

UCF- 2.035 Institutes and Centers

(1) **Purpose.** In order to ensure that institutes and centers implemented within the State University System are of the highest quality and are aligned with the goals of the university and the Florida Board of Governors, the university adopts the following criteria and guidelines for institutes and centers.

(2) **Definitions.** The university makes no distinction between the terms “institute” and “center”. UCF adopts the definitions of institute and center types found in the Florida Board of Governors’ (“BOG”) regulation 10.015, “Institutes and Centers” (“BOG Regulation 10.015”). The term “institutes and centers established by the Florida Legislature” may be shortened to “legislative institutes and centers”.

(3) **Compliance.** UCF adopts all responsibilities and procedures outlined for universities in BOG Regulation 10.015.

(4) **Records and Forms.** The Office of Research shall maintain:

- (a) Copies of all the records described in this regulation and BOG Regulation 10.015 for the current and all prior years for which they exist, as well as copies of all data-request responses sent to the BOG or other state agencies.
- (b) A list of all entities in the university with “institute” or “center” in their names, their center type, status, director, contact information, governing unit, last and next review dates, mission, purpose, statute (if formed by statute), and other pertinent data.
- (c) Any public list of institutes and centers mandated in BOG Regulation 10.015.
- (d) Form(s) for establishing, changing, disbanding, and exempting institutes and centers. These shall be published by the Office of Research along with instructions for filling them out and submitting them.

(5) **Exempt Institutes and Centers** – There are two types of institutes and centers that are exempt from reporting and periodic evaluation under this regulation:

- (a) **Exempt Scholarly Institute or Center** – Entities with “institute” or “center” in their names that are established by a single grant or other limited-term funding not originating in Florida legislation that specifically creates them. Generally, if an external entity requires periodic progress and financial reporting upon which continued funding is contingent, the entity is exempt from additional reporting and evaluation under this regulation and from registration with the BOG. The ongoing existence of such centers remains under the purview of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPR) via the function of approving all external funding. However, such entities may apply to become university or State of Florida institutes or centers of their own volition. The VPR will consider the likely duration of funding and potential other sources of funding in evaluating such proposals. Endowed centers are not exempt, as their funding is long-term. Institutes or centers that have become full academic departments, schools, or colleges reporting to an academic dean or the provost are exempt and may continue to use their institute or center names for branding purposes.
- (b) **Exempt Non-Scholarly or Internal Institute or Center** – Entities with “institute” or “center” in their names that do not serve a scholarly purpose or do not interact with people or entities outside UCF and that do not implement a purpose established by the Florida Legislature or BOG. These include, without limitation, the University Writing Center, the Student Health Center, the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, the Duke Energy UCF Welcome Center, and centers

established for the mentorship of or affinity among or between students and faculty, as they do not interact with people or entities outside UCF. However, institutes established to award scholarships to UCF students by the Florida Legislature are not exempt, due to their creation by legislation. Some entities called “center” or “institute” may have a primary purpose that is internal, but may have some external scholarly interactions, such as the Center for Distributed Learning. The VPR or designee, in consultation with relevant university leaders, shall determine whether the balance of such activities requires the establishment of a university center and reporting under this regulation. Use of the terms “center” or “institute” in the names of such new entities is discouraged, to avoid confusion with the BOG-regulated centers and institutes.

(6) Establishment of Institutes or Centers

- (a) Establishment of all non-exempt and exempt scholarly institutes and centers begins with the submission of a proposal to create an institute or center by the proposed director to the Office of Research with support of the supervising Dean or Vice President using the form published for that purpose. Exemption of non-scholarly or internal institutes and centers follows the procedures below.
- (b) Establishing a university institute or center requires the approval of the proposal by the VPR, who will notify the applying director, involved academic unit head(s), Provost, and President and will register the new institute or center with the BOG, per BOG Regulation 10.015.
- (c) State of Florida institutes and centers require the proposal above as well as the additional items listed in BOG Regulation 10.015. They require VPR approval as well as approval of the Provost and President. The VPR or designee will receive the proposal, route it through these approvals, and notify the appropriate personnel, as for a university center.
- (d) The proposed director of a legislative institute or center must submit the same proposal as for a university center, citing the establishing legislation. Approval of the director and release of funds requires the same approvals and notifications as a State of Florida institute or center. The proposal, which includes the identification of a director, must be submitted as soon as practical and certainly before the legislative vote approving the funds, so that institute or center approval and personnel notification may occur before the arrival of funds. In the absence of such a proposal, the VPR, in consultation with the Provost and President, shall identify a director and charge that person with submitting a proposal, which must be received and approved before funds are released, unless the legislation specifies otherwise.
- (e) Directors of scholarly entities using the terms “institute” or “center” in their names but desiring exemption from university reporting shall submit the appropriate Office of Research form and shall include the funding proposal or other establishing document as an appendix to the proposal narrative. The request shall justify why the entity qualifies for exemption. VPR approval and personnel notification follows that of a university center. The director shall update the establishing document with the Office of Research upon approval of each funding renewal and shall respond in a timely manner to information requests from the Office of Research. If not approved, the VPR or designee shall give the reason and may require an application to establish a university center. Entities not receiving exemption or establishment may not use the terms “institute” or “center” in their names.

