SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Policy on Establishment and Continuation
of Academic Centers and Institutes

Version: 1.0   **Responsible University Official:** Provost

Effective Date: February 1, 2022

1.0 Introduction

The establishment of academic "centers" and "institutes" at the University will help guide and shape excellence in teaching, research, service, and practice, consistent with our mission and core values. This policy will serve as a formal, provost-level policy on the definition and establishment of "centers" and "institutes" within the Division of Academic Affairs.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy governs all academic units (as defined herein) and administrative units under the purview of the provost, at all locations and campuses (including the Madrid Campus). Academic units under the purview of the vice president for medical affairs are excluded.

2.2 This policy applies to the establishment of all centers and institutes within the purview of section 2.1.

2.3 This policy applies to all currently existing centers and institutes within the purview of section 2.1 with regard to ongoing responsibilities, reports, and evaluations in Sections 4.0 and 5.0. The provost will establish a graduated initial rollout for existing centers and institutes to perform their five-year evaluation.

3.0 "Centers" and "Institutes" Defined

Note: It is acknowledged that multiple SLU units/organizations have the terms "center" or "institute" in their names (e.g., Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning, Center for Social Action). While this policy explicitly defines "academic centers" (and "academic institutes") below, it makes no claim of exclusive University-wide rights to the use of those terms. Use of the terms "center" or "institute" does not necessarily invoke this policy; only "centers" or "institutes" that meet the definitions and stipulations of this policy below are subject to this policy. (For example, the Gnaegi Center for Health Care Ethics is, organizationally, a department.)

NOTE: For brevity, all references to "colleges" applies to colleges, schools, centers, and libraries.

3.1   An academic "center" or "institute" is an organizational unit structured around a similar but more narrowly-defined set of scholarly and academic purposes than for which departments, schools, and colleges exist and involves more than one faculty member.

> *Note: SLU has historically used the terms "center" and "institute" synonymously, with both terms referring to the same type and level of academic organizational unit, as defined herein. Nothing distinguished a center from an institute, and the choice of term was the prerogative of the person or body authorized to approve the center or institute as an organizational unit. The function of the organizational unit determines the applicability of this policy, not the name. Names like collegium and network may also be treated as academic organizational "centers" or "institutes," as appropriate.*

> *A research lab led by an individual faculty member or multiple faculty members is not automatically considered an academic organizational center.*

> *Centers and institutes that hire their own faculty are not included in this definition. They are subject to the rules and governance mechanisms for departments.*

Academic centers and institutes exist for the following corporate purposes:

- the support and advancement of SLU's institutional mission;

- the support and advancement of SLU's academic programs;

- the support and advancement of scholarship and creative endeavor of SLU faculty whose work shares disciplinary and interdisciplinary content, scholarly methodologies, or other governing academic characteristic(s); and

- the support and advancement of community outreach of SLU faculty whose work shares disciplinary and interdisciplinary content, scholarly methodologies, or other governing academic characteristic(s).

While the breadth of foci of centers and institutes belies strict definition, the work of institutes—as well as the faculty, staff, and students affiliated with institutes—traverses the boundaries of departments, schools, and colleges. Institutes are typically organized around the investigation of a specific theme, issue, project or policy topic, and often incorporate interdisciplinary work spanning a number of academic fields. Accordingly, institutes play an important role in supporting multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary educational, research, and outreach programs at a University-wide level. Institutes can also strengthen disciplinary degree and certificate programs, provide service learning opportunities, and/or spur levels of highly-visible research activity. Centers, on the other hand, reside in colleges or departments, report to a dean and/or department chair, and are made up of faculty within the college/department.

Centers and institutes are also distinguished from colleges, schools, and departments as follows:

- Faculty may not hold an appointment (primary, secondary, joint, or any other appointment) in a center/institute; rather, faculty hold those appointments in an academic unit (college, school, department).
- Faculty may be chosen by a center or institute director to be *affiliated* with a center(s)/institute(s); center/institute affiliation is voluntary for all faculty.
- "Affiliation with a center/institute" is a formal recognition of a faculty member's
    - selection for center/institute affiliation by the respective center/institute director and
    - engagement in center/institute-related academic activity.
- Workload allocations for faculty who engage in the work of centers and institutes are determined by those making workload assignments in the academic unit of the faculty's primary appointment.

