

**California State University, Sacramento**  
**Campus Policy on Centers, Institutes and Similar Entities**  
**(DRAFT – November 2010)**

*Policy Administrator: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs*

*Authority: President to Provost*

*Effective Date: March 8, 1996*

*Updated: November 2010*

*Policy File Number: UMC2050.htm (formerly)*

**Preamble**

California State University, Sacramento (Sacramento State) recognizes and encourages the development of appropriate centers, institutes and similar entities (hereafter: Centers) as important contributors to applied research, scholarship, public service, student-centered programming, and the provision of specialized training. Centers often bring together faculty and staff of similar interest to work in collaboration on compelling projects, problems, initiatives and research that are best addressed through a more focused, formalized structure. Centers can serve as catalysts for innovation, research development and programmatic outreach by groups of faculty and through interdisciplinary collaborations. Centers may serve any or all of the following purposes:

- Expand the programmatic capacities of a College or the University;
- Provide for and coordinate research-related and other public service programs;
- Enhance and expand the conduct of faculty research and scholarship;
- Enhance the University's ability to obtain external funding in support of its mission.

It is important to note that some Centers, including research-based Centers, often utilize external or sponsored funding to support their development and operations, and they typically do not draw on internal teaching-centered resources for their establishment or support. The official campus list of Centers primarily supported via external (sponsored) funding is maintained by the Office of Research Administration at [www.csus.edu/research](http://www.csus.edu/research).

**Introduction**

Consistent with Executive Order 751 (CSU Office of the Chancellor – 7/2000), the Provost is charged by the President with overseeing all Centers, ensuring their compliance and operational integrity, and maintaining an official list of all research-based Centers. EO 751 stipulates that each CSU campus have explicit policies and procedures for establishing, operating, monitoring, reviewing, and discontinuing Centers, and that these policies are to be consistent with principles of academic freedom and academic responsibilities to ensure that the activities of each Center:

- (1) Contribute to the fulfillment of the California State University mission and the campus mission;
- (2) Are consistent with generally accepted tenets of scholarship (e.g. subject to peer review);
- (3) Meet accepted standards of academic research; and

- (4) Comply with all applicable laws and regulations and comply with the California State University and campus risk management policies.

This policy establishes the framework for oversight of Centers at or affiliated with Sacramento State. There are two types of Centers addressed:

**Category 1: Student or Academic Program-Oriented Centers**

Category 1 Centers are usually more internal, campus-focused, and are generally non research-based academic or student-oriented entities within Colleges or campus divisions. If they rely on external funding for support, such support is sporadic and fairly short-term in nature. Category 1 Centers are the responsibility of the respective Dean or division Vice President and therefore must respond to the policies and procedures established within that division for operational conduct and oversight. Category 1 centers typically operate with less than \$50,000 per year in external funding.

**Category 2: Research-Based Centers**

Category 2 Centers are typically externally-focused and usually involve research, service and outreach activities. All such Centers rely primarily on external funding, are housed within one or more Colleges or Divisions, report directly to one or more Vice Presidents or Deans, and are approved based on their potential and continued contributions to the mission of their home unit and the University and the principles outlined above. At the Vice President's or Dean's discretion, Centers may coordinate their activity with and through a department chair. However, responsibility remains with the Vice President or Dean to work closely with the center director to ensure continued alignment of Center activities and funding with overall University and unit goals and resources. Category 2 centers typically receive greater than \$100,000 in sponsored funding per year for three consecutive years.

**Oversight of Category 1 Centers**

With regard to Category 1 Centers, the unit in which a center is housed shall be responsible for procedures to develop and monitor center programming and funding. These procedures should include means of proposing, establishing, reviewing annually, and closing such entities in a manner consistent with the practices and operational needs of the unit. Vice Presidents and Deans provide oversight for all Category 1 Centers within their units

**Oversight of Category 2 Centers**

As with Category 1 Centers, Vice Presidents and Deans provide oversight for all Category 2 Centers within their units. However, in addition, the Assistant Vice President for Research Administration is responsible for supporting the Provost to ensure compliance and funding coordination for all Category 2 Centers. Primarily due to their complexity, visibility, and receipt of external funding, Category 2 Centers are more explicitly covered by the requirements stipulated in EO 751 and, therefore, the following additional requirements apply to Category 2 Centers only:

**Proposing a Research-based (Category 2) Center**

Category 2 Centers typically are proposed by unit personnel (most often faculty members, sometimes a service unit director) to their unit supervisor (most often a dean, sometimes a vice

president), who determines whether to forward the proposal to the Provost. A draft of the proposal should be sent to the AVP for Research Administration for review and comment prior to formal submission to the Provost. The approval of a Center is predicated upon the identification of a compelling need to be addressed through the Center's activities, in a manner that is more effective than current practice or structure allows. The Director of a Center must be approved by the unit director and must be, except in rare cases approved by the Provost, a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in good standing.

