

UCCS Policy 200-013

Frequently Asked Questions- Spring 2021

Question: What was the impetus for creating this policy document?

Answer:

- 1) Policy 200-013 is a long standing policy at UCCS. The policy, that is still currently in affect, states that *Approval for each new unit (center or institute) will be for an initial period of five years. At the end of this time period the unit will be automatically terminated ("sunset") unless formally reauthorized through this review process. And further notes that Centers and institutes will be reviewed on a regular basis, and the normal review schedule is every five years.*
- 2) The campus was not conducting any reviews. In part, this was because an examination of which units (center or institutes) would need a review was complicated by several units using the title “center” that did not meet the APS definition of a center. It was also determined that a five-year cycle was too frequent and that more often than not, centers would not need a review at all. As such, the new policy states that a center *may be reviewed by the EVCAA... and shall be reviewed no more than once within a seven-year period.* This allows for a center to not be reviewed at all.
- 3) The campus process for center creation was governed by an undated policy and procedure. In practice, some new centers were approved with consent of the Chancellor whereas other centers were created without any administrative knowledge. Many units use the title center or institute, but have no bylaws, no reporting structure, and/or no F&A distribution plans. This has created confusion on which units are really Centers or Institutes and which might require a review and which do not.

Question: Where did the definition of Center come from?

Answer:

The definitions were adopted directly from APS 1008 - Feb 1, 2012 – with modifications for clarity informed by the EAB September 18, 2020 report on naming conventions for Centers and Institutes. When APS 1008 was updated in 2018 it removed Centers. However, the definitions in that 2012 iteration provided the foundation for the campus definitions. Those original definitions were:

- A. *INSTITUTES* - An institute is defined as a single or multi-disciplinary unit which is organized to conduct education, research and creative work, and/or leadership and service activities. Such entities are characterized by organizational permanency, programmatic autonomy, a broad program of study, and an annual operating budget that is fiscally independent of other academic units. They are expected to have substantial external funding (typically over \$1 million/year), commitments for associated faculty lines, evidence of long-term sustainability, a program of research training, and substantial infrastructure. Faculty and research/teaching staff in institutes

usually participate in interdisciplinary graduate/undergraduate education programs. Institutes report to the campus chief academic officer or their designee and go through rigorous program review similar to that for academic departments.

- B. *CENTERS* - A center is defined as a single or multi-disciplinary unit which is organized to conduct education, research and creative work, and/or leadership and service activities. Such entities are characterized by less programmatic autonomy and less independence relative to institutes. Centers are typically organized around the investigation of a fairly specific theme, issue, project, or policy topic but often encompass interdisciplinary work spanning a number of academic fields. The lifetime of a center is often limited by the time and financial commitment to completing the particular project. Centers typically reside in departments, institutes, and/or colleges and report to department chairs, institute directors, or academic deans.
- C. *LABORATORIES AND BUREAUS* - Laboratories and bureaus are defined as single or multi-disciplinary entities whose primary functions are research and/or leadership and service. Laboratories and bureaus typically reside in departments and/or colleges and report to department chairs or academic deans.

Question: I have a research lab that uses the title of Center, do I have to change the name?

Answer:

No, the policy states that *Small Entities, Centers and Institutes established prior to this policy, are encouraged, but not required, to follow these definitions in their naming convention.*

Question: Do small entities need to follow this policy?

Answer:

No, though we encourage small entities to follow the spirit of the policy to inform their creation and review. Many of the units that already use the term “center” at UCCS likely fall into this small entity category and therefore would not need review or approvals.

Question: Why can't my research lab call itself a Center?

Answer:

If your research group already carries the name Center as of January 15, 2021, it may continue using the name. Going forward, small entities must not use the title Center, with alternative examples provided in the policy. Ensuring that we use a uniform definition in the designation of a Center helps to determine which units fall under this policy and must be reviewed. A research lab, for example, will not require review per this policy.

Question: Must all Centers be reviewed?

Answer:

No. All Centers that meet the definitions in the policy “may” be reviewed, but it is not required. Unlike our existing 200-013 which says all Centers “shall” be reviewed, which is a requirement. Saying “may” allows for flexibility with the goal to reduce the burden of doing numerous reviews. Moreover, if a Center is reviewed, the policy states that under normal circumstances a Center will not be reviewed more than once every seven years. This also eliminates overburdening units and personnel with too many reviews.

Question: Are faculty involved in the review teams?

Answer:

Yes. The policy uses a shared governance structure, to ensure faculty are involved including at least one representative from faculty assembly. Students, staff, community members, or external evaluators may also be included. The Center or Institute Director gives input into the review committee members. The policy states that *This review team must be formed with the objectives of the Center in mind*. Thus, a research focused center will likely include more faculty researchers whereas a primarily student focused center will likely include more students.

Question: Many Centers have multiple missions (e.g., serving students and conducting research), how do we know which type of review applies?

Answer:

The *primary* mission will be considered by the EVCAA only to help determine who will help manage the review process. For example, a primary research center would likely be organized by the AVC-R whereas a primary student focused center would likely be organized by the AVC-UEAP.

Question: My Center or Institute has never been reviewed before. How do I know if we fall under this policy?

Answer:

By design, there are very few entities that meet the definition of Center or Institute. As such, it is likely that the Center you are part of is not part of this review process and is either a campus entity with the title of Center (e.g, the Excel Center) or a research lab with the title of Center (e.g., the Center for Magnetism and Magnetic Nanostructures) or a departmental affiliated Center that is already reviewed as part of the academic program (e.g., the Center for Religious Diversity and Public Life) or is a community convening program (e.g., the Knapsack Institute). Deans and Directors will be asked to inventory existing entities that carry the name institute or center and will form a working group to determine which meet the definitions that fall under the policy. Going forward, the name Center or Institute will only be approved for those that meet the policy definitions.

Question: My Center is reviewed in other ways; do I still have to go through another review?

Answer:

No, if the Center is reviewed, for example, as part of an academic program, there is no need for a separate review (section 5b).

Question: Why might our Center be discontinued?

Answer:

As the policy notes in Section 5, there are many factors to be considered depending on the mission and activities of the unit under review. In general, it is expected that a unit that is in need of course correction, would be approved for continuance with an annual review for a number of specific years (Section 5oiii) before any recommendation for discontinuance would be made.

Question: Should I be worried our Center might be discontinued because the Chancellor holds a contrary opinion about our Director or our Center?

Answer:

No. The shared governance process for review ensures that the Chancellor is under advisement of a diverse team and is in consultation with the EVCAA.

Question: Our Center or Institute brought in a guest speaker that said something controversial and some might feel that this “damaged the reputation of the university” which is stated in the policy as a key principle. How will such an issue be dealt with?

Answer:

If the Center/Institute in question is under the jurisdiction of this policy, then not more than once every seven years would such an event be included in the review process. The Director would have the opportunity in their self-study to contextualize and discuss the perceived reputation damage, how the event does/does not align with the mission of the Center, and the sum total of information would be considered by the shared governance review team.

Question: Why does the Chancellor get final authority over approvals and review outcomes for Centers and Institutes?

Answer:

The Chancellor has always held approval authority over Centers, and Institute authority is detailed in APS 1008. The Chancellor is the chief campus officer who has the authority to make decisions for our campus. The designation of a UCCS Center or Institute implies a clear organizational and operational tie to the campus that implicates the university's mission, goals, and reputation. The Chancellor's role is to oversee the best interests of the university as a whole.

Question: Why are Institutes held to a higher standard?

Answer:

APS 1008 requires that *Institutes report to the campus chief academic officer or their designee and go through rigorous program review similar to that for academic departments.*