- Center or institute affiliation affords no other specific rights to the faculty member.
- Academic centers and institutes may not offer/house courses, degree programs, or certificates (i.e., the formally-defined certificates issued by the University via the Office of the University Registrar).
- Informal acknowledgements of completion of training activities offered by centers and institutes will not be recognized on any diploma or transcript issued by the University Registrar, and no center or institute may represent such an acknowledgement of completion as similar or equivalent to an acknowledgement of completion of an "academic program" (as defined by University policy) issued by the University Registrar.
- Academic centers and institutes that offered degrees prior to the implementation of this policy are granted an exception.
- Many centers and institutes receive a portion of their funding from external sources (public and private), affording them varying levels of financial independence. Funding sources and arrangements must follow applicable University policy provisions related to grants, gifts, and donor influence.
- Many centers and institutes are created as mandatory program requirements of an externally-funded grant (these academic organizational units have modified establishment/approval processes, as detailed in Section 3.2 below)

3.2 Academic centers exist at two levels: College and Department. Academic institutes exist at the University level. The distinctions among these levels are detailed in the following table:

Levels of SLU Academic Centers and Institutes

	University-Level Institute	College-Level Center	Department-Level Center
Organizational Scope	Engaging affiliated faculty from multiple colleges within Division of Academic Affairs (including their operational equivalents, including but not limited to the University Libraries or INTO SLU)	Engaging affiliate faculty from multiple departments within a single, governing college/school or in colleges/schools without departments such as Law and Nursing, affiliate faculty from within the college/school, or other invited University faculty	Engaging affiliate faculty from within a single, governing department
Internal Funding Source	Provost	Governing College	Governing Department
External Funding Required?	No	No	No
External Funding Sources (if applicable)	Public or Private	Public or Private	Public or Private
Center/Institute Proposal Development	Completion of a New Academic Center/Institute Proposal; see Appendix A	Completion of a New Academic Center/Institute Proposal; see Appendix A	Completion of a New Academic Center/Institute Proposal; see Appendix A
Center/Institute Proposal Approval Process	By the provost, after receipt of the following: ■ results of a formal vote on the proposal from the Council of Academic Deans & Directors (includes the Faculty Senate president) ■ formal recommendation from the deans of each college in which likely institute-affiliated faculty hold faculty appointments or recommendation from the Research Growth Committee for institutes launched by the SLU Research Institute. ■ feedback from the Vice President for Research ■ informational presentation to the Faculty Senate *Note: This process does not apply to institutes created as mandatory program requirements of an externally-funded grant from a public, governmental entity (e.g., NSF Science and Technology Centers; DOE Energy Frontier Research Centers; etc.). Such institutes are necessarily approved via the support of either the provost or the vice-*	By the dean of the governing college, after receipt of the following: ■ input on the proposal from the highest level faculty governance body of the college ■ input on the proposal from the chair of each department in the college *Note: This process does not apply to centers created as mandatory program requirements of an externally-funded grant from a public, governmental entity. Such centers are necessarily approved via the support of either the provost or the vice-president of research as part of the grant proposal development process.*	By the chair of the governing department, after receipt of the following: ■ recommendation on the proposal from the dean of the governing college ■ results of a formal vote on the proposal by the faculty of the governing department *Note: This process does not apply to centers created as mandatory program requirements of an externally-funded grant from a public, governmental entity. Such centers are necessarily approved via the support of either the provost or the vice-president of research as part of the grant proposal development process.*

