



Policy on Research Centres and Institutes

Classification:

Responsible Authority: Associate Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies

Executive Sponsor: Academic Vice-President and Provost

Approval Authority: Senate

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PURPOSE

To provide a policy for the establishment, governance, management, review, and termination of Research Centres and Institutes at St. Francis Xavier University (StFX).

The principal objective of Research Institutes and Centres shall be to conduct research in a specialized field accomplished through a collaborative effort involving a group of Faculty members and other associated researchers. The research to be conducted will be in a field of particular importance to the province, region and/or nation, or in which there exists a strength of expertise and resources at the University.

SCOPE

University-wide

DEFINITIONS

The University reserves the terms “Research Centre” and “Research Institute” for those entities that have been approved by the processes outlined in this Policy, except where they have been established as administrative or service units by StFX (e.g., Coady International Institute, Student Success Centre). As such, **Research Centres** and **Research Institutes** are recognized University entities which connect researchers/scholars with multi-sectorial components of a broader community to advance the generation and application of knowledge. Consistent with general practice, there is an ascending hierarchy of terms from “Centre” to “Institute” based on degree of size, resources, and anticipated reach.

Research Centre	A Research Centre is an organization constituted by the Senate to undertake research in a specific discipline or interdisciplinary area, but not to the exclusion of other related disciplines. Normally, Research Centres are located within a specific Faculty or School and could even be within a single department.
Research Institute	A Research Institute is an organization constituted by the Senate to undertake interdisciplinary research. In contrast to a Research Centre, a Research Institute normally has a broader organizational reach, and may include activities in addition to research (teaching, outreach, etc.). Institutes will have a more formal organization and governance structure, including a Director. Research Institutes may extend beyond a specific Faculty or School and include participation of faculty members from multiple departments.

POLICY

1. Intent

- The pursuit and undertaking of research at StFX University is principally dependent on the efforts of its faculty members. Faculty members, along with other researchers, students, and partners frequently group together to address research and scholarly issues of mutual interest. These groupings can take many forms, from informal research networks and partnerships to more formal Research Centres or Research Institutes that establish a critical mass of researchers/scholars working under a collective plan of activities. Research Centres and Research Institutes have the potential to increase the collective visibility, profile and impact of faculty research; enhance scholarly and interdisciplinary collaborations; enhance the University's ability to link research, teaching and outreach; attract external funding for research; and so forth. The overarching goal of Research Centres and Institutes, however, is to enhance opportunities for faculty to be successful in their academic and scholarly pursuits.

2. Criteria Guiding the Establishment of Research Centres and Institutes

- The key criterion for the establishment and on-going operation of a Research Centre or Research Institute is that it must add value to the University's research mission beyond that which would accrue from individual or informal activities organized within existing University structures (i.e. Departments, Faculties, Schools). The existence of a Research Centre or Institute should be linked to the specific functions and goals identified at establishment and/or during review. All Research Centres or Institutes should be reviewed at regular time intervals (i.e. every 5 years) to assess performance against objectives and to determine future directions, required changes or possible termination.
- A key criterion for all proposed Research Centres and Institutes is that they support the Academic Mission of the University. As a result, it is important to establish a process of review and approval by appropriate Academic and Administrative Bodies at StFX. These include review by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and Academic Priorities and Planning (APP) Committee prior to review and approval by the President's Council, and the Senate.
- Where Research Centres and Institutes involve external parties, relationships with those parties

should be managed through agreements between the University and those entities. These agreements shall take into consideration overarching principles, including governance, intellectual property, publication rights, support of students, dispute resolution, and so forth.

- The University may also participate in funded international, national, regional, provincial centres, including, for example, National Collaborating Centres, Networks of Centres of Excellence, Granting Agency-funded Research Networks, Centres of Excellence for Commercialization and Research, and so forth. Such centres or institutes have separate statutory, governance, compliance, and reporting requirements associated with them, and these matters are not covered by this Policy. Nonetheless, such centres and institutes, when led from StFX, could be assigned University Research Centre or Institute status. National centres or institutes led from elsewhere are not governed by this Policy.
- Normally, two StFX Research Centres or Institutes covering the same area would not be established/retained.

3. Teaching Activities within Research Centres and Institutes

- Research Centres and Institutes cannot of themselves be responsible for undergraduate and/or graduate teaching activities. Any teaching activities must be based in a Faculty/School.
- Research Centres and Institutes may, through arrangements with Faculties/Schools, assist in the coordination and/or delivery of undergraduate and/or graduate teaching programs.
- Research Centres and Institutes may play an active role in the promotion, organization and support of teaching activities. Research/scholarly training may be undertaken within Research Centres and Institutes, however, final academic responsibility resides with the University through the Departments, Programs, Faculties and Schools. Students whose research programs are located in a Research Centre or Institute must be enrolled in the University through a Faculty and/or School.

