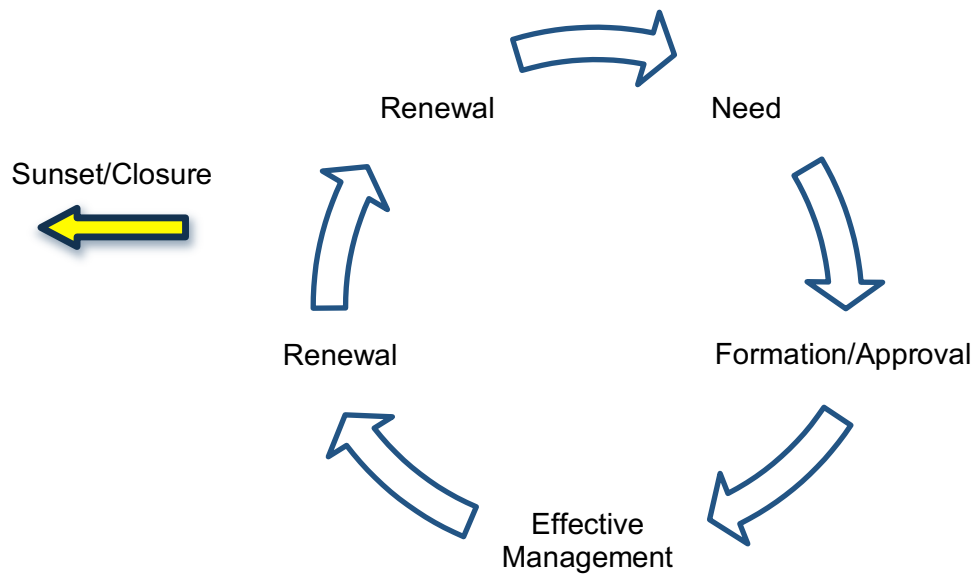


Best Practices for Institutes and Centers



Assessing the Need and Proposed Policy

Faculty members should thoroughly discuss the idea of creating a new center with their dean(s) and other relevant senior administrators at the University. They should be prepared to describe the mission and goal of this proposed unit and what would be accomplished by this unit that could not be accomplished without it. Once approved, faculty can move forward with a full proposal to the dean(s).

NOTE: The structure for interdisciplinary activity should be the minimal structure required to meet its scholarly and/or service objectives (research colloquium, joint research project, establishment of an incubator unit, grow into an externally funded center, and finally require the establishment of a formal division, center, or institute).

Institutes, Centers, Programs, and Initiatives (referred to as “centers”) are defined as:

An organization located within or alongside the traditional academic hierarchy of school/college and department that is formed to pursue an intellectual area of inquiry through teaching, research and or service activities typically bringing together faculty and often students. Centers may focus within a discipline or be interdisciplinary with faculty from a single department, school/college, or multiple units. The organization may be freestanding or within a department or school/college.

Suggested Process on the Formation of Centers or Institutes

Criteria considerations for the proposed unit.

Does the proposed unit:

- Align with the strategic direction of the School/University.
- Fill a need not already met by other entities in the School/University.
- A group of faculty members who are ready and able to provide leadership.
- Have a strategy for external support (philanthropy or sponsored activity).
- Position the School/University in an important emerging field of inquiry.
- Include faculty from more than one School and have an agreed upon governance model.
- Have a commitment of internal support until external support is realized.
- Have the support of the School leadership of the faculty involved.

Please see **business plan template** and **bylaws template** included at the end of this document or on the Provost website at provost.umich.edu/programs/bpci.

Regentally Approved or Established Centers or Institutes

The establishment of a center or institute by action of the Board of Regents is based on a number of factors, including budget, size, scope, and implications for the University community. Please contact the Special Counsel to the Provost at 734-936-2254 to obtain a determination whether the center or institute to be established requires Regents approval.

