

Item	7.6
Approved by	UOIT Academic Council
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## RESEARCH ENTITIES

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### I. PROCEDURES FOR THE CREATION OF RESEARCH ENTITIES

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

A key mandate of UOIT is to advance the highest quality of research. To this end, UOIT welcomes and encourages the formation of research groups, units, centres and institutes. Not only will these research entities foster the highest standard of scholarly inquiry, they will also greatly enrich the educational environment for faculty, students and staff. It is also hoped that the ground-breaking research which UOIT envisions will better the lives of people locally, throughout the country and around the globe.

The purpose of this document is to establish clear procedures on the creation of research entities, to streamline the process, and to help ensure a level playing field for all involved.

#### 2. DEFINITION

Centres are intended to strengthen, coordinate or facilitate scholarly purposes or activities not readily undertaken within the university's unit structures and are intended to offer new areas of activity consistent with the university's strategic direction and priorities. UOIT envisions four main types of research entities: research groups, research units, research centres and research institutes.

##### a. Research Groups:

Research groups are the most informal type. They typically consist of three or more faculty in the same Faculty who are engaged in or want to pursue a common area of research. Research groups do not require an organizational structure, dedicated physical space on campus, or funding. Responsibility for funding of these groups rests with the host Faculty.

##### b. Research Units

Research units are slightly more formal in nature than research groups. They may include members from different Faculties at the university and have a broader research focus. These units are organizationally part of the university and are subject to university management and control, reporting to a designated Dean or the Associate Provost, Research. Generally, they do not include researchers from other universities or organizations, but may have a small office or similar physical presence on campus. A Research Unit may be built around a Research Chair.

##### c. Research Centres

Research centres are more formal than research units and have a wider research mandate. They usually involve activities beyond the scope of a single Faculty and/or involve university resources. As well, they have an on-campus office or similar physical presence. Membership includes faculty from different Faculties and disciplines and, perhaps, small-scale partnerships with other universities, governments, non-profit organizations or businesses.

**d. Research Institutes**

Research institutes are the largest and most formal of all research entities and conduct research into a number of related or different areas of study. They have a definite on-campus presence such as an office.

Membership includes faculty from at least two UOIT Faculties, as well as significant involvement from other universities, governments, non-profit organizations and/or businesses. The title of a research institute may incorporate the name of an external partner that contributes significantly to the institute, likely through the provision of resources, equipment and/or funding. In such cases, the proposed name must comply with appropriate Board policies.

**3. TERM**

Each research entity will be authorized to operate for a specific term. Research units, centres and institutes have an initial term of five years, which can be renewed. Research groups will normally be assigned an initial three-year term but are not subject to the more detailed operational requirements of other types of research entities.

**4. RATIONALE**

The planned research entity must have a clearly-defined rationale that demonstrates the uniqueness and need for the proposed research. The research must support UOIT's values and mission statement as well as enhance the university's standing in the academic and external communities.

**5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

The research objectives and scope must be consistent with the type of research entity being proposed and adhere to the university's Research Guidelines. As well, the proposed research must clearly enhance or challenge the current body of knowledge in the proposed area(s) of inquiry or, if applicable, break new ground. A research entity will not engage in academic activities such as offering academic programs or granting degrees.

All research entities are encouraged to sponsor and organize lectures, workshops, symposia and conferences. As well, research entities must conform to all university policies and procedures.

**6. MEMBERSHIP**

Normally, a majority of the members of any of the four research entities must be current UOIT core faculty. Members must be in good standing with the university, have a track record of successful research, and pledge that their participation in a research entity will not prevent them from fulfilling their teaching responsibilities. The possibility of teaching release time must be discussed with the appropriate dean.

**7. BENEFITS TO UOIT**

A key consideration in approving a research entity is the benefits it will bring to UOIT. These benefits must exceed providing a service to the university community and comprise a level of research that could otherwise not take place. The research must also enhance UOIT's reputation as well as help position the university as an attractive employer to prospective faculty and staff.

**8. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

As the most informal of the four categories, research groups may choose to appoint a leader who would keep the respective dean informed of the group's activities. Research units have a head administrator or a director, and centres and institutes have a director. The head administrator or director keeps the respective dean(s) apprised at regular intervals of the entity's activities, as well as through formal means outlined in Section 11 of this document.

Each research entity must have clearly-defined lines of accountability to one or more Deans and/or the Associate Provost, Research.

Research units, centres and institutes will hold a competition to select the head administrator or director, with the search panel comprising the dean(s) of the Faculty or Faculties associated with the entity, the Associate Provost, Research and the Provost (or delegate). The term of office of the head administrator or director should normally be five years. On a continuing basis, the head administrator or director will keep the relevant dean(s) informed of the research entity's main activities and challenges. Annual reporting and the periodic review are discussed in sections 11 and 12 of this document.

According to the UOIT Act, the university's Board of Governors has the ultimate authority for the creation and closure of all UOIT research units, centres and institutes.

## **9. PROPOSAL**

Faculty members interested in organizing a research unit, centre or institute must submit to the dean(s) of the Faculty or Faculties to which they are appointed a proposal outlining the planned research entity. For a full list of proposal criteria, please see Appendix I. The preferred length of the proposal is three pages.

