THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Research & Partnerships

PERIODIC REVIEW AND REAUTHORIZATION OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTER or INSTITUTE (URCI)
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Coupled with strategic planning, periodic peer review for reauthorization is essential to advancing academic excellence and ensuring Centers and Institutes are well positioned to successfully respond to opportunities and to support the needs of faculty who desire to contribute to cross-cutting, interdisciplinary scholarship and innovation.

For discipline-centered departments, the Academic Program Review is the primary means to maintain and improve quality, where the intent is to be a periodic self-examination process that includes peer feedback and provides guidance on ongoing strategic actions to realize future opportunities. For interdisciplinary Centers and Institutes (CIs), the objective of the Periodic Review is similar; it is a process designed to provide a clear assessment of the strengths and challenges and guide the future direction of activities.

An effective periodic review is beneficial to the CI 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. As a result, CIs can realize many benefits and outcomes from a quality review tailored to the scope and scale of its activities, including:

- An examination of the quality and value of the CI's activities by the faculty and students
- A clarification, evaluation, and perhaps revision, of the CI's goals, strengths, challenges, and opportunities
- An improved source of information to help guide the CI's future actions, activities, and decisions on resources
- An assessment of the CI's objectives and how they enable achievement of the University's strategic priorities and goals.

The Senior Vice President for Research & Partnerships is responsible for the coordination, oversight and documentation of the periodic review and reauthorization processes of all University Research Centers and Institutes (URCIs). As such, the **Office for 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 Institute/Center members.

1. **Periodic Review**

All Institutes/Centers are expected to undergo periodic review for reauthorization after its initial establishment period (no more than 5 years) and renewal period (no more than 7 years). The Office for Research & Partnerships (ORP) initiates the need for review by informing the CI Director. In extenuating circumstances, the Director may request in writing an extension of up to one year from the SVPR. A periodic review of a URCI can also be initiated by the Director or SVPR at any time. In the absence of timely completion of the initial periodic review process, the URCI will be suspended and "sunsetted" after the establishment period has been completed. The URCI then will no longer be considered a campus unit and is not permitted to continue to act as an Institute/Center from that time onward.

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

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

The Self-Study Report (see *Self Study Report Sample Outline*) should reflect on the URCI's past accomplishments and present needs to refine its future mission, achieve its goals and expand impact. The Director coordinates with URCI staff, faculty, and affiliate members in the preparation of the Self-Study Report which shall be submitted to ORP at least 3 months prior to the scheduled review date.

The external peer review shall be conducted by a team of individuals who have national expertise in areas that are common with the URCI. The Director, in consultation with the URCI members and the pertinent cognizant deans, submits nominations to the SVPR or delegates for those to serve on the Review Team. The Review Team composition will vary among URCI, but should reflect of 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; 2) two faculty member from the University of Arizona who are not affiliated with the URCI of the University of Arizona. The SVPR or delegates review the nominated candidates, appoints the External Review Team and designates one member as Chair.

The external Review Team is required to review the Self-Study Report and conduct a campus visit that includes meetings with relevant administrators, faculty, staff, students, affiliate and advisory members to gain a thorough understanding of the URCI to conduct their evaluation. Two exit meetings also are required for the Review Team to provide preliminary evaluation of and recommendations for the URCI: one with the Director, members, and designated staff and a second exit interview the SVPR, relevant dean(s) and any other pertinent university administrators. ORP schedules the on-campus review, pays for the travel and honoraria costs of the external reviewers, develops the charge statement for the Review Team based on input from the cognizant Deans, and establishes the review team meeting schedule framework in coordination with the URCI. The URCI is 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 the written Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Report should focus on recommendations to strengthen the URCI within existing resources and operating context, as well as suggestions for investment that would have the greatest impact to advance quality and increase research and engagement activities. The Evaluation Report shall include:

- Brief Introduction
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Recommendations that are specific, concrete, and feasible that can be reasonably implemented within the resources currently in place.
- Other sections at the Review Team's discretion.

Within 30 days of receipt of the Review Team's Evaluation Report, the URCI Director and SVPR shall meet to discuss its recommendations and mutually identify actions and timelines to address them. This should include any anticipated modifications in the type, mission or purpose of the URCI and description of the proposed changes.

URCI faculty, staff, students, affiliate and advisory members are expected to be actively engaged in all phases of the periodic 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 URCI response.

2. Reauthorization of URCIs

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

- Review process
- Summary of external Review Team recommendations
- Planned actions for the next performance period
- Requested period of reauthorization (up to 7 years)

Copies of the periodic review supporting documents (reports, itineraries, etc.) should be appended to the reauthorization request.

If the Periodic Review recommends the URCI 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 URCI, the Director 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 is responsible for disseminating this determination, along with corresponding reports, to the Institute/Center Director, Provost, relevant Deans and others as appropriate.