

Centers & Institutes

Policy Category:

Research

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(Adopted by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, Meeting #427, November 25, 1975; amended Meeting #437, March 25, 1977; Meeting #593, November 16, 1990; amended and approved by the Board's Academic Strategies Committee on June 23, 2011; approved Meeting #851, October 7, 2011.)

1. That the careful, considered institutional use of the center and institute mechanism be recognized by the Board as a legitimate, potentially valuable approach to the furtherance of institutional mission, through the fostering of interdisciplinary activities in pursuit of basic and applied research and instruction, the attracting of non-state funding in support of institutional mission and goals, the motivation of faculty, the strengthening of academic departments, and the optimized utilization of institutionally-unique resources.
2. That the Board establish the principle that the justification for establishment of centers and institutes must be in terms of their potential for contributing to the achievement of the institutional mission.

The fact that federal or other non-state funds can be secured to fund, totally or in principal measure, a given center or institute cannot be considered Justification for the establishment of that center or institute. The real test of justification must be in terms of the extent to which the objectives of the proposed center or institute can be shown to be wholly consistent with and fully supportive of the institution's mission and advance its strategic priorities and goals. Failing the test, the center or institute ought not to be established.

3. That institutions have the authority to establish centers and institutes that do not grant degrees, consistent with their role and mission. The exception would be if an institution wanted to name the center or institute after a living person. In those cases, OAR 580- 0500025 requires Board approval.
4. That institutional review of proposals to establish centers and institutes be carried on in a manner that is consistent with the considerations cited in item 2 above while enhancing the entrepreneurial talents of the department or other sponsors of the center or institute.
5. That institutions be asked to establish policies to assure that, at regular intervals each center and institute will be given a careful review by an appropriate institutional agency, the examination to include a review of the purposes for which the center or institute was established, the objectives of the center or institute, any changes in objectives that have occurred since the previous review, the validity of the center's or institute's present objectives and purposes, and the adequacy of its performance. That based on the review, the institutional provost (or their designee) make decisions regarding improvement, changes in emphasis, alternatives as to direction, changes in leadership, phasing out of the institute or center, or some portions of it, or merging with some other unit within the institution.
6. That when centers or institutes are inactive, they be reviewed under institutional policies to consider whether they ought to be retained or discontinued.