- (f) The VPR or designee will determine whether non-scholarly or internal entities using “institute” or “center” in their names are exempt. New entities using “institute” or “center” shall notify the Office of Research of their formation.
1. The VPR or designee, at their discretion, may require the leadership of such entities to submit a request for exemption of a non-scholarly or internal institute or center. Entities not receiving such a request are exempt by default until they receive one. Entities may submit such a request of their own volition to receive a determination.
 2. Acceptance or denial of exemption must be in writing and include justification of the decision. Denied entities must cease using the terms “institute” or “center” in their names and descriptions in all internal and external speech and materials within 90 days of denial (historical materials shall not be altered retroactively).
 3. On receipt of a proposal to create a non-exempt or exempt scholarly institute or center, the VPR or designee may grant another 90-day grace period to allow time for the approval process.
 4. Exempt entities that have altered their functions must notify the Office of Research of the change in writing and may be required by the VPR or designee to submit a new request for exemption, which may be accepted or denied as above.

(7) Institute and Center Reporting

- (a) Annual Reporting – All legislative, State of Florida, and university institutes and centers must file annual reports for the prior fiscal year with the Office of Research, no later than July 31 of each year. The Office of Research will provide instructions and templates for annual reporting, which must be used. The VPR or designee shall review the reports and may require revisions to comply with instructions or for clarity. Directors shall respond to revision request with priority, and certainly within two weeks of receipt. The review process shall conclude no later than September 15 of the same year or 15 days before the BOG’s annual request for center and institute financial data, whichever is sooner.
- (b) Periodic Review and Evaluation
1. The VPR or designee shall periodically review and evaluate each non-exempt institute and center. Legislative and State of Florida institutes and centers shall be evaluated every five (5) years. University institutes and centers shall be evaluated every seven (7) years.
 2. The Office of Research shall provide templates and instructions for the institute’s or center’s component of the overall evaluation, which must be used. These are due to the Office of Research by July 31 of the evaluation year. The VPR or delegate shall meet with the director to discuss the review before concluding the evaluation. The process shall conclude on the same schedule as the annual reporting process. Either the institute or center or the Office of Research may, at its expense and discretion, use an external consultant in preparing its portion of the review.
 3. At a minimum, all reviews and evaluations shall include:
 - a. A determination of the institute’s or center’s progress against defined goals and objectives within the context of the institute’s or center’s mission, the participating university missions and strategic plans, and the current BOG Strategic Plan;

- b. An assessment of the return on investment of state dollars, if applicable;
 - c. The need for continuation of the institute or center;
 - d. Possible changes in mission or organizational structure;
 - e. Budget reduction or expansion;
 - f. Recommendations for change of classification, if applicable; and
 - g. Recommendations for status change (active, inactive, terminated), if applicable.
4. In cases where BOG Regulation 10.015 requires it, the VPR or designee shall submit a copy of the review and evaluation as specified.

(8) Changes to an Institute or Center

- (a) Renaming, reorganizing, significantly altering the mission or purpose, deactivating, activating, or disbanding an institute or center are fundamental changes that must be approved by the same authority(ies) as would approve the entity's creation, and with the same notifications. They are initiated using a form provided by the Office of Research and are submitted following the form's submission instructions. The VPR or designee shall receive, review, and route them, and make the same personnel notifications as for approval of a university center. Involved faculty and staff shall be notified as well.
- (b) Naming a new director is in the authority of the supervising Dean or Vice President, who shall notify the VPR or designee as well as involved faculty and staff in writing, including the effective date of the change. The VPR or designee shall make the same personnel notifications as for approval of a university center.
- (c) Disbanding a university institute or center may be initiated by the center director with the supervising Dean or Vice President's concurrence; by the supervising Dean or Vice President; or by the VPR, Provost, or President or their designees using a form published by the Office of Research. These are evaluated and approved by the same authorities as would approve establishment of such a center, and with the same personnel notifications. The VPR or designee shall receive, review, and route the form and make the necessary notifications. Involved faculty and staff shall be notified as well. If other universities are involved, their presidents shall be notified of UCF's withdrawal from the entity if a majority does not agree to disband it.
- (d) Since the VPR, Provost, and President must all approve creation of a legislative or State of Florida institute or center, any one of them may approve disbanding such a center, effectively by withdrawing their consent. For State of Florida institutes or centers, the VPR or designee must notify the Provost, who must forward the request to the BOG for a decision under its Regulation. If the BOG does not order disbanding, the Provost or President may withdraw UCF participation from the institute or center.
- (e) Upon disbanding, the director shall work with the VPR or designee in carrying out UCF's obligations under BOG regulation 10.015. Fiscal information must be provided as part of the annual reporting process if the institute or center expended any funds during the fiscal year in which it was disbanded.

Authority: Board of Governors Regulations 1.001 and 10.015. History: New 10-6-14. Amended: 10-20-22, 9-22-25.