

BRANDON UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTRES, INSTITUTES, AND GROUPS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY

1.0 Reason for Policy

To outline the general guidelines of the Senate Research Committee (SRC) on the establishment and administration of centres, institutes, and groups that focus primarily on research and research-related activities (e.g. research training, research dissemination), and scholarly/creative activities. These guidelines are administered on behalf of the SRC by the Office of the Vice-President (Academic & Research).

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions:

2.1.1 Research Centre/Institute

A research centre/institute is a formally structured organizational unit of the university. It is established under the authority of the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Senate of the University. The purpose of a research centre/institute is to engage in research, study or other academic focus in specific areas and to encourage research collaborations among disciplines and between departments, faculties, and schools. Research centres/institutes also provide unique training opportunities for students and serve as a valuable information source for the community at large.

Research centres/institutes normally provide for the strengthening, coordination or facilitation of research and scholarly/creative activities not readily undertaken within the university's department structure, building upon the expertise, competence and staff interest existing at the university.

Research centres/institutes are generally expected to:

- a. have clearly identified goals and objectives;
- b. have some degree of permanence, transcending collaboration on a particular, limited project;
- c. bring together scholars from different disciplines and/or areas of specialization within a particular discipline;
- d. maintain high levels of research productivity;
- e. foster the training of future researchers, especially in regard to research skills;
- f. attract post-doctoral fellows, visiting professors, and other scholars;
- g. cooperate with scholars at other universities and/or institutions; and
- h. seek external funding in order to operate on a cost recovery basis.

In pursuit of their objectives, research centres/institutes may establish communication links inside and outside the university, and organize seminars and symposia.

On occasion, research centres/institutes may involve formal partnerships with other universities and/or institutions. University involvement in such joint centres/institutes is subject to formal agreement approved by the Vice-President (Academic & Research) by recommendations of the Dean.

2.1.2 Research Group

A research group is an association of university scholars who share research interests and who engage in collaborative or closely related research and scholarly/creative activities. The purpose of a research group is to promote and facilitate communication and collaboration among its members, and to establish the legitimacy of the group both inside and outside the university. The approval of the establishment of a research group is delegated to the Vice-President (Academic & Research).

2.2 Policy Governing the Establishment of Research Centres/Institutes

2.2.1 Every research centre/institute within the university is accountable through its Director to a university officer, Dean, or the Vice-President (Academic & Research). Financial responsibility for the centre/institute is vested with this university officer, Dean, or the Vice-President (Academic & Research). Faculty/School Deans/Directors shall report to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) on all matters related to research centres/institutes.

2.2.2 Directors will exercise general supervision over the operation of the unit with specific responsibilities varying with the size of the unit as well as the complexity of its policies and operations.

For any joint faculty/school initiative, the Directors shall be responsible to whichever Dean (or the Vice-President (Academic & Research) is so designated either in the initial proposal to create such a unit, or as subsequently recommended and approved. In general, only those units which cannot appropriately be administered at the faculty level shall be the responsibility of the Vice-President (Academic & Research).

2.2.3 All research centres/institutes shall be financially secure with core funding derived from either the university or other sources. In this regard, while the university may provide support to research centres/institutes through its operating budget, research centres/institutes are expected to seek external funding to support their activities (e.g. through grants, contracts, donations or fee-for-service).

2.2.4 Research centres/institutes shall not normally require the hiring of new full-time academic faculty. Each member, including the Director, should hold an appointment in an academic department (1). If release time is required, this should be purchased by the research centre/institute under terms and conditions of the Collective Agreement. Selection of a research centre/institute Director is normally the responsibility of the university officer to whom the Director will report.

2.2.5 While the organizational and administrative structures of research centres/institutes vary as a function of their objectives, size and funding arrangements, all research centres/institutes shall have an advisory committee. The specific terms of reference of such committees may vary from one unit to another; however, the general purpose of these committees is to provide advice on the unit's activities and programs.

2.2.6 All university research centres/institutes must conform to university policies and procedures. In particular, all research centres/institutes shall adhere to the *Overhead Policy for Brandon University Contracts* with respect to the recovery of overheads on research contracts.