4. Steps in the Establishment of Research Centres and Research Institutes

- Outlined in the section on Procedures (see below)

5. Governance and Management of Research Centres and Institutes

- In all of their operations, Research Centres and Institutes must ensure that the reputation of the University is maintained. Research Centres and Institutes must properly and prominently acknowledge their relationship with the University in all correspondence and published material and clearly identify themselves as StFX Research Centres and Institutes in their work and communications.
- A Research Institute will normally have a Director, appointed by the Academic Vice-President and Provost, on the recommendation of a Selection Committee representing the stakeholders and chaired by the Dean/Vice-President to whom the Institute will report.
- A Research Centre may have a Director, Chair or Head appointed by the Academic Vice-President and Provost, on the recommendation of a Selection Committee representing the stakeholders and chaired by the Dean/Vice-President to whom the Centre will report.
- Research Centres or Institutes may wish to establish a Management (Steering) Committee responsible for overseeing the operations and fiscal affairs of the Centre/Institute.
- An external Advisory Committee may be established on the recommendation of the Dean/Vice-

President. The role of the External Advisory Committee is to assist and guide the Centre or Institute and its Director on matters of strategy and policy. The formation of an External Advisory Committee is highly recommended when there is significant active participation of, or engagement with, external stakeholders.

- The plans for Research Centre or Institute Governance, including the development and operation of Management and/or External Advisory Committees, should be set out in initial proposals and annual reports.

6. Reporting and Review of Research Centres and Institutes

- Outlined in the section on Procedures (see below).

7. Termination of Research Centres and Institutes

- The University reserves the right at any time to terminate the operation of a University-approved Research Centre or Institute for demonstrated academic, administrative or financial reasons. The closure or phase-out of a Research Centre or Institute may also be recommended as a result of a periodic review. In either of the above cases, the recommendation for termination, including rationale for the recommendation, may be made by the applicable Dean or Vice-President. The recommendation, including the rationale for such recommendation, will be reviewed by the RAC, APP and the PC, before being forwarded for consideration to Senate.

8. Implementation

- The University may develop guidelines, procedures and/or templates to assist in the administration of this Policy. All future Research Centres and Research Institutes receiving Senate approval under this Policy will be designated as such on the StFX Research webpages and other official documentation.

PROCEDURES

1. Establishment of Research Centres and Research Institutes

- An initial request to establish a new StFX Research Centre or Research Institute must be reviewed with the respective Dean(s) prior to submission to the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies (AVPRGS). Following initial feedback, the lead participants and proponents, who are normally University faculty members, will decide whether to submit a proposal to the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) for review.
- Faculty member participants and proponents of a StFX Research Centre or Institute should prepare a Proposal to establish the entity as a formal structure within the University. Appendix 1 outlines guidelines for the development of a Proposal to establish a Research Centre or Institute.
- Proposals will be initially reviewed by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC), the Academic Priorities and Planning (APP) Committee, and the President's Council (PC). The RAC shall consider whether the proposal is consistent with the research mission of the University. The APP shall consider the overall academic implications of the proposal. The PC will primarily determine whether the resource requirements and the sources of funding have been

appropriately considered. The RAC, APP or PC may ask the proponents for further information. If the proposal is endorsed by the RAC, APP and PC, it will be recommended to Senate for approval. The StFX Research Centre or Institute will be formally established upon receiving the approval of Senate.

- Implementation of all facets of a StFX Research Centre or Institute must follow all appropriate University policies related to financial management, procurement, human resources management, health and safety, intellectual property, research ethics and research integrity.

2. Reporting and Review of Research Centres and Institutes

- The Director, Chair or Head of a Research Centre or Institute shall prepare an Annual Report following the guidelines included in Appendix 2, outlining the activities, income and expenditures of the past year, as well as plans and budget for the coming year. The Annual Report shall be prepared by October 1 in each year, submitted to the AVPRGS, and reviewed by the RAC and APP.
- Annual reports on all StFX University Research Centres and Institutes will be included in the AVPRGS report to Senate each January.
- A Review of the activities of each StFX University Research Centre and Institute shall be periodically conducted, normally at least once every five years. Newly established Research Centres or Institutes may have their operation reviewed after a short time (i.e., 3 years) if requested by the RAC, APP, PC or Senate. The Dean or Vice-President to whom the Research Centre or Institute reports is responsible for initiating the review. The review, which should follow the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3, should examine the operation of the Centre or Institute, having regard to its mandate, the extent to which it continues to serve the strategic interest of the University, and its fiscal viability. The results of the review shall be presented to the RAC and PC, which will make recommendations on continuation to Senate.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Other University Policies consulted in the drafting of this policy include the following:

Acadia University:

http://hr.acadiau.ca/tl_files/sites/hr/Policies%20and%20Procedures/Centres%20at%20Acadia.doc

Saint Mary's University

http://www.smu.ca/webfiles/8-1009_Senate_EstablishReviewInstitutes.pdf

University of New Brunswick

<http://www.unb.ca/research/vp/research/index.html>

University of Prince Edward Island

<http://www.upei.ca/policy/adm/ord/gnl/0001>

AB XX: APPENDIX 1**Guidelines for the Development of a Proposal to Establish a Research Centre or Research Institute at St. Francis Xavier University**

StFX recognizes the value of Research Centres and Institutes as to increase the collective visibility and impact of faculty research, enhance scholarly collaborations, enhance the University's ability to link research, teaching and outreach, and so forth. The overarching goal of Research Centres and Institutes, however, is to enhance opportunities for faculty to be successful in their academic and scholarly pursuits. The formation of Research Centres and Institutes also commits the University to a certain degree of support and accountability. Proposal for the creation of StFX Research Centres or Institutes should contain the following information:

1. **Name and Purpose:** This section should identify the name, focus, rationale, value and benefits of the new Research Centre or Institute. The section could outline the proposed mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the Centre or Institute, as well as how the Centre or Institute fits with University strategic plans (University, Research, Faculty, Department, etc.).
2. **Functions and Activities:** This section should outline the research activities to be undertaken within the Centre or Institute, the types of related research activities (educational, outreach, knowledge mobilization and translation, etc.), the role and involvement of students, and the types of research collaborations and partnerships envisaged.
3. **Governance and organization:** This section should outline the members or various participants in the Research Centre or Institute, the organizational structure (if applicable), how the Centre or Institute will be managed, how decisions will be made, who will be accountable for decisions and activities, to whom the Director, Chair, or Head will report, and what management or advisory structures will be put in place. This section should also list any external partners or collaborators.
4. **Resources:** This section should provide a detailed outline or description of financial, space and human resource requirements of the Research Centre or Institute, and how those requirements will be met and/or supported (including expectations of support from the University). There must be an indication of funding required to support the Research Centre or Institute (both initial start-up costs and costs of ongoing operations) and of the internal and external sources of that funding. Research Centres or Institutes are normally expected to be financially self-sustaining over time and cannot operate on the basis of deficit financing.
5. **Letters of support from Chairs and/or Deans of areas involved in work of the proposed Research Centre or Institute.**
6. **A provision for annual reporting, and for strategic and operational review every five years; and**
7. **A statement recognizing the Research Centre's or Institute's obligation to conduct its activities in accordance with University policies.**

AB XX: APPENDIX 2**Guidelines for the Development of an Annual Report for a Research Centre or Research Institute at St. Francis Xavier University**

Annual reports for research centres and research institutes should address the following areas and topics:

- Mandate, goals and objectives.
- Progress achieved against the initial five-year plan.
- Governance – management, advisory bodies.
- Work undertaken – research activities, projects, outcomes, publications, partnerships, outreach, workshops, conferences, communications, etc.
- Involvement of members and other partners.
- Involvement of students and HQP outcomes.
- Leadership succession planning.
- Report on finances and other resources, including space, personnel, infrastructure etc.
- Budget update, including summary of expenses and income for the year, projections for next year.
- Objective and initiatives planned for the next year.

AB XX: APPENDIX 3**Guidelines for the 5-Year Review of a Research Centre or Research Institute at St. Francis Xavier University**

The five-year review of all StFX research centres and research institutes should include the following elements:

1. A review of the history, rationale, and development/evolution of the Research Centre or Institute, including the purpose for which it was established, its intended mission and mandate(s), its key goals and objectives as set out in initial planning documents. This section should include a summary of the ways in which the Research Centre or Institute serves the overall University mission (strategic plan, strategic research plan, etc.), as well as the ways that it serves the broader community, province, region, country, etc.
2. A full description of the research centre or institute.
3. A detailed summary of the key goals, objectives, and activities/programs of the research centre or institute, and the degree to which these have been met or achieved over the five-year period.
4. Any relevant statistics on the research centre or institute – research outputs and bibliometrics, research funding received, student trainees, etc.
5. Information on special activities or achievements of the research centre or institute – workshops, conferences, lecture series, partnerships, commercialization, etc.
6. Feedback from students, researchers involved in centre or institute activities, or external reviews undertaken for the centre/institute.
7. Any information on partner satisfaction if applicable.
8. Listing of all external funding or contracts associated with the research centre or institute.
9. Report on resources, including space, infrastructure, human resources, and financial budget.
10. Report on University support functions relevant to the research centre or institute (e.g., library, ITS, communications and marketing, advancement, etc.)
11. Any issues or concerns that members of the research centre or institute feel should be raised or addressed in the near or mid-term.