	University-Level Institute	College-Level Center	Department-Level Center
	president of research as part of the grant proposal development process.		
Center/Institute Leader	Director /Co-Director	Director/Co-Director	Director/Co-Director
Center/Institute Leader Minimum Qualifications	Minimum qualifications shall follow the plan articulated in the institute's approved proposal. Directors are expected to have a demonstrated record of leadership, scholarship, or professional experience warranting such an appointment by the provost.	Minimum qualifications shall follow the plan articulated in the center's approved proposal. Directors are expected to have a demonstrated record of leadership, scholarship, or professional experience warranting such an appointment by the dean.	A full-time, faculty appointment in the governing department, normally at the rank of associate professor or professor.
Center/Institute Leader Contract Type	Administrative Position	Administrative Position	Administrative Position
Center/Institute Leader Admin Salary/Stipend	Varies, determined by provost	Varies, determined by governing dean	Varies, determined by governing chair
Center/Institute Leader Appointment Process	By the provost, per the institute's approved plan for initial hiring and re-appointment process and criteria	By the governing college dean, per the center's approved plan for initial hiring and re-appointment process and criteria	By the governing department chair, per the center's approved plan for initial hiring and re-appointment process and criteria
Center/Institute Membership	Minimum of three affiliated faculty (excluding director(s), should director(s) be faculty)	Minimum of three affiliated faculty (excluding director(s), should director(s) be faculty)	Minimum of three affiliated faculty (excluding director(s))
Ongoing Responsibilities	Annual report to the provost, evaluation of the academic institute every 5 years	Annual report to the dean, evaluation of the academic center every 5 years	Annual report to the chair, evaluation of the academic center every 5 years

4.0 Center/Institute Establishment , Continuation, and Closure

4.1. **Establishing a Center/Institute.** Centers and institutes are established per the processes outlined in the table in Section 3.2. The provost will establish procedures (e.g., a checklist or form) to support these processes.

4.2. **Annual Center/Institute Evaluation.** Academic centers and institutes will be evaluated annually and must provide an annual report to the relevant academic leader. This report will include the names of faculty affiliates, center/institute activities and publications, and details about center/institute funding including grants and gifts awarded in the prior year. Annual reports must be submitted no later than October 1 and reflect activities undertaken during the period of July 1-June 30 of the preceding year, except that centers and institutes that have other annual reporting requirements with a different reporting date may request a different reporting date from the Provost, so that their annual report coincides with their other required annual report.

4.3. **Fifth Year Renewal Evaluation**. Centers and institutes must be formally reviewed every five years by the relevant academic leader (provost for University institute, dean for college centers, chair for departmental centers). The five-year evaluation will determine whether a center/institute shall be renewed or closed. In an evaluation year, a preliminary status report is due by March 31.

Fifth year renewal evaluations must result in a decision to continue or close. Centers/Institute that continue to meet their academic objectives, remain financially viable, and add value to Saint Louis University will be allowed to continue. If the relevant academic leader determines that an academic center/institute no longer serves the University or is no longer viable, it will be formally instructed to close. Closure decisions may be appealed to the provost within 60 days of notification of the decision. The provost will grant or deny the appeal, in writing, within 45 days of receipt of the appeal request.

4.4. **Closing a Center/Institute.** Proposals to establish centers and institutes (per Section 3.2) must include plans for the disposition of assets upon closure including endowments, equipment, and staff. When the relevant academic leader determines that an academic center/institute cannot be sustained or when a center or institute has fewer than three (3) faculty affiliates, it will be given 12 months to close. Academic centers and institutes will follow a closure checklist that includes working with the relevant academic leader to dispose of or reassign its assets.

5.0 Center/Institute Leadership, Membership, and Staff

5.1 **Center/Institute Director Position Description.** Centers and institutes are led by directors. Directors are the only administrative positions necessarily created via the approval of a new center/institute. Directors are responsible for the following:

1. Planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating the work of the center/institute.
2. Administering the center's/institute's budget in accordance with University and any external funder requirements.
3. Making all appointments of center/institute personnel (including faculty affiliations), after the consultations stipulated in Section 5.5.
4. Performing normal administrative duties necessary for the effective operation of the center/institute.

