



**UMBC POLICY FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF
CENTERS OR INSTITUTES
UMBC Policy # IV-1.00.01**

I. POLICY STATEMENT

University System of Maryland (USM) Policy IV-1.00 for the Establishment and Review of Centers or Institutes requires UMBC to develop a Policy and Procedures for the establishment and monitoring of Centers and Institutes. This UMBC Policy on the Establishment and Review of Centers or Institutes (“Policy”) describes how the institution complies with USM IV-1.00 at the USM.

II. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

UMBC encourages faculty, staff, students, and administrators to engage in areas of common interests. The creation of Entities that help to organize and engage faculty, staff, and students from one or more disciplines around those interests can expand the research enterprise, foster collaboration, and support the University’s educational mission. To this end, this document defines a UMBC Policy for the establishment, review, oversight, continuation, or termination of these Entities. This Policy also defines the Division of Research & Creative Achievement as the responsible unit for the management of this Policy and associated Procedures.

III. APPLICABILITY AND IMPACT STATEMENT

This Policy addresses UMBC units, faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

IV. CONTACTS

Direct any general questions about this University Policy first to your department’s administrative office. If you have specific questions, contact the following office:

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email
Policy Clarification	Division of Research & Creative Achievement	410.455.5636	orca@umbc.edu

V. UNIVERSITY POLICY

- A. Use: The University Policy to establish Centers, Institutes, or Similar Units is defined by the following criteria:

1. The University recognizes Groups, Centers, and Institutes as organizational Entities intended to facilitate research, foster collaboration, and enhance the academic experience.
2. Centers or Institutes do not award credit-bearing credentials, including degrees, but if applicable, they should foster relationships with academic programs to support the University's educational mission.
3. Centers or Institutes may have a diverse range of financial models. Centers or Institutes should seek and maintain a level of support consistent with their mission and expectations, which could include funding from internal and external sources.
4. Faculty contracts establishing joint appointments with Centers or Institutes must define the nature of the faculty member's responsibilities (and associated procedures) with the Entity and any potential limitations to their appointment.
5. Centers or Institutes may be the primary appointment homes for professional track (PTK) faculty and must establish and follow a plan of organization and policies, guidelines, and procedures for PTK faculty in alignment with the University's policies and guidelines.
6. Centers or Institutes must comply with applicable University and USM policies.
7. Centers or Institutes that receive federal support must ensure compliance with the federal regulations and guidelines that govern federal grants, contracts, and other funding agreements, including those regarding the Responsible Conduct of Research/Research Integrity.
8. The establishment of new Centers or Institutes should be aligned with the definitions of these Entities in Section VI (Definitions) and Section VII (Procedures) of this Policy.
9. Approval of new Centers or Institutes will be granted by the Approval Authority, as defined in Section VI (Definitions) and Section VII (Procedures) of this Policy.
10. Existing Centers or Institutes that do not meet the specifications of these Entities in the definitions of Section VI (Definitions) shall be evaluated within no more than three years to ensure compliance.
11. Review of proposals to establish Entities will be based on the type of Entity defined in Section VII (Procedures) of this Policy.
12. Centers or Institutes are to be reviewed within three (3) years of establishment and at least once every five (5) years thereafter. Center and Institute Directors must undergo a formal, comprehensive review in accordance with the UMBC Procedures for Establishment and Review of Centers or Institutes.
13. Groups, Centers, or Institutes may be terminated at any time by the Approval Authority, in consultation with the Unit Head, for violation(s) of USM or University policy, federal regulations, or state or federal law. Groups, Centers, or Institutes may be terminated at any time by the Approval Authority due to inactivity, lack of funding, or lack of interest by the faculty to sustain the Entity's activities.