Regents Bylaw, Sec. 6.03. Institutes and Centers (revised April 1995)

Institutes may be established on recommendation by the president as subordinate units of the university, for the purpose of conducting teaching research, or service activities administratively organized as separate units ordinarily responsible to a major unit of the university. The executive functions of an institute shall be performed by a director and executive committee, appointed by the president, and responsible to the appropriate university officer.

Centers may be established on recommendation by the president for the support of interdisciplinary research, publication, and training in several departments within a school or college. The executive functions of the center shall be performed by a director and executive committee, appointed by the president, and responsible to the dean and executive committee of the college.

Effective Management of Unit and Annual Reports

Once a unit is created, it is normally approved for a five-year period. Management of the unit is the primary responsibility of the unit's director, which is carried out according to the policies and practices of the responsible school, college or other oversight body, as well as university rules and policies.

While each school manages its own process for regularly reviewing their units, the general process involves preparing an annual report and undergoing a periodic formal review. It would be appropriate to review the management and performance **as part of the annual budget conference**. While specific review

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criteria and required documentation will differ by school they include some of the following items:

- A brief assessment of the year's successes and challenges.
- Is the unit fulfilling the mission for which it was established?
- The unit's current budget (total GF, Research & Endowment monies), goals and metrics/measures** for the next two to three years.
- Center grant and other external funding sources.
- Current unit space occupancy (square footage).
- Center Organizational Chart.
- Staffing FTE (Direct and Indirect).
- Center Faculty (engaged in the unit's activities and the corresponding departments).
- A listing of publications by Center faculty.
- A listing of honors/awards for the Center.

** Examples of possible metrics:

- ✓ Funding
 - Total ICR
 - ICR/total grant expenditures
 - ICR/GF support
 - GF support as percentage of total operational expenditures
 - Revenue raised/Administrative costs
 - Faculty support (Grant and GF)
 - GF budget
 - Total space (square footage)
 - Infrastructure/Equipment (invested capital)
 - Fund balances
- ✓ Operational Effectiveness
 - Total FTEs, Staff FTEs
 - Administrative structure with titles
 - Administrative Costs/Total Costs
 - Shared Staff FTE's
 - Faculty workload
 - Utilization of space (time used/time available)
 - Administrative Audit results
 - Faculty retention
- ✓ Teaching & Educational Impact (Not all units have a teaching component)
 - Enrollment
 - Student to Faculty ratio
 - Degrees (certificates) awarded
 - SCH taught
 - Courses access or availability
 - Class sizes
 - Waitlists
 - Student Advising
 - Student Satisfaction
 - Number of Students participating in research

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- Learning assessments
- Standard test scores
- Job Placements
- Graduation Rates
- ✓ Research Effectiveness
 - Grants awarded/Grants submitted
 - Publications per year
 - Faculty teaching load (effort of salary to teaching)
 - “Participation index” based on teaching load
 - Faculty tenure rate
- ✓ Visibility & Impact
 - Mention of unit in media
 - Faculty recruitment
 - Program ranking
 - Number of units participating

Tracking Centers/Institutes/Initiatives

U-M is interested in tracking organizations that are labeled "institute", "center", and "initiative" or, in some cases, other identifiers (such as "program"). For simplicity, we describe them hereafter as "centers". We should track organizations via a financial identifier in order to compile regular statistics without having to ask the unit administrators for data.

Other organizations will not need a financial identifier, though they should be tracked via a simple inventory (organization name and contact information), in order to report on the overall scope of such activity at U-M.

Listed below are categories with definitions and questions to help sort them into meaningful groups.

Categories 1 and 2 are those that the provost would like to track via a financial identifier, and 3 and 4 are those that the provost would like to include in our inventory (along with 1 and 2) without a financial identifier being necessary. Categories 5 and 6 describe organizations whose existence we will track in our U-M inventory for the sake of completeness. Below are the categories with questions that are intended to determine whether a given organization fits a particular category.

Category 1: University Center or Institute

The participants, activity, resources and/or oversight extend over more than one school/college/unit.

- Faculty participation crosses multiple schools/colleges
- Administrative/financial oversight of the center usually centrally located
- Center receives funding from multiple units

If an Institute: it is a separate university administrative unit and reports to a major university unit.

