OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY SECRETARY

Memorandum

Date: November 11, 2026

To: Roberta Lavin, Faculty Senate President

From: Nancy D. Middlebrook, University Secretary

Re: Request Faculty Senate Approval of Proposed Revision to *Faculty Handbook* Policy A91: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of UNM Research Centers and Institutes

This proposed revision of Policy A91: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of UNM Research Centers and Institutes was developed by the Faculty Senate Research Policy Committee to update it to reflect current practices and to provide descriptions of the different categories used by UNM Main Campus.

The Faculty Senate Policy Committee (FSPC) reviewed the recommended policy revision and sent it to the campus for review and comment. No comments were received. The FSPC approved the attached proposed policy revision to go forward to the Faculty Senate for approval and would be happy to have a member at the Faculty Senate meeting to an answer questions or concerns. Thank you for this opportunity to work collaboratively with you on this important policy.

Attachment:
Proposed revised draft Policy A91: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of UNM Research Centers and Institutes

cc: Eve L Espey, Co-chair, Faculty Senate Policy Committee
Karen Patterson, Co-chair, Faculty Senate Policy Committee
Tito Busani, Chair, Faculty Senate Research Policy Committee

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Faculty Handbook	A91: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of UNM Research Centers and Institutes

Approved By: Faculty Senate
Approved: 3/7/16 Draft 5/13/26
Responsible Faculty Committee: Research Policy Committee
Office Responsible for Administration: Vice President for Research and HSC Vice President for Research

Legend: Red text is new wording, ~~strikeouts~~ show proposed deletions, Language that is shown in black (not underlined) reflects language in the current policy.

Revisions to the Policy Rationale, Policy Statement, and Applicability sections of this document must be approved by the full Faculty Senate.

APPLICABILITY

All UNM units, including the Health Sciences Center and Branch Community Colleges ~~Campuses~~.

POLICY RATIONALE

Research centers and institutes ~~play an inevitable, integral, and increasing role in modern research universities. These roles stem from two facts. First, cutting edge research in most academic disciplines is increasingly~~ encourage thematically focused but synergistic collaborations that are multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary in nature. ~~Second, research centers and institutes encourage thematically focused but synergistic collaborations that go beyond those that occur in traditional academic departments.~~ This enhances ~~both~~ the intellectual impact of the academic activities ~~as well as~~ and promotes extramural funding opportunities. From time-to-time it is necessary for the University of New Mexico (UNM) to consider proposals for the creation of new research centers and institutes, or for major restructuring or termination of existing research centers and institutes. This Policy document provides policies and procedures for consideration of such actions regarding research centers and institutes.

POLICY STATEMENT

The creation of a new research center or institute located on or off the UNM Albuquerque campus, or major changes to an existing research center or institute, require approval of the Faculty Senate and the Provost or Executive Vice President for Health Sciences (EVPHS). Approval of the proposed action must be obtained prior to initiating operation of a new research center or institute, or making permanent major changes to an existing research center or institute. In no case is this to be construed as prohibiting an existing research center or institute from experimenting with temporary major changes prior to seeking approval of these

on a continuing basis. However, it is expected that even in the case of experimental changes, stakeholders, such as affected faculty, staff, and students, will be informed in advance and their input considered by the appropriate dean, director, or other administrator proposing the changes, prior to initiation. All proposals to create, re-organize, or terminate a research center or institute shall follow the policies and procedures described herein, and any applicable standards or guidelines established by the Faculty Senate Research Policy Committee in consultation with representatives of the Provost, ~~or~~ the EVPHS if applicable, and relevant research center or institute heads. Refer to FH Standard A91#1:Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of Non-HSC Research Centers and Institutes for details.

Depending upon the scope and range of the research centers and institutes involved, there should be different levels or categories of research centers and institutes. To facilitate the integration of research centers and institutes into the mission of the most relevant academic units, they should be managed at the most local administrative level practicable. Regardless of level or category, there should be consistency across research centers and institutes in terms of the rules, operating procedures, and reporting and evaluation mechanisms that govern research centers and institutes. This acknowledges that research centers and institutes will vary with respect to focus, objectives, and outcomes, but the rules and procedures that govern their creation, operation, and continuation should be consistent.

Revisions to the remaining sections of this document may be amended with the approval of the Faculty Senate Research Policy Committee, Policy Committee, and Operations Committee.

PROCEDURES

1. Conceptual Phases of Research Centers and Institutes

Research centers and institutes have three (3) conceptual phases in their life cycle: the proposal phase, the operational phase, and the termination/reinvention phase.

1.1 Proposal Phase

The life cycle of a research center or institute begins with the proposal phase, during which faculty, staff, and administrators must work together to build a strong case for UNM to invest in a research center or institute. UNM administration should be provided evidence of the intellectual value of the research center or institute beyond that which can be achieved within the departmental or college structure. The proposal shall clearly identify the scope of the research center or institute; in particular which academic units will be contributing resources, including faculty time, staff, facilities, and funds. The proposal should have funding plans for the short (e.g., one to five years) and the long (e.g., decades) terms.