2.3 Policy Governing the Establishment of Research Groups

Research groups are established under the authority of the Vice-President (Academic & Research), upon the recommendation of the Dean or University Librarian.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Reason for Procedures

To set out the procedures secondary to the policy: Research Centres, Institutes, and Groups.

2.0 Procedures

2.1. For Establishing Research Centres/Institutes

2.1.1. Approval process

The authority to establish research centres/institutes resides with the Board of Governors, normally on the recommendation of the Senate of the university. Proposals for research centres/institutes are transmitted from SRC to the Chair of the Senate Planning Committee (SPC) to determine if SPC review is required, and to Senate through its Executive Committee. Prior to their transmittal to SRC, proposals for the establishment of research centres/institutes are normally supported by departmental and faculty councils, as appropriate.

It is expected that a group of researchers will already have discovered the advantages of collaborative work and academic interchange before proposing the formal establishment of a research centre/institute. Researchers should have an established record of research and publication in their fields, as well as, success in securing external support for their research.

2.1.2. Contents of proposal

Proposals must be comprehensive enough to allow the merits and feasibility of establishing a research centre/institute to be assessed, and shall include the following:

- a. Name of Research Centre/Institute
- b. Description and Justification. This shall include:
 - i. a concise statement of the mission and objectives of the proposed research centre/institute and their relationship to the strategic plan of the university;
 - ii. an identification of the scope of activities envisaged; and
 - iii. a description of the research benefits and opportunities likely to result from the establishment of the research centre/institute, including an indication of how the proposed research centre/institute would facilitate research among scholars within the university and in the wider community.
- c. Constitution. This shall include a description of:

- i. the organization structure of the proposed research centre/institute, including the roles and responsibilities of its various committees;
 - ii. the categories of membership and the criteria of each of these categories;
 - iii. procedures whereby appointments will be made for each membership category; and
 - iv. the privileges and responsibilities of membership.
- d. Management. This should identify the university officer to whom the proposed research centre/institute reports and in whom financial responsibility is vested.
- e. Proposed Membership. This shall include a listing of the proposed membership of the research centre/institute broken down by the various membership categories, where applicable. For each proposed member, abbreviated curriculum vitae shall be provided which details the following information: degree(s) held, employment experience, professional activities, research interests, research funding record, and record of research achievements.
- f. Physical Resources. This shall include:
- i. a listing of available research facilities (e.g. library holdings, laboratories, space, equipment), including an indication of current strengths and weaknesses; and
 - ii. an indication of future requirements, including a proposed strategy for obtaining these resources.
- g. Financial Resources. This shall include a detailed budget and budget justification for the first three to five years which includes the anticipated revenue from all sources (i.e. university, government, industry, recovery of indirect costs, royalties, etc.) and proposed annual operation costs, as well as plans for seeking external funding. Centres/Institutes are expected to be self-sufficient and generate revenue for operations and maintenance independent of Brandon University. This must be demonstrated through both actual and anticipated sources of income and accompanied by letters of support from potential users/clients who will make use of fee-for-service agreements.
- h. Statements of Support and Commitment. Letters of support and commitment should be signed by the appropriate university officer(s) (i.e. department head, Dean/Director, the Vice-President (Academic & Research)). Any commitments or agreements to provide space, teaching release time or other resources, including the recovery of indirect costs from contract research, should be documented and signed by those authorized to make such commitments. In the absence of such statements, it will be assumed that no such commitments or agreements have been made.

2.2. Annual Reporting Requirements

To facilitate the conduct of periodic review of research centres/institutes, the Director of each research centre/institute shall provide an annual report to the university officer to whom he/she reports as well as to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) and SRC. This report should detail: the activities of the centre and its personnel, including research accomplishments, graduate training and other research-related activities (e.g. conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.); and its financial status.

2.3. For Reviewing Research Centres/Institutes

In order to ensure that all research is consistent with the goals of the university and that research centres/institutes reflect positively on the general reputation of the university, all research centres/institutes shall be reviewed by SRC on a periodic basis not less than every five years.