If a Center: it is a university unit within a school or college, or sometimes spanning several departments within a school or college, and although involves multiple schools or colleges, has an administrative home unit.

Category 2: School/College Center

The organization is contained within a single unit; however, the organization's activity is understood to play a role in the medium to long-term unit's academic strategy.

- Usually more than one individual carries out the center's leadership concurrently or overtime.
- Center has a medium or long-term funding agreement.
- Unit would want to continue the center's activity even if the center no longer existed.

Category 3: Sponsored Research Center

The unit is in existence only because the university received a center grant or contract and is dependent on the continuation of such funding.

- The center only receives Sponsored Research funding, although it may receive cost sharing from non-sponsored sources.

Category 4: Faculty Member Center

The organization carries out a teaching, research, or service program specifically associated with a particular individual.

- Center was set up as (part of) a recruitment/retention package.
- Center's activity would not continue in the absence of the faculty member.

Category 5: Administrative Center

The organization's activities are administrative or focused on a supporting role for the enhancement of teaching and/or research.

- Center does not conduct its own research activity.
- Center's membership is primarily non-faculty, or faculty members primarily conduct non-research activity for the center.

Category 6: Agency Center

The center is "affiliated with" the university but is not a university organization (an example is the Institute of Wildlife Fisheries).

- Center does not receive any university funding.
- Center primarily reports to a non-university body.

Comprehensive Reviews

It is a best practice that a periodic formal review, generally every five years, be done on a unit. Usually the Dean's Office will contact the unit director to initiate an internal review of the unit. The review committee

typically will be comprised of University of Michigan faculty; however, the need may arise due to expertise needed to assess the unit that an external reviewer will be asked to serve on the review committee, or at least provide input on the reputation of the unit outside of the University of Michigan. The final report of the review committee is usually advisory to the Dean.

Reviews typically entail five main objectives:

1. Has the center met the mandate for which it was established? This provides the opportunity to reassess whether an organization's direction, goals, strengths, and weaknesses are in the areas of the School/College's mission.
2. Is the center relevant to the mission of the School/College?
3. Has the center been a good financial steward of its resources? This assists in determining the present and future needs of each Institute/Center/Program with respect to personnel and other resources.
4. Does the current format of the center need to change, stay the same or change directions, and if so, what would be the future direction?
5. How is the current leadership performing? Reviews provide a mechanism by which the members of a center can express their views concerning the unit leadership.

Sunsetting/Closing/Discontinuance of a Center

General standards for consideration in closing, sunseting, or transitioning a center:

- The center cannot sustain itself financially, either by external or internal funds.
- The scholarly quality of work performed by the center falls below U-M norms.
- The original interdisciplinary nature of the center has disappeared, perhaps because what was once novel has been absorbed into the mainstream of a cognate discipline.
- The center is unable to attract new faculty, students, or dedicated leadership.

Sunsetting a center may have a number of manifestations, including:

- Transfer, intact, from status as a "Unit" center to a new home within a school or college. It may happen that a center evolves in such a manner that its interests fall completely within a single school or college. Under such circumstances, re-establishing within a college would be a logical transition.
- Redistribution of center resources and transfer some or all to other units.
- Spin-off as an entity separate from the University.
- Liquidation of all resources with return of assets to original stakeholders.

Sunsetting of a center may also involve a substantial degree of administrative effort and the process should follow procedures agreed upon in the document establishing the center with respect to the redirection, redistribution, or disposal of resources and assets (lines, equipment, space, funding, staff, etc.), including:

- The completion of remaining grant/contract obligations.
- Provision for bridging support for students appointed to the center.
- Determination of IT transitions for its website, databases, servers, clinical patient data (HIPPA).

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- Provision of bridging or other transition funds for dislocated staff.
- Assistance in placement, relocation or outsource activities for effected staff.
- Cover tenure obligations to academic faculty partially appointed to the center.
- Decommission facilities, especially specialized laboratories.
- Transfer facilities and space back to original stakeholder.