1.2 Operational Phase

Once established, all resources for a research center or institute shall be defined, including building space, equipment, staff, faculty appointments, and effort shares. The director is appointed by the administrator appropriate to the research center or institute, and the

conditions of the appointment and the term of service, including options for renewal, shall be clearly stated in the appointment letter. Directors shall be evaluated annually by a representative group of individuals. Guidance for the review is drawn from the proposal for the research center or institute and must include criteria for evaluation of the research center or institute vitality, achievement of goals, resource allocations, and budgets.

1.3 Termination/Reinvention Phase

The annual review processes from the Operational Phase shall reveal when a research center or institute is experiencing difficulty in managing resources or achieving its expressed goals. Although the director and other applicable administrators shall be expected to take action to support and revive the research center or institute, they are also responsible for terminating or "sunsetting" the research center or institute, as well as redirecting the resources to other areas of UNM when necessary. The reinvention and redirection of research center or institute activities shall be completed via a process similar to that for creating a new research center or institute.

2. Listing of Research Centers and Institutes

The website maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) or the Office of the HSC Vice President for Research shall contain an annually updated list of all research centers and institutes governed by the Provost and EVPHS and a summary of the most recent review for each research center or institute.

3. Levels or Categories of Research Centers and Institutes

With the goal of research centers and institutes to facilitate faculty activities beyond those which can be achieved in departments alone, it is critical that research centers and institutes be formed at the level or category within the institutional hierarchy that best supports this aim. The level or category will determine the approvals and evaluations required.

~~4. Division Specific Standards~~ Standards for the organization and review of research centers and institutes may vary within major components at UNM. To accommodate these differences each component should develop a standard document specific to the component designed to ensure compliance with this Policy. In the event that a research center or institute has substantial involvement in both the HSC and non-HSC divisions of UNM, the director will work with the Provost and EVPHS to determine which standard is applicable or if another standard needs to be developed.

3.1 UNM Main Campus Organizational Structure

The organizational structure outlined below is used on the UNM Main Campus with applicable guidelines provided in FH Standard A91#1:Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of Non-HSC Research Centers and Institutes which is applicable to non-HSC research centers and institutes. A standard will be developed to provide guidelines applicable to HSC research centers and institutes.

3.1.1 Category I

Category I research centers and institutes exist within departments, with directors reporting to the respective department chair. These research centers and institutes are appropriate in cases where the majority of affiliated faculty and the scope of activities both generally lie within the confines of a traditional academic department. However, the creation of a Category I research center or institute should expand and enhance opportunities beyond those possible by relying on the traditional existing department infrastructure alone.

3.1.2 Category II

Category II research centers and institutes exist within colleges, but outside of the traditional department framework, with directors reporting to the dean. These research centers and institutes are appropriate in cases where the majority of affiliated faculty and the scope of activities span more than one department but remain within the confines of a single college or school. Category II research centers and institutes should expand and enhance opportunities beyond those possible by relying on Category I research centers and institutes or the traditional department and college/school infrastructure.

3.1.3 Category III

Category III research centers and institutes exist alongside colleges or schools, with directors reporting to a higher-level administrator, such as the Provost or Vice President for Research. These research centers and institutes are appropriate in cases where the majority of the affiliated faculty and the scope of activities span more than one college or school. Category III research centers and institutes should expand and enhance opportunities beyond those possible by relying on Category I or II research centers and institutes, or the traditional department and college/school infrastructure.

3.1.4 Category III-Shared

Category III-Shared research centers and institutes exist across main campus and HSC campus alongside colleges or schools, with directors reporting to the Vice President for Research and the HSC Vice President for Research. These research centers and institutes are appropriate in cases where the majority of the affiliated faculty and the scope of activities span more than one college or school from each campus (UNM Main Campus and UNM Health Sciences Center). Category III-Shared research centers and institutes should expand and enhance opportunities beyond those possible by relying on Category III research centers and institutes, or the traditional department and college/school infrastructure.

DEFINITIONS

Major actions. A merger of two or more research centers or institutes, a division or dissolution of a research center or institute, or a change in the basic mission of a research center or institute.

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

- Directors of research centers and institutes.
- Academic deans or other executives, department chairs, directors, and managers responsible for research centers and institutes.
- Administrative staff responsible for research centers and institutes.
- Faculty interested in creating a new center or institute

RELATED DOCUMENTS

UNM Board of Regents' Policy Manual:

RPM Policy 5.1: The Faculty's Role in the University's Academic Mission

RPM Policy 5.9: Sponsored Research

Faculty Handbook:

FH Policy A61.16: Research Policy Committee

FH Policy A88: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of UNM Academic Units

FH Policy E60: Sponsored Research

FH Standard A91#1: Creation, Review, Reorganization, and Termination of Non-HSC Research Centers and Institutes

University Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual:

UAP Policy 2425: Recovery of Facilities and Administration Costs

CONTACTS

Direct any questions about this policy to Office of the Vice President for Research, the HSC Office of the Vice President for Research, or the Faculty Senate Research Policy Committee.

HISTORY

- July 1, 2025 - Policy format updated to align with FHB A53
- August 23, 2022 - Updated titles of Executive Vice President for Health Sciences and HSC Vice President for Research, per FHB Policy A53 procedures.
- April 28, 2015 – Approved by the Faculty Senate

DRAFT HISTORY

May 13, 2026 – revised draft approved by FSPC to go to Operations Committee for approval to go out for comment in the fall semester.

January 11, 2026 – Revised draft with changes recommended by RPC.