

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Academic Affairs
AREA: Academic Programs

Number: 12.03.03

SUBJECT: Procedures for Establishing and Operating Academic Institutes and Centers

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to define and set forth minimum criteria for the creation and oversight of centers and institutes for which the primary activities are academic in nature.

This MAPP does not pertain to research organizations (e.g., centers, institutes, clusters, core facilities, and laboratories) for which approval and oversight are provided by the appropriate chair(s), dean(s), and the Vice President for Research in concert with the Faculty Council Research and Scholarship Committee as documented in [MAPP 08.02.01](#).

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Bylaws – A set of rules adopted by a center or institute to provide a framework for its operation and management.
- B. Center or Institute – An academic center or institute, for the purposes of this MAPP, is an organization based at the University of Houston whose primary purpose is to enhance scholarly and/or instructional activities among the University of Houston and its faculty. Academic centers and institutes exist to provide a critical mass to attain national recognition, pursue grants, and partner with other institutions and outside organizations/entities. Academic centers and institutes may include other activities, such as research, student services, and public programs.
- C. The Committee: The Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes will be appointed by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

Note: The Committee will consist of eight faculty members appointed from those nominated by college deans and the Faculty Council who will each serve a two-year term.
- D. Sunset Review – A periodic evaluation of the need for the continued existence of a center or institute, based on an assessment of its effectiveness and performance.
- E. Termination – Cessation of operation and discontinuation of the use of the center name.
- F. Written Operating Procedures – A set of written instructions for dealing with a given situation or process.

III. CREATION OF CENTER OR INSTITUTE

- A. To establish a new center or institute, a group of faculty members must develop a proposal that includes the following:

1. **Introduction** – Presents a justification for the existence of the proposed center or institute;
2. **Goals and Objectives** – The benefits to the University of Houston must be presented, along with the benefits to the faculty involved;
3. **Delineation of Organization, Governance, and Membership** – Faculty membership can include tenure-track, clinical, instructional, lecturing and research faculty. An organizational chart must be provided. The role of the faculty must be defined, and standards must be set for faculty involvement. Faculty members listed must be active participants with defined roles and academic programs, including a clear statement of how they are involved;
4. **Program Reporting and Accountability** – A clear description of how the proposed center or institute will meet the program reporting and accountability requirements must be provided;
5. **Budget and Fiscal Accountability** – The proposed operating budget must be submitted for the first five years. Documentation of financial operations and business practices, including statements on financial accountability requirements must be provided;
6. **Space** – Space requirements must be identified;
7. **Commitments** – Administration-level, college, and departmental commitments must be described;
8. **Members** – A listing of faculty who will be members of the center or institute along with two-page curriculum vitae for each member must be submitted;
9. **Reporting Point** – The proposal must state to whom the center or institute will report to, both financially and administratively;
10. **Funding** – A list of recently funded activities related to the proposed center or institute, as well as projected sources of future funding must be provided;

Note: The role of the Division of Advancement and Alumni and the Division of Research must be documented in any funding projections.

11. **Impact** – A description of how the proposed center or institute will impact the University of Houston and the University of Houston System must be provided; and
 12. **Term** – The intended term of the center or institute must be provided.
- B. The proposal must be approved by the appropriate department chair(s) and dean(s) of the department(s)/college(s) involved, and by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost after receiving an advisory recommendation from the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes.
- C. All naming opportunities associated with an academic institute and center must follow appropriate policy and procedure for establishing naming rights according to the [System Administrative Memorandum \(SAM\) 08.A.04 - Naming Opportunities](#).

