



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

Employee Policy Manual and Handbook

CENTERS AND INSTITUTES: POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The University recognizes the contribution that centers and institutes can make in (a) enriching teaching, research, and service within the academic community and/or (b) advancing institutional goals within the service mission of the institution beyond academics. They also often assist the University in leveraging external funding. Proposals for the establishment of such units require a careful review of their need, role within the institution, and relationship to the mission of the university. The guidelines herein are to be followed for the proposal of a center or institute and an ongoing review of its viability to the university.

Proposals

Any administrative unit of the university may submit a proposal for the creation of a center or institute. The terms centers and institutes are used interchangeably but institutes typically reflect a broader institutional scope. Proposals that are academic in nature are submitted to the Council of Academic Deans (COAD) for review and initial approval. Prior to submission to COAD, proposals must have the endorsement of the appropriate department(s) and college(s). Proposals for centers or institutes that are non-academic in nature are submitted by the appropriate vice president to the university executive council for review and initial approval. Subsequent approvals must be obtained by the appropriate constituency bodies as outlined in shared governance and/or university policy. The university president has final authority for the approval of center and institutes. A proposal must include the following items: purpose of the center or institute, relation to mission of the university, organization chart, budget, objectives, external funding and partners (if any), and evaluation procedures. All fundraising, including the establishment of current use and endowment funds, must follow the gift acceptance, spending, and investment policies of the UNA Foundation.

This policy statement recognizes that units of the institution that provide ongoing administrative and academic support are often referred to as centers. The guidelines described herein are not applicable to those units.

Reporting Procedures

Centers and institutes are considered a part of the organization structure of the university. As such they must compile and submit annual and periodic reports compliant with the guidelines outlined by the university institutional effectiveness committee.

Periodic Review

Centers and institutes will conduct an audit of their activities and contribution to university mission every five years. The report of that audit will be reviewed by the COAD and/or Executive Council to determine continued viability. Should a center or institute be deemed to be non-viable, it will be afforded the opportunity to provide an improvement plan. A subsequent review after one year will be conducted and a final recommendation will be made to the president by the COAD or Executive Council to either continue the center or institute for an additional four years or discontinue it. The decision of the president in consultation with the Board of Trustees as needed is final.