14. The Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will file the Policy with the Office of the USM Chancellor.

VI. DEFINITIONS

Administratively Separate Center or Institute	A Center or Institute is considered administratively separate from UMBC if it is located at UMBC, but (a) its operating budget is not included in the UMBC budget and its personnel are not UMBC employees (i.e., the Entity is administratively part of another USM institution or a state or federal agency); or (b) the Entity is a branch of a multi-site center structure operated by another agency that contracts with UMBC for a physical location and support services, possibly including professional support.
Board of Regents	“Board of Regents” means the Board appointed by the Governor of Maryland, President of the Maryland Senate, and the Speaker of the Maryland House to oversee USM’s academic, administrative, and financial operations; formulate policy; appoint the USM Chancellor; and is the Approval Authority for a Center or Institute that is administratively separate from an institution.
Center	“Center” means an Entity that engages faculty, staff, and students in areas of specialized focus within one Department or across multiple Departments. A Center may also be affiliated with an external agency or laboratory. Centers may complement coursework, since involvement in research supports student learning in areas such as collaboration, interdisciplinarity, and professional practices. Some Entities exist that may not fall into this definition and under this guide but use traditional “Center” description in their name.
Chancellor	“Chancellor” means the Chief Executive Officer of the University System of Maryland and the Chief of Staff to the Board of Regents and is responsible for the overarching leadership and management of the entire USM.
College Level Center or Institute	“College Level Center or Institute” means a type of Entity that is typically composed of faculty, staff, and students from a single College and may involve engagement from multiple Departments or areas of focus within the College.
Department Chair	“Department Chair” means the head of an academic Department; a unit that organizes faculty to develop and perform research and educational activities.
Director or Executive Director	“Director” or “Executive Director” means the head of a Center or Institute.
Entity	“Entity” means an organization that is identified separately having its own independent existence.
Group	“Group” means an informal collection of faculty members gathered to promote a common area of academic or research interest. Groups are organized on an ad hoc basis to conduct a specific project, such as preparing a proposal.

Institute	“Institute” means an Entity intended to have a level of permanence like that of an academic Department. Institutes engage faculty, staff, and students in areas of specialized focus within a College, across multiple Colleges, or UMBC-wide. An Institute may be affiliated with an external agency or laboratory.
Lead Administrator or Entity Head	“Lead Administrator” means the administrator or administrators responsible for a Unit and the individual(s) to which the Director reports. A Lead Administrator may also be an Institute Director, Center Director, Academic Director, Department Chair, Dean, multiple Deans, the Vice President for Research & Creative Achievement (VP-RCA), or the Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.
Multi-Institutional Center or Institute	“Multi-Institutional Center or Institute” means an Entity created collaboratively between UMBC and another USM institution to advance the missions of both institutions or of the University System of Maryland.
UMBC Level Center	“UMBC Level Center” means an Entity that is composed of faculty, staff and students from within one College, across multiple Colleges, or University-wide.
UMBC Level Institute	“UMBC Level Institute” means an Entity that is composed of faculty, staff and students from one College, across multiple Colleges, University-wide, or across multiple USM institutions.
Unit	“Unit” means a College, School, Division, Department, Institute, Center, or Group. Units may be empowered to hire individuals as non-tenure track faculty and staff who will be responsible for initiating and pursuing their own research or creative achievement activities. The leader of these Units (e.g., Center Director) serves as the equivalent of Department Chair for the purposes of university processes (e.g., rank advancement of those appointed within these Units).
Approval Authority	“Approval Authority” means the administrator or administrators with authority and oversight of the establishment, review, and termination of a Center or Institute. Depending on the level at which the Entity operates, the Approval Authority may be a Dean or multiple Deans, the Vice President for Research & Creative Achievement, the Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the appropriate Vice President, or the President. The Chancellor is the Approval Authority for a Center or Institute that is multi-institutional. The Board of Regents is the Approval Authority for a Center or Institute that is administratively separate from an institution.

VII. APPROVAL AND PROCEDURES

A. Procedures for this Policy can be found at:

[UMBC Procedures for Establishment of Centers and Institutes](#)

VIII. DOCUMENTATION: None.

IX. RESTRICTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS: None.

X. RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

[University System of Maryland \(USM\) Policy IV-1.00 for the Establishment and Review of Centers or Institutes.](#)

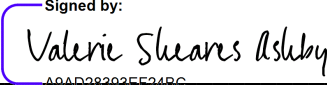
Administrator Use Only

Policy Number: IV-1.00.01

Policy Section: Research

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Research and Creative Achievement

Responsible Office: Division of Research and Creative Achievement

Approved by UMBC President:  **Date** 6/2/2026 | 8:47 PM EDT
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