

Tracking Centers, Institutes, and Initiatives

U--M is interested in tracking organizations labeled as "institute", "center", and "initiative," as well as other identifiers such as "program." For simplicity, we will refer to them collectively as "centers." These organizations should be tracked via a financial identifier to compile regular statistics without burdening unit administrators.

Other organizations that do not need a financial identifier should be tracked using a simple inventory, including the organization name and contact information), to report on the overall scope of such activity at U-M.

The categories below are defined to help sort organizations into meaningful groups. Categories 1 and 2 will be tracked via a financial identifier. Categories 3 and 4 will be included in our inventory, along with Categories 1 and 2, but do not require a financial identifier. Categories 5 and 6 describe organizations that will be tracked for completion in our U--M inventory. 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

Definition:

A University Center or Institute is an entity that extends beyond a single unit within the university, focusing on interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, and often inter-institutional collaboration for teaching, research, and service activities.

Criteria:

- **Interdisciplinary Reach:** Involves faculty participation from multiple schools or colleges.
- **Central Oversight:** Administrative and financial oversight is centrally located, often at the university or provost level.
- **Diverse Funding Sources:** Receives funding from multiple units within the university and/or external sources.
- **University Mission Alignment:** Aligns and supports the strategic goals of the university.
- **Significant Impact:** Demonstrates substantial impact on research, education, or service at a broad university level.
- **Governance Structure:** Has a governance model approved by university leadership, often reporting to a central administrative unit.

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Category 2: School/College Center

Definition:

A School/College Center operates within a single school or college, focusing on specific academic or research areas pertinent to that unit's integrated strategy.

Criteria:

- Departmental Integration: Activities are limited to the faculty and departments within a single school or college
- Strategic Role: Plays a significant role in the school's or college's academic strategy
- Funding Agreements: Generally has medium or long-term funding agreements within the school/college budget
- Leadership Roles: Led by more than one individual over time or concurrently within the school/college.
- Operational Independence: Manages its own budget and potentially its own administrative space within the school or college
- Typical Support: Often supported by the school's leadership financially and administratively

Category 3: Sponsored Research Center

Definition:

A Sponsored Research Center is primarily funded by external research grants or contracts and focuses solely on specific research objectives tied to these funding sources.

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

Criteria:

- External Funding: Operates primarily on sponsored research funding or associated cost-sharing from non-sponsored sources.
- Funding Dependent: Existence is contingent on the continuation of such external funding.
- Research Focus: Directed towards specific research goals dictated by grant or contract stipulations.
- Limited Longevity: Operates for the duration of the grants or contracts received.
- Reporting Requirements: Required to submit regular reports to funding agencies and comply with their guidelines and oversight.

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Category 4: Faculty Member Center

Definition:

A Faculty Member Center revolves around the expertise, research, or service program specifically associated with an individual faculty member typically set up as part of recruitment or retention.

Criteria:

- Personal Association: Directly tied to the work, research, or service program of a specific faculty member.
- Recruitment/Retention: Often established as part of a recruitment or retention package for a faculty member.
- Limited Scope: Activities and relevance often limited to the scope of the faculty member's work or interest.
- Dependent Continuity: The center's existence is highly dependent on the faculty member's continued association with the university.
- Autonomy in Activities: Operates with high autonomy but often under the faculty member's department or school/college

Category 5: Administrative Center

Definition:

An Administrative Center focuses on supporting and enhancing teaching and/or research activities without conducting its own independent research.

Criteria:

- Support Role: Primarily enhances and supports research and teaching activities rather than conducting original research.
- Non-Research Activity: Faculty involvement is generally in non-research roles or administrative capacities.
- Non-Faculty Membership: Membership and leadership are mainly administrative, non-faculty personnel.
- Operational Focus: Enhances operational efficiency within certain academic or service areas.
- Financial Tracking: Often does not require financial identifiers for research funding but needs operational budget tracking.

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Category 6: Agency Center

Definition:

An Agency Center is an organization affiliated with the university but primarily operates under the leadership and standards of an external, non-university agency.

Criteria:

- External Affiliation: While the center may have university affiliation, leadership and primary accountability lie with an external non-university body.
- No University Funding: The center does not receive funding from the university.
- Reporting Structures: Often reports to their respective external organizations rather than university leadership.
- Independent Operations: Operates independently in terms of governance, compliance, and strategic direction.