

Policies and Procedures Guide for ORUs reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor for Research Office (VCRO)

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Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, University of California, Berkeley

Our practice with regard to Organized Research Units conforms to the UCOP policy on ORUs that was published on December 7, 1999: <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2500488/ORU>

For more information, or to submit comments please contact: research@berkeley.edu

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1. Definition and Purpose

An Organized Research Unit (ORU) is an academic unit established with the approval of the Chancellor or his/her designee. It provides a structure to support interdisciplinary research that complements the academic goals of departments. ORUs may be subject to review every 5 years to reassess their goals and ensure a continuing and dynamic commitment to relevant interdisciplinary research.

An ORU is an academic unit the University has established to provide a supportive infrastructure for interdisciplinary research that complements the academic goals of departments. Characteristically, ORUs cross significant intellectual boundaries between disciplines such as those assumed to exist between departments and divisions, or their equivalent. ORUs may also be established to serve a compelling campus research priority or need that has been identified through broad campus consultation or strategic planning.

ORUs serve to enable or facilitate interdisciplinary research and research collaborations; disseminate results through research conferences, workshops, meetings, performances and other creative activities;

seek extramural research funds; and carry out university and public service programs related to the ORU's research expertise. ORUs provide undergraduate and graduate student research and training opportunities, access to facilities, and can contribute to the development of interdisciplinary academic programs and curricula that are established, overseen and supported by one or more Divisions. An ORU may not act as an academic home unit that offers degree programs or formal courses for credit to students of the University or to the public, unless it has been empowered to do so after consultation with the appropriate authorities. ORUs may provide administrative oversight or services to interdisciplinary curriculum programs.

2. Designations

ORUs normally carry the designation "**Institute**" or "**Center**," but other titles may be employed in particular situations. An ORU that covers a broad research area may in turn contain other more specialized units; for instance, an Institute may comprise several Centers, or a Station may comprise several Facilities. It is recognized that some long-established units have designations that do not conform to the definitions that follow; however, insofar as possible, designations of new units shall be taken from those defined below with the approval of the VCR.

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, college, and perhaps even campus boundaries. The unit may also engage in public service activities stemming from its research program, within the limits of its stated objectives.

Center: a unit, sometimes one of several forming an Institute, that furthers research in a designated field; or a unit engaged primarily in providing research facilities for other units and departments.

Laboratory: a non-departmental organization that establishes and maintains facilities for research in several departments. A laboratory in which substantially all participating faculty members are from the same academic department is a departmental laboratory and not an ORU.

Museum or Field Station: a location or site that provides physical facilities for interdisciplinary research and may house other units. They perform the functions of an ORU and are available to students, teachers, and researchers from the UC Berkeley as well as qualified external users in science, art, the humanities, teaching, and other disciplines.

Station: a unit that provides physical facilities for interdepartmental research in a broad area (e.g., agriculture), sometimes housing other units and serving several campuses. The terms "**Facility**" or "**Observatory**" may be used to define units similar in function but with narrower interests.

Multicampus Research Units (MRUs) and Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPIs): MRUs and MRPIs are UC system designations. They provide stimulus and cohesion for thematic topics important to UC and California and serve as a resource for the UC system. Policies and procedures for MRUs, may be found at <http://ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/mrpi/index.html>.

3. Leadership and Affiliates

- a. **ORU Director:** ORU directors are valued members and leaders of the UC Berkeley research community. Directors will be selected on the basis of their ability to foster multidisciplinary research and build leadership and world-class excellence in the supported areas of scholarship.

Each ORU should be headed by a Director who is, a tenured member of the faculty, unless an exception is granted by the Chancellor, and who may receive an administrative stipend determined by the VCR in addition to faculty salary. A faculty member who already earns such a stipend through another appointment (e.g., as Associate Dean or Department Chair) may not receive a second stipend. Such dual administrative responsibilities should be avoided where possible.

Appointment Procedure: The Chancellor has re-delegated authority to the VCR to approve the appointment of ORU Directors. This process is managed by the VCR Immediate Office.

The Director of an ORU reports to the VCR, as the Chancellor's designee. The founding Director of an ORU shall be specified in the proposal to establish the ORU and is appointed by the VCR upon the formal approval of the new ORU. During the final year of a Director appointment, or under circumstances when the appointment of a new Director is required, the VCR appoints a search advisory committee. In consultation with the search committee, the VCR communicates a campus-wide call for nominations. The search committee reviews all nominations received, decides on a short list of viable candidates, and decides on an evaluation method (e.g. vision statements, interviews, etc.). The committee recommends to the VCR one or more individuals for appointment.

