

PERIODIC REVIEW AND REAUTHORIZATION OF  
ACADEMIC UNIT INSTITUTES/CENTERS (AU I/C)  
***GUIDANCE DOCUMENT***

Coupled with strategic planning, periodic review for reauthorization is essential to advancing the missions of Academic Unit Centers and Institutes (AUCIs) and ensuring that they are well positioned to most effectively facilitate interdisciplinary scholarship, research, innovation, and impact.

Just as the periodic Academic Program Review (APR) process serves to maintain and improve discipline-centered departments via self-study, peer feedback, and strategic/opportunity guidance, the objective of the periodic review for AUCIs is use these same mechanisms to provide a clear assessment of strengths and challenges, help guide future directions.

An effective periodic review benefits the AUCI in planning for the future, fully engages the faculty and administration in the development of the self-study, external peer review, unit response, and the subsequent implementation of the recommendations. CIs can realize these benefits from a quality review tailored to the scope and scale of its activities, including:

- Examination of the quality and value of the CI's activities by faculty, staff, students, and if appropriate, collaborators from the community or other entities.
- Clarification, evaluation, and perhaps revision, of the CI's goals, strengths, challenges, and opportunities.
- Analysis of internal and external factors that influence the CI's current and future activities, strategic planning, and decisions on resources.
- Assessment of the CI's objectives and how they enable achievement of the Academic Unit's and University's strategic priorities and goals and support the faculty, staff, students, and communities they serve.

The Senior Vice President for Research and their delegates are responsible for the oversight and documentation of the periodic review and reauthorization processes of all Centers and Institutes. As such, the **Office of Research & Partnerships (ORP)** serves as the main point of contact for this process, although the periodic review and reauthorization is a collaborative process with senior university administrators, college deans, and department heads whose faculty are AUCI members.

The AUCI is responsible for all expenses incurred by the Periodic Review process. It is incumbent upon the Cognizant Academic Unit Administrator (CAUA), whether College Dean, Department Head, or other supervisor, to provide an FRS account number to cover any expense incurred by the Periodic Review process.

## **1. Periodic Review**

All AUCIs are expected to undergo periodic review for reauthorization no more than 5 years after initial establishment, and for periodic renewal every 7 years (minimum frequency) thereafter. **ORP** initiates the

need for review by informing the Cognizant Academic Unit Administrator (CAUA) (College Dean, Department Head, or other supervisory official) of upcoming expiration of the AUCI authorization. In extenuating circumstances, the CAUA can request in writing an extension of up to one year from the Senior Vice President for Research. In the absence of timely completion of the periodic review process, the AUCI will be suspended and "sunsetted". In such instances, the AUCI then will no longer be considered a campus unit and is not permitted to continue to act as a campus unit from that time onward.

The CAUA is expected to conduct a periodic review of the Institute/Center in coordination with **ORP** (see "Sample Calendar of Activities" outlining the review process). Typically, there are three components to the periodic review:

- Internally-generated Self-Study Report;
- External peer review of the AUCI that produces an Evaluation Report with recommendations for the AUCI;
- External Review Response outlining specific actions the AUCI will take to address the Evaluation Report's recommendations over the following performance period.

Self-Study Report. The Self-Study Report (see *Self Study Report Sample Outline*) should reflect on the AUCI's past accomplishments and present needs to refine its future mission, achieve its goals and expand impact. The Director coordinates with AUCI staff, faculty, and affiliate members in the preparation of the Self-Study Report. The Report will be submitted to **ORP** with the re-authorization request.

External Peer Review. The external peer review should be conducted by a team of individuals who have expertise in areas that are common with the AUCI. The external review team is appointed by the CAUA and should reflect the university's core value of diversity in perspectives, and thus will typically include: 1) at least two individuals who are employed at other peer or similarly well-regarded institutions, agencies, or industries (faculty or similarly qualified professionals) outside of the University of Arizona; and 2) two faculty members from the University of Arizona who are not affiliated with the AUCI.