The sponsoring dean(s) will then submit the proposal to the Research Board which, in turn, will be responsible for advising Academic Council and the Board of Governors on the establishment of the research entity.

Until final approval is granted, the proposed research entity may not use its name in any official capacity (letterhead, signage, etc.). If there is involvement from external parties such as other universities, organizations or businesses, the proposal must also be approved by all outside groups before the entity can be created.

## **10. FINANCIAL OPERATION**

For the benefit of UOIT researchers and the university itself, the entity must be financially self sufficient and sustainable in the long-term. The sources of funding outlined in the proposal must be sufficient for at least the first five years of operation. Each entity shall be responsible for obtaining sufficient revenue from grants, contracts, indirect costs or other means to offset its direct costs of operation. Research entities shall normally carry forward any year-over-year financial surpluses or losses.

Under no circumstances is a research entity to incur debt or operate a deficit. If a research entity's financial situation becomes precarious, the head administrator or director is to immediately notify the respective dean(s), who will alert the Associate Provost, Research and the Provost. Depending on the circumstances, these individuals may recommend that a review of its ongoing viability be undertaken and that the entity be put on probation or be closed. In all reasonable circumstances, the university will work with the entity and its members to help solve financial difficulties.

## **11. ANNUAL REPORT**

Research units, centres and institutes are required to submit a written report each year for the period ending March 31 to the respective dean(s), with copies to the Associate Provost, Research and the Provost, by April 30. The report, which should not exceed five pages, will document the activities and accomplishments of the past year including the amount of external funding, its impact on the university and all partnering organizations, and any changes in membership. As well, the report must include a financial statement (including sources of funds and expenditures), and a summary of planned activities and research for the next year. If a research entity does not submit its annual report within 30 days of the deadline, further action such as probation or closure may result.

## **12. PERIODIC REVIEW**

Each research unit, centre and institute will undergo a thorough review at the end of each five-year term. The review team will consist of the respective dean(s), the Associate Provost, Research, the Provost (or delegate) and one or two outside assessors knowledgeable in the field. The review will examine the entity's operations, accomplishments, success, membership, finances and plans for future research. Upon

completion of the review, the review team will recommend to Academic Council and the Board of Governors one of three courses of action: renewal, probation or closure. If probation or closure is recommended, the entity will have 60 days within which to respond before the recommendation is confirmed.

**13. CLOSURE**

A recommendation for closure would only result in certain circumstances. Failure to submit an annual report (even after the 30-day "grace period" has elapsed), submission of an unsatisfactory annual report, failure to pass the periodic review, or any circumstance that could adversely affect the university in any way, may result in closure. As well, a majority of a research entity's members may recommend closure, having found that the entity has met its research goals and no further research is planned. If closure is recommended, the entity will have at least three months from the date of the recommendation to wind down its affairs.

**14. CONTACT INFORMATION**

The office of the Associate Provost, Research is responsible for maintaining a complete list of research groups, centres and institutes, their campus locations and contact information, the name and contact of the head administrators and directors, and the names and contact information for all members.

## APPENDIX I - PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

The suggested maximum length of the proposal is three pages (excluding budget, letters of support, faculty CVs, etc.). To expedite the review of proposals, faculty members should ensure that their documents contain the following information:

- 1. Proposers**  
Give the names of the proposing faculty, their titles and contact information.
- 2. Faculties**  
Specify the Faculties involved.
- 3. Title**  
State the proposed name of the planned research entity.
- 4. Description and Justification**  
Name the type of entity%research unit, centre or institute. Explain why is it needed at UOIT and, if possible, by the larger community.
- 5. Research Mandate**  
Outline the type of research to be performed.
- 6. Management**  
State if the entity is to be led by a Head Administrator or Director (research units) or Director (research centres and institutes) and outline the position's responsibilities.
- 7. Proposed Members**  
This should include the names of proposed members as well as their Faculty or Faculties, contact information and an abbreviated curriculum vitae for each (degrees, employment history, professional memberships, research activities and interests, research funding record for the past five years, and a summary of their publication record).
- 8. External Involvement**  
Give details about any expected outside partners such as researchers from other universities as well as governments, organizations and businesses. State the name, address and contact information for each organization involved; the key people to participate in the research entity as well as their titles and contact information; and how their involvement will benefit the research entity. Include copies of agreements or memoranda of understanding with all outside parties.
- 9. Facilities**  
Explain the type, size and location of space desired, and how the desired space will fill the proposed research entity's needs. Specific space commitments must be secured from the office of the Provost. Mention all special equipment or other requirements that have space implications.
- 10. Resources and Equipment**  
Provide a complete list of all required resources and equipment, including computers, phones, copiers and fax machines. Specify what internal resources (i.e. library, audiovisual) will be used and to what extent.
- 11. Budget**  
Prepare a detailed budget projection for the first five years, including all sources of income and expected expenses and disbursements.
- 12. Letters of Support**  
Include all letters of support from dean(s) and external partners.