

Guidelines for Center/Institute Reviews

Office of the Vice President for Research, Iowa State University

The Office of the Vice President for Research maintains data and information on all centers and institutes and the reports from reviews.

The oversight of and frequency of reviews resides with either the office of a vice president or with a college dean, with copies of the review sent to the Office of the Vice President for Research and the provost's office. Board of Regent's Policy (§6.06F) requires that each Regent university review each center or institute once every seven years to help ensure that the center or institute being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality, and consistent with the institution's mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the need to continue the center or institute.

In undertaking reviews, consider the six criteria of success (from ISU Task Force on Centers and Institutes report in 2004) as a measure of the performance of the center/institute. These questions are general points to aid in evaluation and need not be documented in the final review report.

1. EXHIBITS NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND PROMINENCE

Quality of Research

- What is the overall quality of research at this center/institute?
- What is the quality of research at the center/institute's major centers/units? (subjective evaluation)
 - Quality defined in terms of: competitiveness, national prominence, novelty, and timeliness of major research themes
 - How does this research compare nationally?
- What are the research outputs? How well does the center/institute deliver the research outputs?
 - Awards (national recognition)
 - Refereed journal papers; impact factor
 - Conference keynote and invited presentations
 - Conference refereed publications
- How effective is the center/institute at transferring knowledge and technology into applications?

Training

- How much and how well does the center/institute contribute to the training of future researchers, graduate students, post-docs and/or develop the skills needed by industry?

2. PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES NOT PROVIDED BY TRADITIONAL CAMPUS UNITS

3. HAS A CLEAR MISSION THAT IS DIRECTLY TIED TO ISU'S MISSION

4. IS OF VITAL INTEREST TO A GROUP OF RESEARCH-PRODUCTIVE FACULTY MEMBERS

Relevance

- How does this center/institute serve the research mission of the university?
- What is the overall relevance of the research being undertaken to the needs of industry and other users of the research?

Mission and Vision

- How well is the center/institute's mission aligned with the goals of the university? Interest to the

Faculty

- Which faculty groups benefit from this center/institute's activities? Does the center/institute have an adequate reach across the campus?
- Comment on the inter-disciplinary nature of the center/institute's research mission and goals.

5. HAS EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**Management**

- How well are the center/institute (and centers within it, if this is an institute) managed in terms of their ability to support the center/institute's mission and goals?
 - Overall organization
 - Governance – director's leadership, center directors' roles, advisory boards, etc.
 - How are centers/institutes' research directions determined?
 - How are the center/institute's resources allocated/prioritized? How are those decisions made?
 - If this is an institute, how are the centers within the institute evaluated/assessed?

6. CREATES CLEAR BENEFITS THAT GREATLY EXCEED ISU'S COSTS**Resources**

- What is the level (amount) of "base funds" (state and/or university support) and how are funds invested? What has the center/institute done to ensure its long-term sustainability?
- If this is an institute, what criteria are used to provide support for the centers/units within the institute? How are the centers assessed in terms of how they use the institute's funds?
- How much revenue does the institute and its centers generate from outside sources (sponsored grants)?
- What are the key funding sources? Are they sufficiently diversified and has the center/institute adequately leveraged its funding base?
- Does the center/institute generate adequate overhead (IDC) revenues?

Strategy

- How does the center/institute's current strategy fit with its strengths, and how appropriate is it for the development and future success of the center/institute?
- Comment on the center/institute's plans for the future.
- Does the center/institute have the staff and other resources to attain current and future goals?
- Comment on the overall performance of the center/institute. What is the overall impact of this center/institute?