The external Review Team reviews the Self-Study Report and conducts a campus visit that includes meetings with relevant administrators, faculty, staff, students, and affiliate and advisory members to gain a thorough understanding of the AUCI, in order to conduct their evaluation. Exit meetings with the Director, CAUA, and any other pertinent academic unit administrators should be considered to provide preliminary evaluation of and recommendations for the AUCI. The AUCI and CAUA are responsible for providing suitable meeting space and logistical support during the Review Team campus visit.

Within 30 days of the campus visit, the Review Team shall submit a written Evaluation Report to the AUCI Director and CAUA. The Evaluation Report should focus on recommendations to strengthen the AUCI within existing resources and operating context, as well as suggestions for configurational changes or investment that would have the greatest impact to advance its mission. Suggested format for the Evaluation Report includes:

- Brief Introduction.
- Strengths and Weaknesses.
- Recommendations that are specific, concrete, and feasible that can be reasonably implemented within the resources currently in place.

- Suggestions for collaborative/synergistic activities with other entities.
- Other sections at the Team's discretion.

External Review Response. After the External Review Evaluation Report is received, the AUCI Director and CAUA should meet to discuss its recommendations and mutually identify actions and timelines to address them. These should be summarized in an External Review Response which is submitted as part of the reauthorization request to the Senior Vice President for Research.

AUCI faculty, staff, students, and affiliate and advisory members are expected to be actively engaged in all phases of the review process. They are expected to be familiar with the Self-Study Report, participate in the Review Team's campus visit, and participate in the development of the AUCI response.

## 2. Reauthorization of AUCI

Reauthorization may be requested to the SVPR by the CAUA following either the initial 5-year or ongoing 7-year performance periods. Following completion of the Periodic Review, the CAUA submits a request for reauthorization to the SVPR that includes:

- Cover letter with the following information:
  - o Summary appraisal of the AUCI performance and future strategy for success;
  - o Desired period of reauthorization (up to 7 years);
  - o (as appropriate) Request for modification in the type, mission or purpose of the AUCI and description of the proposed changes as described in the *Guidance on Establishment and Modification of Academic Unit Centers and Institutes*.
- Copies of the periodic review supporting documents (Self Study and External Review Reports, review response, etc.).

If the Periodic Review recommends the AUCI proceed into the next performance period without significant modifications from the previous authorization period, only a brief review by the SVPR will be necessary. If substantive changes in the type, mission or purpose are requested, a more intensive review will be conducted appropriate to the nature and scope of the requested changes. For major and fundamental changes to the AUCI, the CAUA may be requested to submit additional material and discuss the changes with the SVPR. Significant modifications including renaming, merger, changes in home units, or termination of CIs require ABOR approval.

The SVPR makes the final determination of reauthorization. **ORP** will disseminate the determination to the CAUA, AUCI Director, and others as appropriate.

## 3. Modification or Termination of an AUCI

The CAUA may request to modify or terminate an AUCI by submitting a written request to the **ORP** Institute/Center Coordinator that describes the desired change and rationale for the modification. These requests will be reviewed by the SVPR, and an appropriate action, including a review process, will be taken tailored to the nature of the request.

When requesting modification or termination of an AUCI, consideration should be given to the termination or transfer of any contractual obligations, the employment status of any employees, the transfer of any capital equipment or space, and the transfer or reassignment of any funds, including foundation accounts. Significant modifications including renaming, merger, changes in home units, or termination of CIs require ABOR approval.

#### **4. Periodic Review in Conjunction with Academic Program Review (APR)**

The CAUA may request from the Office of Research & Partnerships that the periodic review be conducted in conjunction with an academic unit Academic Program Review if the Center or Institute is entirely housed within the one department under review. In the case of a combined review, primary coordination responsibility is through the Provost's Office, but **ORP** should participate in coordination meetings as needed. The APR Self Study Report must include a separate section for the AUCI following the *Self Study Report Sample Outline*. Selection of the external review team should follow the Provost's Office *APR Procedure Manual* but should reflect expertise inclusive of the AUCI to effectively evaluate its contribution to the department or college.