

UC Davis Policy and Procedure Manual

Chapter 220, Research--General

Section 01, Organized Research

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Responsible Department: Office of Research

Source Document: [UC Administrative Policies and Procedures Concerning Organized Research Units](#)

[Exhibit A, Proposal for the Establishment of an Organized Research Unit](#)

[Exhibit B, Annual Reports of Organized Research Units](#)

[Exhibit C, Guidelines for the Review of Organized Research Units](#)

I. Purpose

The purpose of an organized research unit is to foster research that crosses boundaries among disciplines, departments, and schools or colleges and that cannot readily be done within the administrative structure of a single department or other administrative unit. The purpose of an organized research project is the same as that of an organized research unit, but for a specific, shorter period. This section describes administrative policies and procedures concerning organized research units and organized research projects at UC Davis.

II. Definitions

- A. Organized Research Unit (ORU)--an academic agency, approved by The President, established within the campus to administer research programs complementary to the academic goals of the campus. The research programs are usually collaborative and multidisciplinary. An ORU may have other academic functions ordinarily carried out by departments of instruction and research, e.g., it may sponsor research conferences and meetings, advise on graduate curricula, or provide support for graduate students and graduate programs, but an ORU cannot have jurisdiction over courses or curricula and cannot offer formal courses for credit unless it has been specifically empowered to do so. Other criteria, such as designations or administrative arrangements, do not in themselves suffice to define an ORU.
- B. Multicampus Research Unit (MRU)--similar to an ORU, but approved by The Regents. An MRU functions at the level of the Office of the President and coordinates research between two or among several campuses. Information on the establishment, administration, and review of an MRU may be obtained through the Office of Research.
- C. Organized Research Project (ORP)--a pilot project or precursor to an ORU. An ORP has characteristics similar to those of an ORU, that is, it is interdisciplinary, normally collaborative, and cannot be accomplished within the confines of a single department. An ORP must be educational and complementary to the academic goals of the campus.
- D. University policy has designated certain categories of names for ORUs. These designations shall not be used for research projects that are not ORUs. Insofar as possible, designations of ORUs shall be taken from the following definitions:
 1. Institute--a major unit that coordinates and promotes faculty/student research on a continuing basis in areas that extend across departments, schools or colleges, and sometimes campuses. The unit may also engage in public service activities stemming from its research programs.
 2. Laboratory--a nondepartmental organization that establishes and maintains facilities for research in a given discipline or in related disciplines.
 3. Center--a small unit, sometimes one of several forming an institute, that furthers research in a designated field; or a unit engaged primarily in providing research facilities for other

units and departments.

4. Station--a unit that provides physical facilities for interdepartmental research in a broad area (e.g., agriculture), sometimes housing other ORUs and serving several campuses.

ORPs may not use the above designations; their establishment permits use of project, program, or group.

III. Procedures for Establishment

A. Establishment of an ORP

1. An ORP may be established under the following criteria:
 - a. When a group of faculty form an interdisciplinary research group that identifies a "pilot" research project with the intention of developing it into an ORU, formal status as an ORP may be granted for a maximum of three years. After this period the program must either become an ORU, become a program within an existing ORU, or forfeit formal recognition.
 - b. When a proposal for an ORU has been submitted but the review process is not complete and the needs of the project require formal status, status as an ORP may be granted. This will automatically change to ORU status when The Regents have approved the proposal.
2. For an ORP to be established as a pilot project:
 - a. Interested faculty develop a brief (4- to 6- page) document that justifies the establishment of an ORP, stating its goals and objectives, the leader and associated faculty, the disciplines involved, the location, and such other information useful in determining appropriateness for ORP status.
 - b. The proposal is forwarded to the Vice Chancellor--Research for review and consultation with the appropriate deans to determine their support, after which the proposal is approved or denied.
 - c. A copy of the approved proposal is forwarded to the Academic Senate for information and future reference should the ORP submit a proposal for status as an ORU.
3. Establishment of an ORP as an interim measure until ORU status is approved requires a letter of request to the Vice Chancellor--Research.
4. ORP status confers eligibility for modest administrative support funds and establishment of the ORP's own account.

