

# **William & Mary**

## **Formation and Operations of Centers**

### **(Financial and Administrative Policy and Procedures)**

Effective date: January 16, 2019

#### **Purpose**

William & Mary (the “university”) promotes the formation of a Center or Institute (other names are also used; Center is used throughout this document to encompass all such entities) to facilitate achievement of the university’s instructional, research, and outreach missions. They can take various forms and differ considerably in size, scope and intended or actual longevity. This document sets forth the policies and procedures by which Centers, current and future, are to be organized and operated.

*Please note: In the case of the School of Marine Science, several of its Centers are formed and/or mandated by the Commonwealth. The establishment and oversight of such Centers lie outside this policy and procedures, except to the extent that they are subject to standard university policies and regulations.*

Centers have proven to be effective means of organizing complex academic activities, particularly interdisciplinary research, instruction, and outreach. They allow faculty and others from varied backgrounds and expertise to come together to focus on and solve common problems that might not otherwise be addressed, and they have provided substantial growth in support for faculty, students, and facilities across the university. These units often serve as a fulcrum for securing extramural support. It is the desire of the university that these collaborative and innovative activities succeed according to appropriate metrics for each. These policies and procedures are designed to enhance the future success of Centers at the university.

A prerequisite for establishing or maintaining a Center is a faculty and/or staff member(s), typically working with staff and students, visitors and collaborators from other universities or business, who declare a common purpose and pursue shared research, instruction and/or outreach as an enterprise that involves common activities. Often, collaborative research and scholarship cannot be effectively carried out within one existing department or school, so a Center will contain shared resources, operations, facilities and personnel, requiring appropriate oversight, reporting and review. Centers, duly constituted (see Item 1 below), reviewed and approved according to the policies contained in this document, are organizational units of the university, and, in some instances, between universities.

Centers therefore are not typically created for the benefit of a few individuals. A Center should be proposed only when the formation of such entity provides substantial operational or strategic advantages relative to existing organizational units, and should be approved only if establishment of the Center is in the long-term best interests of the university, even when its immediate purview is more local. A Center is often, but not necessarily, interdisciplinary in scope, involving the faculty and students of two or more departments or schools.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Establishment**

For new Centers, unless created through state initiatives or mandates, a formal request to establish the entity must be submitted to the Provost for consideration and approval. The request to establish a Center within (or among) departments or schools may originate from any interested and involved party and requires the approval of the relevant dean(s). The request will contain a Proposal for the Center, which addresses all pertinent policy and procedure requirements, to include:

- a. The purpose and need for the Center, outlining the significant advantages it would provide to the university.
- b. The general nature of the faculty and student groups that will, directly or indirectly, be involved in the Center, and the clientele to be served by the Center.
- c. Proposed governance, including, as appropriate, the purpose and structure of any advisory board.
- d. Funding, including in-hand, committed, and prospective intramural and extramural support available for personnel, facilities, programs, and operations, followed by a proposed operating budget that incorporates these sources. The Proposal shall estimate the space, facilities and equipment to be used by the Center during its initial years of operation. A proposed policy for the distribution of anticipated revenue streams, including recovered indirect costs, consistent with university policy, shall also be included.
- e. The basis for continuation and terms for the termination of the Center, including a plan for the release of personnel, especially those who depend principally on the Center for their employment. Such a plan should discuss terminations, displacements, and reassignments that would occur, and the demise of premises and property on termination of operations. The presumption is that lack of adequate funding will lead to the discontinuation of the Center.
- f. A description of the positions required and qualifications, including those of the Center's proposed director (or co-directors).

The university will employ its Institutional Change (IC) process for establishing Centers.

### **2. Authorization**

Centers shall be approved prior to their operation, for periods of approximately five years, renewable on review. The Provost will oversee their periodic review to ensure their continued success. For Centers based solely within a single school, the relevant dean is responsible for the review and reporting to the Provost on the review. For such Centers within one school only, the dean may alter internal financial arrangements as often as required to achieve Center goals, by mutual agreement with the Center's director and advising the Provost. For Centers that span more than one school, the Provost must consent to proposed changes prior to their occurrence. All Center arrangements must comply with all university, state, and federal policies and procedures.

A register of all authorized Centers shall be maintained in the Provost's Office. A copy of the complete register shall be forwarded to the Office of Sponsored Programs, Internal Audit, and to the university's Finance Office annually at the close of each fiscal year.

### **3. Governance**

The request to establish a Center shall detail the proposed governance structure. For Centers within a single school, the authority to appoint or reappoint the Center's director resides with that school's dean. For Centers spanning more than one school, the authority to appoint or reappoint the director resides with the Provost. In all cases, such actions require appropriate mutual consultation, including with the chair or program director of the unit in which the Center is situated and, where applicable, with the advisory board. The Center's director, with the concurrence of the relevant dean for school-specific Centers or the Provost for university-wide Centers, shall have the responsibility to recruit, appoint, reappoint, hire, and dismiss Center staff consistent with university policy and procedures. Center directors will advise departments and deans, and/or the Provost or designee for purposes of annual evaluations of seconded, or appointed personnel with shared duties. Directors shall report on their activities annually to the relevant dean, board and Provost.

### **4. Financial and Administrative Procedures and Responsibilities**

Each established unit within the university is held accountable for diligent administrative oversight and fiscal control of the accounts assigned to it. Administrative oversight and fiscal control of Center activities are thus the responsibility of the administrative entity to which the accounts are assigned. Each Center will be separately identified and assigned a unique organization code within the university's accounting system. All administrative financial transactions shall be processed in accordance with established university policies and procedures. Centers do not operate independently of schools or the university, and thus, where applicable, arrangements about income, overhead expenses and the sharing of net revenues involve the relevant dean or the Provost.

Annually, the Center director will review its activities and all financial records of the Center with the administrator (or agent) to whom he/she reports. All reports should be submitted within three months after the close of the university's fiscal year. At any time, an audit of Centers may be conducted at the request of the dean (for a single-school Center), the President, the Provost, or the Board of Visitors.

### **5. Signature Authority**

The Center director will propose to the dean and/or Provost, as appropriate, specific individuals from participating faculty and employed faculty and staff to be responsible for personnel, accounting, and other transactions of the Center. The director shall keep these assignments current as participants change. Signatory authority will be granted on an annual basis following university policy. Unless specifically designated, directors and other personnel in the Center may not sign grants, contracts, intellectual property and non-disclosure agreements, or other instruments that bind the university to specific performance; such signature authority lies with the President, the Provost, or their delegates and designees. Centers shall abide by all contracting regulations regarding the provision of services, and shall follow the university's sponsored program procedures for submission of proposals and receipt of awards of grants, contracts, and foundation support.

### **6. Reporting**

All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty associated with a Center shall hold and retain an appointment in an academic department or school. The Center director shall provide input to the department chair and dean for inclusion in annual evaluations. In proportion to the

percentage of effort allocated to departmental and center teaching, research, and service, the appropriate parties will confer on all matters of record for faculty.

## **7. Review**

The Provost, as the university's chief academic officer, has oversight of Centers. On a periodic basis, normally every five years, Centers will be reviewed. For school-specific Centers, the immediate responsibility for this review is the dean's, who reports the results to the Provost; the Provost will arrange for reviews of university-wide Centers. In some cases, more frequent reviews may be required by outside agencies. Existing Centers will not be reviewed sooner than three years from the effective date of this policy.