2.3.1. Review Process

2.3.1.1. Notice of the review will be communicated to the Director of the research centre/institute by the Chair of SRC at least nine (9) months prior to the end of the mandate of the research centre/institute.

2.3.1.2. In response to this notification, the Director of the research centre/institute shall submit to the Chair of SRC a report which contains the following:

- a. a description of how and why the centre/institute has achieved or revised its original objectives; a detailed listing of its research training accomplishments; a current membership list; and a detailed financial statement;
- b. a five-year plan which identifies future research directions and development strategies;
- c. letters indicating continued support for the research centre/institute from appropriate Deans; and
- d. the names of individuals who can provide external assessments of the research centre/institute.

2.3.1.3. On the basis of this report as well as a review of annual reports, SRC shall determine whether a formal, independent review committee should be struck to conduct a full review of the research centre/institute. If a full review of the research centre/institute is not warranted, in that it is clear that the research centre/institute either qualifies for continuation or that it does not, SRC will recommend to Senate that the research centre/institute continue for a period of three to five years, or that it be terminated, without further review. Any legal agreements that affect the status of the research centre/institute must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation.

2.3.1.4. In the event that a full review is required, a Review Committee will be appointed by the Chair of SRC in consultation with SRC at least six (6) months prior to the end of the mandate of the Centre. The membership of the Review Committee shall normally include: a senior researcher with administrative experience and no direct involvement in the research centre/institute (preferably a former Dean or department head) who shall act as Chair of the committee; the Director of another research centre/institute; a researcher who is not affiliated with the research centre/institute but is knowledgeable in the field of its research activity; the Chair of SRC or his/her designate to assess financial and institutional concerns; and other members as deemed appropriate.

2.3.1.5. The mechanism by which the Review Committee elects to conduct the review shall be at the discretion of the committee in consultation with the Chair of SRC. Notwithstanding, the primary focus of the review shall be an assessment of: the extent to which the research centre/institute has fulfilled its objectives; the appropriateness of its future goals; and its current and projected financial viability. The review process should involve meetings with the Director and members and should also include the solicitation of external assessments as well as discussion with non-members of the research centre/institute from related departments/fields.

2.3.1.6. The Review Committee shall provide a written report to the Chair of SRC within four months of being established. Before submitting this report, the Chair of the Review Committee shall provide a copy of the report to the Director of the research centre/institute under review to ensure that the report

contains no factual errors. The Director may submit a written commentary on the report to the Chair of SRC.

2.3.1.7. SRC will consider the report of the Review Committee, consulting with the committee and Director of the research centre/institute as necessary before making a recommendation to Senate concerning the future of the centre/institute. The recommendation may be:

- a. continuation with review in 5 years;
- b. continuation with review in 1, 2, or 3 years; or
- c. termination.

Any legal agreements that affect status of the research centre/instate must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation.

2.4. For Establishing Research Groups (2)

2.4.1. Approval Process

The official recognition and designation of a research group is at the approval of the Vice-President (Academic & Research), normally on the recommendation of the Dean.

A designated research group has the privileges of: identification as a separate unit for university publication purposes as well as use of university letterhead with the group designation; and, if needed, a separate set of accounts for the group's use.

2.4.2. Contents of the Proposal

Recommendations to establish research groups should be forwarded by the Dean to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) for consideration. Such recommendations should be accompanied by the following information:

- a. name of research group;
- b. objectives and rationale for formation of the research group (including confirmation that its establishment will not detract from existing academic programs);
- c. description of the constitution of the research group in terms of:
 - i. its organization structure;
 - ii. conditions of membership;
 - iii. reporting procedures; and
 - iv. mechanisms for regular review and assessment (which should include a brief annual report to the Vice-President (Academic & Research));
- d. list of members and abbreviated Curriculum Vitae; and
- e. statement signed by the Director of the research group and Dean detailing any understandings among the research group and Dean (including the provision of space, teaching release, sharing of the recovery of indirect costs on contract research, other resources, etc).

2.4.3. Notification

Upon approval, the Vice-President (Academic & Research) will notify the SRC and the Senate of the formation of the research group.