Guidelines for Conducting Internal College Reviews of Research Centers and Institutes that report to the Executive Dean

December, 2014

All College centers and institutes are subject to regular review. Most centers will be reviewed at five-year intervals following these guidelines (unless otherwise specified in the initial Memorandum of Understanding). Centers that are identified with individual faculty members will report on their activities as part of the regular faculty annual review process, with more extensive reviews at the time of funding renewals. These more extensive reviews will follow the general procedures outlined here but may be conducted without a review committee at the Executive Dean’s discretion (i.e., by the Executive Dean or the Dean’s designate).

The timing and steps in the review are as follows:

A. The Associate Dean for Research maintains a record of the centers and institutes that are due for review each academic year. The divisional Associate Dean oversees the review. Upon request of the Associate Dean for Research, the divisional Associate Dean notifies the center or institute (hereafter the “unit”) that it will be reviewed. Notifications are usually given at the beginning of the fall semester in the second to last year of support but can be given later upon mutual agreement of the Executive Dean and the center/institute. At the time of notification, the Associate Dean will share the questions that units are typically asked to address in their reports, with the understanding that the review committee may add questions.

B. The Associate Dean collects information available in the Executive Dean’s office about the original goals and expectations for the unit, as well as information about the unit’s goals, mission, expectations that is available on the Web, to share with the review committee.

C. The Associate Dean appoints a review committee based on recommendations from the unit director and from the chairs of relevant departments. The Executive Dean gives final approval to the committee membership. The Associate Dean is not a member of the committee but is available for consultation and advice during the review process. Review committees typically have 3-5 members, depending on the size and complexity of the unit being reviewed. Members of the committee may be chosen from within and from outside of the College depending on the unit and the unit's interactions with constituencies outside the College. The Associate Dean appoints the committee chair.

D. The committee meets with the Associate Dean to review the available information and to finalize the questions that are to be addressed in the unit’s report.

E. The Associate Dean drafts the formal solicitation that goes to the unit, following the template at the end of these guidelines.
F. Upon receipt of the units’ report, the Associate Dean arranges for the committee to meet to discuss the report and generate a list of people to be contacted as part of the review. Staff in the Executive Dean’s office are available to schedule the meetings.

G. The committee prepares its report. The final report should address:
   1. The goals and expectations associated with the unit.
   2. How well the unit has achieved its goals and what steps it could take to be even more effective.
   3. The unit’s contributions to the research and educational missions of the College.
   4. The appropriateness and feasibility of the unit’s plans for the future.
   5. How the unit is viewed by its various constituencies.
   6. The strengths and limitations of the current director’s leadership
   7. Recommendations of the committee for future funding from the College and/or changes to the unit’s operations.

H. The Associate Dean attaches his/her recommendation to the committee report and forwards to the Executive Dean.
Dear ________,

As you know, the College will review your (Center/Institute) this year as part of our standard cycle of evaluation. The committee in charge of your unit’s review has met and put together the following list of questions to which we would like you to respond in your report. Please submit your report by ________________.

1. What were the primary goals for this unit?
2. What has been accomplished as regards each of these goals?
3. What are the unit’s major accomplishments since its last review/since establishment?
4. How has this unit contributed to the research and teaching missions of the College?
5. How has this unit contributed to the College’s reputation?
6. How has this unit contributed to interdisciplinary research?
7. What has this unit accomplished that could not have been accomplished without it?
8. What are the unit’s plans for initiating new activities or establishing new goals?
9. What are the unit’s plans to continued operations? Please submit a plan that addresses the following:

   1. Administrative Structure
      a. management plan (director, membership, committees, reporting lines, etc.)
      b. space and facilities (existing/virtual/needed)
      c. staffing
      d. advisory board
   2. Purpose and goals of the unit:
      a. details about what College need the unit fills
      b. details of what benefits the unit provides with respect to:
         i. research
         ii. graduate student support/recruitment
         iii. reputation/prestige
         iv. grant/fellowship activity
   3. Detailed five-year plan for unit including a plan for how the unit will achieve its goals and accountability benchmarks
   4. Detailed five-year budget

After reviewing your report, the committee may decide to contact staff or affiliates of the (Center/Institute) to learn more about its activities and operations. Any interviews will be completed by ______ after which the committee will meet to prepare its evaluation. The committee’s report will be delivered to the Executive Dean by ________________.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this review.