Helping each other and sharing best practices

If you have additional best practices that you would like to share with the broader university community, please email provost@umich.edu. We will update this document as appropriate.

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

**Proposal for the Establishment of
CENTER X**

at the University of Michigan, School of / College of _____

University of Michigan

Prepared by

XXXX
Department of XXXX

Dean's Office Staff Assistance:
xxxxxxx

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PART I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & PROPOSAL

Part I – Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is a concise, unified presentation of the main sections of the proposal, sufficient in content that a reader has a complete understanding of the proposal without reading the entire document. (Should not exceed two pages.)

Recommendations:

- Clearly state what is being proposed and what action is being requested from whom.
- Identify how the resources being requested will be used to secure independence and sustainability.
- Provide key, informative reasons why the proposal should be supported and the value created. (If risks or barriers have been identified, make sure to address them.)

PART II – CENTER BUSINESS PLAN

1.0 STRATEGIC VISION

1.0 Strategic Vision

This section should demonstrate an understanding of the bigger picture—what the Center intends to become and the role of the Center as part of the broader research and clinical enterprise at Michigan. Clearly articulate how the Center fits into the University mission and, as relevant, its three major components—education, research, and service and / or patient care. A Center Proposal should rationally integrate existing programs and engage faculty from diverse disciplines who have current research focuses that are consistent with or complementary to the mission and goals of the Center.

Subsections that should be included:

- **Mission:** A declaration of the purpose, priorities, and aspirations of the Center.
- **Goals:** Specific objectives of the Center.
- **Integration:** Assessment of the University of Michigan research landscape. Who else is doing this or something similar? Provide strategy for overarching integration. If integration of an existing activity is not planned, provide rationale for its exclusion.

1.1 Center Mission

1.2 Goals

1.3 Integration

2.0 CENTER INITIATIVES / PROGRAMS

2.0 Center Initiatives / Programs

This section should begin with a brief overview of the major initiatives and / or programs (e.g., research, education, core service, etc.) that will be the hallmark of the Center. Subsections should be used to highlight each program in greater detail, including a brief description of the short- and long-term objectives, the coordination with and importance to the Center as a whole, timing for implementation and dependence on the acquisition of key resources. *A Center should not merely house a number of siloed programs.*

2.1 Program A

Summary:

Objectives:

- text
- text

Timing:

Please see **Appendix 1.1** for a detailed account of Program A

3.0 ACADEMIC PEER ASSESSMENT

3.0 Academic Peer Assessment

In this section, explain how the Center fits into that landscape of the field of the Center's primary focus. Provide a concise evaluation of similar programs that exist at other institutions and their level of success (i.e., is there precedent?). What will distinguish the University of Michigan? What is the Center's competitive advantage(s)?

4.0 ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE & KEY FACULTY

4.0 ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE** & KEY FACULTY

The University recognizes the importance of a strong and committed leadership team for the success of a Center, specifically:

- Complementary attributes and strengths.
- Staying power.
- Common vision.
- Ability to work as a team.
- Professional and past experiences.
- A relationship with the reporting authority.
- ** See Bylaws Template

Center proposals should clearly define the key managers, scientific / operational advisors, and governance. A preliminary organizational chart should be included to demonstrate how authority and responsibility are distributed.

Discussion points for Key Faculty section:

- How will faculty be associated with the Center (appointments, affiliations, etc.)?
- What are the general rules or requirements for faculty participation?
- How is credit shared or contributions to an interdisciplinary program recognized?

4.1 Administration

4.2 Governance

4.3 Key Faculty

5.0 MILESTONES & TIMELINE

5.0 Milestones & Timeline

Center proposals should summarize the planned ramp up of all relevant programs and should highlight the timing of major milestones of the Center, including:

- Initial governance & administration kick-off
- New initiative / program launches
- Major faculty hires
- Significant space requirements

The Milestones & Timeline section should tie into the Required Resources and Financial Planning sections of the proposal.