5.2   Approval of a new center or institute neither establishes nor implies the need for any administrative personnel other than the center/institute director. Determination of the need for any additional administrative personnel (from .1 FTE to 1.0 FTE) will be made separately by the director in consultation with the academic leader to whom the director reports.

5.3   Centers and institutes must have a director and at least three affiliated faculty.

5.4   No new faculty position is created upon the approval of a new academic center or institute. Approval of a new center/institute does not imply the need for any new faculty to be hired by SLU.

5.5   Creation of a center does not obligate the university or an academic leader to fund the center, its director, or any personnel. All budgeted funds are approved by the academic leader to whom the director reports.

5.6   Designation of faculty affiliation (as defined in Section 3.1) requires a letter of designation signed by the faculty member, the faculty member's department chair, dean, the center/institute director, and the academic leader to whom the director reports.

6.0 Approvals

This policy was:

1.   Approved by CADD*: January 20, 2022

2.   Approved by the Provost: January 20, 2022

* This approval included a 30-day period during which all SLU faculty had the opportunity to provide to their respective deans and the provost any comments or suggested edits prior to the CADD vote.

Academic Centers and Institutes Proposal Cover Sheet

Purpose: ☐ Proposal for New Center/Institute ☐ Annual Report   ☐ Five-Year evaluation

Date of Report: _____   Academic Year: _____

Name (or proposed name) of Center/Institute: _____

Acronym (if any): _____   Proposed Annual Reporting Date: _____
                                              (If not October 1)

The following materials are attached:

FOR CENTER/INSTITUTE PROPOSAL:
☐ Detailed description of the center's/institute's academic/scholarly purpose, including a purpose statement, and a statement describing how the center supports and advances SLU's institutional mission.
☐ Description of the center's/institute's SLU organizational level, including relationships with other academic units, and/or to other University centers/institutes (including whether proposed center/institute replaces an existing or discontinued center/institute)
☐ Anticipated date of center's/institute's operational start
☐ First year goals and annual measurable performance outcomes/milestones
☐ Initial resources required:
  o Plan for hiring initial Director and re-appointment process and criteria
  o List of colleges and departments in which likely center/institute-affiliated faculty hold faculty appointments and a process for affiliation approval, including a list of faculty (if any) who seek to affiliate with the academic center/institute at launch
  o Initial facilities and equipment needs, including information technology resources and anticipated website needs, including likely location/URL
  o Library resource needs (include a formal review from pertinent subject librarians)
  o Student research opportunities and community service components
  o Letters of support
☐ 5-year center/institute plan including:
  o Detailed 5-year staffing plan
  o Detailed 5-year budget, including start-up funds, anticipated internal and external funding
  o Plan for comprehensive fifth-year center evaluation, including renewal and sunsetting criteria
  o Plan for disposition of assets upon closure including endowments, equipment, and staff
☐ For College- and Department-Level center proposals only: Feedback from VP for Research (See Appendix B)

FOR CENTER/INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT:
☐ Detailed evaluation of achievement of annual milestones/measurable performance outcomes
☐ Detailed evaluation of progress towards five-year goals
☐ Any additional pertinent information

FOR CENTER/INSTITUTE FIVE-YEAR EVALUATION:
☐ Detailed evaluation of achievement of five-year milestones/measurable performance outcomes
☐ Preliminary decision of continuation or discontinuation of center/institute
☐ Any additional pertinent information

Academic Centers Proposal
Feedback from Vice President for Research

Purpose: ☐ Proposal for New Center   Level: ☐ Department   ☐ College/School/Library

Date Feedback Submitted: _____   Academic Year: _____

Name (or proposed name) of Center: _____

Acronym (if any): _____

Please comment on the contribution you believe this center will make to the University's research landscape, as well as any potential overlap or duplication with other SLU centers (existing or proposed) about which you are aware that may either lessen the need for the proposed center or cause this proposal to be modified to complement those centers.

Signature: _____   Date: _____
                     Vice President for Research