All Centers are initially established for a developmental period not to exceed three years, at which time a comprehensive review is undertaken to examine performance and consider the potential future and direction of the Center. A proposal to initiate a Center should not exceed five pages and should contain, at a minimum:

- 1. A compelling rationale for the establishment of the Center, with a clearly stated set of objectives, planned activities and outcomes;*
- 2. Indication of a clear relationship to the mission of the College or the University;*
- 3. A clear administrative structure and reporting line to a Dean(s);*
- 4. An established and approved plan for the development of financial support, including the anticipated sources of external funding.*

#### **Annual Report of Category 2 Center Activities**

The Provost is charged by the President with overseeing Centers, with such oversight conducted through appropriate unit supervisors (e.g., college deans, division vice presidents) and the Office of Research Administration. All Centers report directly to a unit supervisor, who therefore serves functionally as supervisor for the Center Director in his/her Center capacity. Unit supervisors are responsible for working closely with Center Directors to ensure continued alignment of Center activities and funding with overall unit goals and resources. The Director is subject to all relevant unit and university policies and procedures and his/her performance is considered as part of the annual report of the Center.

By February 1<sup>st</sup> each year, the Director shall provide to the unit supervisor for review and comment a 3-5 page summary of the Center's activities and accomplishments, primary expenditures, issues of concern, and plans for the next fiscal or academic year. The unit supervisor and Director are encouraged to make available a copy of the annual review to the Department, College, and interested parties outside of the College. A copy must be sent to Research Administration for inclusion in the official record.

#### **Comprehensive Five-Year Reviews of all Category 2 Centers**

In addition to annual reports from the Center to the unit supervisor, comprehensive reviews of Centers are required every five years by a formal review team whose members are selected by the unit supervisor, in consultation with the AVP of Research Administration. Review teams may consist of campus administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, or community members as appropriate. The chair of the team shall be selected by the unit supervisor, and the comprehensive review team shall produce a final report (5-7 pages plus attachments) that addresses at a minimum the following:

1. *The activities of the Center since the last review;*
2. *The successes and failures of the Center in meeting the goals of the last five-year plan;*
3. *The criteria by which the Center is to be evaluated over the next five years vis-à-vis a proposed plan for the next five years;*
4. *How the Center expended its resources and any concerns over such expenditures, current or anticipated;*

The draft report may be reviewed with the Director and others as appropriate, and should include specific recommendations for action by appropriate campus entities, including a recommendation to the appropriate unit supervisor and the Provost for continuation or closure of the Center. A copy of all annual and comprehensive reviews will be housed in the Office of Research Administration, as is the schedule of reviews.

### **Closure of a Center**

Occasionally, the continued operation of a Center (either Category 1 or 2) may not be sustainable due to changes in funding, institutional priorities, retirements, departures, faculty interest, or other factors. Proceedings to close a Center may be initiated by the unit supervisor or the AVP of Research Administration, in consultation with the Provost. Closure actions may be based on a determination of a lack of or inappropriate activity, reduced or non-existent external funding, or structural changes within affected Departments, Colleges, or other University units.

All personnel, operational and fiscal matters associated with the closure of a Center must be approached with careful attention to integrity, liability, and the University's reputation. Any outstanding fiscal matters are the responsibility of the supervisor of the unit to which the Center reports.

### **Additional notes:**

1. Centers are identified in all formal correspondence (including contracts) as "California State University, Sacramento's Center for [Center name]."
2. Centers that receive federal or state funds will be subject to additional compliance policies and reporting as required federal and state regulations and by the Office of Research Administration.
3. Until a Center is approved, employees or entities of the University or its auxiliaries may not represent themselves, in electronic, written or verbal form, as representing an approved Center.
4. Templates for proposing a Center, as well as templates for annual or five-year reports, may be obtained from the AVP for Research Administration.