Term of Service: Directors are at will appointees normally appointed to five year terms. After the effectiveness of each Director has been reviewed near the end of his/her initial five year term, renewal for a second five year term may, and often does, occur. In compliance with UCOP policy governing the administration of ORUs, Directorships of ORUs are limited to ten years of continuous tenure in all but extraordinary circumstances (e.g., in the midst of a capital campaign to which the sitting Director is crucial, or when there is no other viable candidate to assume the position).

- b. **ORU Chair:** ORU Chairs are at will appointees normally appointed to 3-5 year appointments. All ORU Directors whose unit has "nested" ORUs, have the authority to conduct a search and recommend faculty for Chair appointments. Final approval rests with the VCR.
- c. **Faculty Associate Directors:** Faculty Associate Directors may be recommended by the ORU Director for appointment by the VCR and should follow the policies and procedures outlined by the Academic Personnel Office.
- d. **Advisory Committee:** Each ORU has a faculty committee that is advisory to the Director. The Director submits a list of individuals to be appointed to his/her advisory committee to the VCR, or in the case of "nested" Centers to their Institute Director, at the beginning of each five year term. Advisory committee terms normally coincide with the term of the Director.

Advisory committees meet at least twice an academic year. Although an annual report is not required, committees are invited to submit an informal report to the VCRO and the Director, at the end of each academic year if issues arise that members believe should be brought to the attention of the central campus.

External Advisory Committee: An ORU may also have an External Advisory Committee, comprised of individuals from other on-campus units and/or from outside the campus to provide

perspective and to help identify new research and scholarly opportunities. The composition of this committee should be determined by the Director working with the Faculty Advisory Committee and the VCR. This committee should review the activities and plans of the unit and provide written advice to the Director on an annual basis. A summary of the Advisory Committee recommendations and findings shall be given in the unit's Annual Report.

e. Affiliated Faculty, Researchers and Students

A diverse and vibrant ORU is dependent on its affiliates to provide the multiple opportunities for interactions across the campus that lead to the creation of new, cross-disciplinary research. To maintain their vitality, ORUs must be accessible to and encouraging of new affiliates who will bring fresh ideas to the ORU's research portfolio. Any faculty, researcher or student whose intellectual interests coincide with the mission and activity of an ORU can participate in the ORU.

4. Budget and Personnel

ORU budgets are typically comprised of a mix of funding streams that include private philanthropy (endowments as well as current use support); grants from local, state and federal governments as well as private foundations; income from recharge activities; etc. Additional funds may be provided by the VCRO. Typically, appointments funded solely by ORU resources will be time limited to the life of a project or an ORU, after which neither the ORU nor VCRO will be responsible for salary commitments for such appointments. When budgets permit it, the VCR may agree to also provide temporary funds to an ORU in support of other ORU-related activities. The use and term of such temporary funds shall be determined and agreed upon between the VCR and the Director. Support for graduate students may be sought by ORUs directly from the Graduate Division.

Any positions within an ORU—professional, technical, or administrative—may be established and filled, regardless of the funding source, only after specific review and authorization of the proposed positions and of the candidate selection in accordance with University policies and procedures. At the VCR's discretion, ongoing ORU budgets may be reviewed and adjusted annually.

5. Procedure for Establishment

An ORU is established by the VCR, who, in turn, may seek the advice of the appropriate Dean/s, department chairs, and others. Faculty who wish to propose a new ORU are encouraged to consult with the VCR and VCRO staff early in the proposal preparation process. Proposals will be reviewed initially for their intellectual merit and quality of proposed interdisciplinary research, education, public service, and commitment to campus diversity goals. Proposals that are favorably reviewed in this first round may then be evaluated through a second review of the resource requirements and commitments necessary to ensure the success of the ORU.

Intellectual Merit Review: Listed here are guidelines to assist with the development of a proposal. Proposers should consider their stated goals with particular care, as their ORU will be reviewed in large measure based on the extent to which they meet their goals.