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

- A. The director and/or co-directors shall be selected to be the administrative head(s) of the center/institute in accordance with its bylaws.
- B. Each academic center/institute must have bylaws or written operating procedures.
 - 1. Bylaws must include rules governing faculty membership, rules governing to whom the academic center/institute reports, how the director is chosen, appointed, and terminated, statements on financial accountability and responsibility for the operations of the center/institute, procedures for changing the bylaws, and the selection and role of a faculty advisory council for the governance of the academic center or institute (when such an advisory council is utilized).
 - 2. Written operating procedures must include procedures governing reporting lines, rules on financial accountability and responsibility for operations of the center/institute, procedures for the appointment and termination of employees, members, and directors, and the frequency of meetings of such persons.
- C. The director must ensure that information on work performed by members of the center/institute is available, whenever necessary, to the appropriate administrators, department heads, and deans for deciding on increments, salary adjustments, promotions, and tenure.
- D. All academic centers and institutes must conform to the University's rules and regulations relating to personnel, property, program reporting, and financial accounting.
- E. Responsibility for the business administration of any academic center or institute will be to a single college, to be identified in the proposal for the creation of the center/institute. If more than one college is represented by the faculty participating in a center/institute, the deans of the participating colleges will agree to the responsible college and notify the Provost of that agreement. The chief business officer of that authority will ensure that the business administration of the center/institute complies with the requirements documented in [MAPP 01.02.01, Business Administration](#).
- F. Notice of financial and human resources matters affecting a member of the center or institute will be provided to the member's department chair or dean for approval as soon as practicable, but no later than 90 days after the notice.
- G. An annual report of activities for the fiscal year must be produced, including a financial statement. This report must be sent to the center/institute members, the department chair(s), dean(s), and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The University will consider providing financial or other assistance to the center/institute for the following academic year based on this report. Annual reports for a given fiscal year must be submitted by January 15th of the subsequent fiscal year.
 - 1. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will present all reports to the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes for review.
 - 2. The Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes will provide a report of its deliberations and recommendations to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

- H. A proposed operating budget and goals shall be developed every five years and presented to the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes.

V. PROPERTY DEVELOPED AND USED

The members of each academic center and institute, where appropriate, shall develop internal guidelines or agreements on the property developed or used by the center/institute. These agreements must conform to existing university rules and regulations and cover possible questions involving:

- A. Use of equipment and space;
- B. Copyrights, patents, royalties, and other intellectual rights; and
- C. Commissions, consulting, and service agreements based on work developed under the auspices of the center/institute.

VI. SUNSET REVIEW AND TERMINATION

- A. The Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes will develop procedures for Sunset Review and termination. These procedures shall be provided to each institute and center and shall include a list of items and questions to be considered in the review process, which is to be conducted at least every five years.
- B. Each academic center/institute will be reviewed every fourth year of a five-year term by the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes.
- C. The guidelines for termination of academic centers and institutes shall include:
 - 1. An academic center or institute may be voluntarily terminated by the relevant administrative body or director.
 - 2. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to lack of activity, faculty departure, or other indications that the academic center or institute is inactive.
 - 3. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to a significant lack of productivity in terms of scholarly activities. In addition, if training is a goal, lack of participation of trainees may also be grounds for termination.
 - 4. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to a significant reduction in faculty support of the academic center or institute indicated by a decline in faculty participation and resource sharing.
 - 5. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to evidence of problems with leadership or support because there is no named director, a failure to respond to inquiries, a failure to provide the required progress reports, and/or a discontinuance of departmental or college support.
 - 6. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to lack of financial viability.
 - 7. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to evidence of financial misconduct, academic/scientific misconduct, and/or related ethical misconduct or financial mismanagement.

8. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to failure to meet established goals for external support or return on investment, especially if the center or institute received startup funds or other sources of support from the University.
9. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to duplication of efforts or other indications that the organization is redundant.
10. An academic center or institute may be terminated due to space utilization that is incommensurate with the level of activity if attempts at relocation have been unsuccessful.
11. Non-voluntary terminations should be initiated by the academic center or institute's direct reporting supervisor, dean, or the Provost. The supervisor will follow the procedures specified per [MAPP 02.04.06](#).

D. Formal requests to terminate an academic center or institute will be evaluated by the UH Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes. After each such review, the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes shall make a written recommendation to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost regarding whether a center or institute should remain on the list of recognized centers and institutes. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost shall consider the recommendation of the Committee, but is not bound by the recommendation. The Provost's decision is final.

VII. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every five years

VIII. APPROVAL

/Diane Z. Chase/

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

/Raymond Bartlett/

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

/Renu Khator/

President

Date of President's Approval: October 14, 2025

IX. REFERENCES

[MAPP 02.04.06 – Reduction in Force](#)

[MAPP 08.02.01 – Policy for the Establishment, Evaluation and Discontinuation of Research Organizations](#)

[SAM 06.A.07 – Procedures for the Operation of Centers and Institutes](#)