5.1 Milestones

5.2 Timeline

6.0 RESOURCES REQUIRED

6.0 Resources Required

Identify the major incremental space, staffing, and equipment needs that will be required to take the Center from the launching phase to fully operational. Also include any commitments or agreements made with Departments or other stakeholders regarding:

- Administrative management (finance, HR, grant administrator, etc.),
- Space management,
- Sharing of recruitment costs, and
- Joint agreements.

This section should correspond with the Timeline and Financial Planning sections of the proposal.

6.1 Departmental Support

6.2 Space

6.3 Faculty & Staff

6.4 Equipment & Other Resources

7.0 FINANCIAL PLANNING

8.0 Financial Planning

Briefly describe the short- and long-term strategy for securing funding that leads to financial independence and sustainability. The Financial Planning section should show the projected direct costs and expected revenue sources of the new Center, and should include:

- 3-5 year forecasts of direct costs and revenues,
- Departmental commitments and funds flow relationship, and
- An identification of sources and uses of funds

Financials should correspond with the Timeline and Required Resources sections of the proposal.

7.1 Financial Overview

7.2 Financial Projections

8.0 METRICS OF SUSTAINABILITY & SUCCESS

8.0 Metrics of Sustainability & Success**

Centers should become independently sustainable. Performance measurements that gauge the progress and success of the Center should be clearly stated. [See examples of metrics in Best Practices Guide.] Centers should also build in conditions for sunseting in business plan. [See examples of metrics in Best Practices Guide.]

PART III - APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1.0: X

1.1 X

APPENDIX 2.0: X

2.1 X

2.2 X

BYLAWS TEMPLATE

Article 1. NAME AND AFFILIATION

- 1.1 *Name.* The name of this organization shall be the X, University X ("the Center").
- 1.2 *Affiliation.* The Center is one of the constituent centers of X School /College, University X.

Article 2. GOAL AND MISSION

- 2.1 *Goal.* The goal of the Center is to ...
- 2.2 *Mission.* The mission of the Center is:
 - to _____ and facilitate interdisciplinary research and teaching related to _____.
 - to _____.
 - to _____.

Article 3. PARTICIPATION

- 3.1 *Affiliates.* The Center may designate as "Affiliates" of the Center any interested individuals (including, in particular, members of the University X faculty) whom it expects to contribute...
- 3.2 *Associates.* The Center may negotiate with selected Affiliates who are willing to... for designation as "Associates" of the Center.

Article 4. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

- 4.1 *Reporting.* The Center shall be accountable to the Dean and reporting to _____, the Center director, and the Steering Committee.
- 4.2 *Steering Committee.* The activities of the Center shall be overseen by a Steering Committee of a chair and XX to YY members, who shall be appointed by _____ for X-year terms. Their appointments may be renewed up to X times and may be staggered initially to facilitate rotations in future years. The Center's Steering Committee shall adopt the bylaws of the Center, approve its general policies, elect its Executive Committee, and oversee its management. The Steering Committee shall meet at least twice each semester. Steering Committee meetings may be called by...
- 4.3 *Executive Committee.* The Steering Committee shall select an Executive Committee composed of the chair and XX to YY of its members and generally representative of the major units of the university participating in the Center.

- 4.4 *Director.* The Center's Director shall be appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Steering Committee and the Center Steering Committee, and shall be an ex officio member of the Center Steering Committee and its Executive Committee.
- 4.5 *Subsidiary bodies.* The Steering Committee shall have the power to create such subcommittees, advisory boards, working groups, and other subsidiary bodies as it deems to be needed to carry out the work of the Center.

Article 5. AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

- 5.1 *Amendment of the Bylaws.* These bylaws may be amended or repealed by vote of a majority of the Steering Committee, acting at a meeting for which the agenda and the proposed amendment were circulated to the members at least one week in advance.
- 5.2 *Severability.* If any provision of these bylaws is held to be illegal, unenforceable, or inconsistent with University rules, that provision shall be automatically severed and removed from these bylaws, the remainder of which shall remain in force.