising, student health, computing, faculty development, and certain other centers. However, these entities may have institutes or centers under their purview that are covered by the procedures described in this document.]

III. **STATEMENT OF POLICY**
The USF System President may grant authorization for the development and implementation of University institutes and centers. All requests to form an Institute or Center must follow all internal approval processes.

If approved, all institutes and centers must comply with annual evaluation and budget reporting requirements. Formal evaluations of institutes and centers occur at least every seven years.

It is the responsibility of any college within which a given institute or center is organizationally located to provide oversight for the daily activities of the institute or center, including State University System Education and General (including carry forward), Contract and Grants, Fees, and Plant Operations and Maintenance. This is especially important in the case of multidisciplinary institutes and centers that involve faculty from multiple departments or colleges.

Deans will ensure that institutes and centers, like all other academic and administrative units, are conducting their daily activities in accordance with University policies and procedures with respect to financial operations, personnel actions, agreements with outside entities, and faculty activity reporting including outside activity and conflict of interest.

Colleges should also provide oversight of institutes and centers with respect to marketing and publicity to ensure; 1) accurate representation of their affiliation with the University, 2) maintenance of appropriate use of the University name, and 3) compliance with all applicable institutional requirements.
Deans are also responsible for ensuring that the required annual reviews of directors are completed along with annual reporting requirements set by the University. Deans are also responsible for ensuring that the required formal reviews of institutes and centers are conducted at least once every seven years.

When a University institute or center is disbanded, the college or other unit within which the institute or center is located must formally notify the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President by filing the appropriate forms. Each terminated institute or center must show a zero budget balance and complete the annual reporting requirements for the last year of operation.

Authorized by:

Provost and Executive Vice President

President