

**HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Chapter 7	Research and Sponsored Programs	Effective:	March 2007
Section 7.9	Organized Research Units	Revised:	
<b>Policy 7.9.1</b>	<b>Establishment and Review of Organized Research Units</b>	Responsibility:	Vice President for Research

## **ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF ORGANIZED RESEARCH UNITS**

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### **Functions**

An “Organized Research Unit” (ORU) is established to provide support for interdisciplinary research that complements the academic goals of departments of instruction and research. These units are typically referenced as institutes, laboratories, or centers. The functions of an ORU are to:

- Facilitate research and research collaborations;
  - Disseminate research results through conferences, meetings, and other activities;
  - Strengthen graduate and undergraduate education by providing students with training opportunities and access to facilities;
  - Seek extramural research funds; and,
  - Carry out University and public service programs related to the ORU’s research expertise.
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### **Definitions**

Units included as organized research units normally carry one of the designations defined below. Institute, laboratory, and center are the most commonly used designations.

**INSTITUTE:** A major unit that coordinates and promotes faculty and student research on a continuing basis over an area so wide that it extends across department, school or college, or campus boundaries. The unit enhances and supports broad-based research efforts. The unit may also engage in public service activities stemming from its research program, within the limits of its stated objectives.

**LABORATORY:** A non-departmental organization that establishes and maintains facilities for research in several departments, sometimes with the help of full-time research staff appointed in accordance with institutional policy. A laboratory in which substantially all participating faculty members are from the same academic department is a departmental laboratory and not an ORU.

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**CENTER:** A non-departmental unit that furthers research in a designated field or a unit engaged primarily in providing research facilities for other units and departments.

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### **Procedures for Establishment**

An ORU is established upon the President's approval of a proposal submitted by the faculty via the Council of Deans and the University Research Council, to the Vice President for Research. Centers with an anticipated annual budget of less than \$3 million representing the sum of research grants and contracts managed through the Center's operations, as well as institutional and other funding, may be constituted upon approval of the Health Science Center President or designee. Centers with an anticipated annual operating budget greater than \$3 million must be approved by the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs in advance of establishment, or prior to the year an existing center's budget is anticipated to exceed \$3 million. Each ORU must be headed by a Director and must have an independent external advisory committee. Proposals to establish an ORU will be reviewed according to the protocol outlined in the Health Science Center's Vice President for Research webpage: "[Manual for Evaluation of Organized Research Units](#)".

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### **Procedures for Review**

Periodic review of ORUs is necessary to ensure consistency with institutional goals and priorities, and the institution's need to sustain a capacity to innovate. Each ORU will be reviewed annually according to the protocol outlined in the Health Science Center's Vice President for Research web page ("[Manual for Evaluation of Organized Research Units](#)") by an ad hoc committee approved by the Vice President for Research. In addition, ORUs will be reviewed at least every six years by an independent external advisory committee appointed by the President, in consultation with the Vice President for Research and the ORU Director. Committee reports will be forwarded to the President, who will determine whether the ORU should continue, be phased out, or be discontinued. For ORUs with budgets exceeding \$3 million, the President shall forward the external committee's report with the Presidential recommendation to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs.

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**Maintenance of Reviews and Approvals**

Documentation of the establishment of ORUs and periodic reviews must be filed with the Office of the Vice President of Research. Such Office will maintain and make available to the President an inventory of those organized research units throughout the Health Science Center.

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**Relevant System Policies, Procedures, and Forms**

Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, [Rule 40602](#) – “Organized Research Units”

Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, [Rule 60302](#) – “Advisory Councils of an Institution”

Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, [Rule 80307](#) – “Naming Policy”

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