- a) Research, education, public service, and diversity goals and objectives of the ORU.
- b) Name of the proposed Director, who will be a tenured faculty member; any co-Director or Associate Director should be identified, as well.
- c) Proposed membership of the Advisory Committees for the first year of the ORU's existence.
- d) Experience of the core faculty in interdisciplinary research collaborations.

- e) A discussion of the added value and capabilities that will be brought by the new ORU and an explanation of why they cannot be achieved within existing campus academic units.
- f) Research plan for the two years of operations and projections for the three years following.
- g) Statement about anticipated benefits of the proposed ORU to the teaching programs of the participating faculty members' departments or other existing academic units and programs.
- h) Names of faculty members who have agreed in writing to participate in the unit's activities.
- i) Projections of numbers of faculty members and students, professional research appointees, and other personnel for the specified periods.
- j) Budget estimates for the first two years of operation, projections for the three years following, and anticipated sources of funding.
- k) A statement of immediate space needs and how they will be met for the first two years; and realistic projections and cost of future space needs.
- l) A realistic plan to seek and obtain the necessary extramural funding needed to launch the research plan of the ORU.
- m) The proposal should also include a competitor analysis and a statement of why the proposal is a good fit for Berkeley.
- n) A date after which central campus financial support is no longer required must be agreed to. There is an expectation that ORUs will become self-supporting within this specified time-frame.

If possible, proposers should secure written financial commitments from all parties providing support for the ORU, including, if appropriate, an agreement to allocate space for the new ORU. All necessary startup requirements must be agreed to in writing to ensure the adequacy of the overall support and space allocation to the unit.

6. Annual Reports

Each ORU will submit annually a report on the ORU's activities for the prior fiscal year to the VCR in a uniform format that is based on a template provided by VCRO. The Annual Report may be presented to the ORU Advisory Committees for their review and concurrence prior to submission to the VCR. Receipt of the annual report by VCRO is required prior to disbursement of the next year of funding for the ORU.

7. Review Process

ORUs have contributed substantially to UC Berkeley's outstanding research reputation. In order to maintain an exceptional ORU portfolio at UC Berkeley, it is important to periodically assess the performance of existing ORUs, at least every 10 years. The review process provides ORUs with a mechanism for in-depth, peer-reviewed evaluation of programs and goals, and provides the administration with a means of ensuring that research being conducted is of the highest quality and justifies the space and support received from the University.

The VCRO will meet with the ORU Director to develop a timeline for the review period, which will include a self-assessment of the ORU. The VCRO will appoint a review committee. The Academic Senate's Committee on Research *may* be invited to appoint someone to join the review, *ex officio*. The VCRO will meet with the review committee to provide explicit instructions prior to the beginning of the review. The review committee will interview the ORU Director, Advisory Committee members, associated faculty, divisional Dean/s, if appropriate, and other individuals deemed pertinent to the review, including non-UC Berkeley researchers in the field; and tour the ORU's physical facilities. The review committee will prepare a report of its findings in accordance with the review criteria, which will

be submitted to the VCR.

8. Procedure for Closure

The VCR or review committees may recommend continuation or closure of an ORU. As with all ORU-related processes, the closure process for an ORU shall be conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

- a. A recommendation to disestablish as part of the review process receives careful consideration by the ORU Director and Advisory Committees, chairs of departments and directors of other ORUs that would be affected by the closure, relevant Deans, the EVCP, and the VCR.
- b. After reviewing comments from all of the committees and individuals listed in (7) above and if the VCR determines that closure is the best course of action, then the VCR formally closes the ORU.
- c. A phase-out period lasting from a few months to up to two years may be provided to permit orderly transfer or termination of non-faculty personnel, grants, financial accounts, and programs. VCRO will work to ensure research space for existing grants is preserved, and to facilitate the transfer of these grants to other academic units or ORUs for administration, on a case-by-case basis.
- d. At the time an ORU receives notification that it is to close, the VCRO will facilitate access to campus resources for affected personnel. Reappointment or termination of personnel will be consistent with current campus HR policies and procedures.
- e. University funding for the ORU reverts to the VCR to fund needs and opportunities for other ORUs, including new ORU proposals. Space assigned to the ORU reverts to the unit that provided it, unless other arrangements have been made. The ORU Director, in consultation with the VCR and the management of the recipient unit, must develop a plan for the return of space during the phase-out period.

9. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the VCRO on a case-by-case basis.

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