B. Establishment of an ORU

1. To establish an ORU, concerned faculty prepare a proposal containing the information in [Exhibit A](#). The proposal, along with a one-page description of the subject matter in lay terms, is submitted to the dean of the school/college most directly affected by the proposed ORU for review of resources requested and evaluation of the proposal. After the dean's concurrence, the proposal is forwarded to the Vice Chancellor-- Research, who seeks advice from appropriate Divisional Academic Senate committees and the Planning & Budget Office. The Vice Chancellor- Research then presents the proposal to the Council of Deans & Vice Chancellors for review.
2. After completion of campus review, the Chancellor forwards the proposal to the President. The Office of the President reviews the proposal and refers it to the appropriate Universitywide Academic Senate committees and, if necessary, to the California

Postsecondary Education Commission for comment. The President is authorized to approve the establishment of ORUs, and reports annually to the Board of Regents on any such actions. Establishment of an ORU carries with it a commitment of space and funding adequate to its mission.

IV. Administration of an ORU

- A. Each ORU shall be headed by a director who shall be a tenured member of the faculty. Policy and procedures for appointment of directors of ORUs are outlined in [UCD Appendix II-C](#) of the Academic Personnel Manual.
- B. The director shall be aided by a standing advisory committee, appointed by the Vice Chancellor--Research and chaired by a faculty member other than the director (who serves on the committee as an ex officio member). The committee shall meet regularly and shall participate actively in setting the unit's goals and critically evaluating its effectiveness on a continuing basis. The advisory committee shall be comprised mainly of faculty members, but may have some members from outside the University. The charge to the committee and its functions, membership, and reporting requirements are determined by the Vice Chancellor-- Research.
- C. ORUs on the Davis campus report operationally to a dean of a school or college or as delegated by the Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor--Research has functional responsibility for organized research.
- D. Each ORU shall provide an annual report to the Vice Chancellor--Research that contains the information set forth in [Exhibit B](#).

V. ORU Program Review

- A. Each ORU shall be reviewed at intervals of five years or less by an ad hoc review committee, appointed by the Vice Chancellor--Research from a slate nominated by the Committee on Committees of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate. The time of the ORU review usually coincides with review of the director (see [UCD Appendix II-C](#) of the Academic Personnel Manual). When these reviews occur simultaneously, the ad hoc committee shall prepare a separate report evaluating the accomplishments of the director and recommending reappointment or replacement; the report may append and refer to the review of the unit.
- B. Review reports for ORUs are usually confidential. The ad hoc committee shall review the unit's purpose, success in meeting that purpose, present functioning, future plans, and continuing development (see [Exhibit C](#)). In conducting its review, the ad hoc committee shall have available the five-year report of the director, comments of the ORU advisory committee, annual reports of the unit, budgetary and expenditure information, and such other information as is appropriate and/or requested. The ad hoc committee shall consider and make specific recommendations on the following alternatives: continuation; change in funding; change in other resources; change in the mission; merger with other units; discontinuance; other matters deemed important by the ad hoc committee.
- C. The ad hoc committee report shall be reviewed by the appropriate Divisional Academic Senate committees and the Council of Deans & Vice Chancellors. Decisions concerning continuation of the unit and any needed changes shall be made by the Chancellor after consideration of the ad hoc and Senate committee recommendations and recommendations of the Council of Deans & Vice Chancellors. The director shall then be informed of the content of the report, and a copy of the report and action is forwarded by the Chancellor to the President for information.

VI. Continuation or Termination of Status

- A. ORPs
An ORP may submit a proposal to become an ORU at any time up to three years of ORP status.

The proposal must undergo the regular review process associated with establishment of ORUs. If ORU status is not approved but the program warrants continuation, the ORP may become a program within an existing ORU. If no action is taken at three years, ORP status terminates unless an exception is requested from and approved by the Vice Chancellor--Research.

B. ORUs

1. An ORU has a maximum life span of 15 years, after which the campus must submit to the President a formal proposal for continued ORU status in the context of the University's needs and resources at the time. In no case may an ORU be continued beyond these 15-year periods without approval of the President.
2. If it is determined that an ORU is to be disestablished, the phaseout period shall be of sufficient length to permit an orderly termination or transfer of contractual obligations. Normally, the phaseout period shall be limited to one academic year. The President is authorized to approve the disestablishment of ORUs, and reports annually to the Board of Regents on any such actions.

VII. References

- A. Office of the President: [Policy of The Regents of the University of California on Organized Research Units](#), 10/1/71; adopted by The Regents 9/17/71; revised by The Regents 11/19/93.
- B. Office of the President: Administrative Policies and Procedures Concerning Organized Research Units, 3/8/82.
- C. [Academic Personnel Manual Section 630, Stipends/Guidelines for Compensation of Provosts of Colleges, Academic Deans, and Directors of Organized Research Units](#).
- D. [Academic Personnel Manual UCD Appendix II-C, Appointment and Review of Directors of Organized Research Units](#).