**Research Institute Mission**

Research Institutes at the University of Massachusetts Lowell further the mission of the University and advance the research objectives set forth in the strategic plan- UMass Lowell 2020. A Research Institute has a long term relationship with one or more universities or collaborating institutions external to UMass Lowell. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or equivalent is required with each collaborating university or institution. Research Institutes differ from Research Centers and from one another in focus, scope, and staffing, but each contribute in unique ways to the common goals of expanding knowledge, generating new discoveries, and/or having a positive impact on society through informing policy and systemic change. Communities of researchers from UMass Lowell and from collaborating Universities and other institutions, provide a stimulating environment that encourages early researchers and challenges the experienced researcher. Research Institutes also contribute to the education and training of the researchers of the future by serving as learning environments for students.

**Research Institute Criteria**

- Research Institutes have a clear mission and goals that are aligned with the mission and goals of UMass Lowell and can identify strategies to advance goals of the Research Institute
- A new Research Institute must add value to the University beyond what already exists
- Research Institutes have the potential to elevate UMass Lowell as a leader in their specific research and scholarship areas among peer institutions and have the capacity to enhance the reputation of the University
- Research Institutes strive for regional, national, and international recognition
- Research Institutes serve as an umbrella for a critical mass of activity related to a particular area of scholarship/research (e.g. multiple grants, publications, projects)
- Research Institutes show evidence of scholarly activity.
- Research Institutes successfully generate external research funding to further the mission of the Institute
- Research Institutes involve and benefit students by serving as a learning environment
- Research Institutes report to the Academic Deans within the Colleges/Schools in which the Institute is established to ensure integration with the academic mission and infrastructure
- Research Institutes maintain long-term, effective, and strong collaborations with institutions external to UMass Lowell that further the mission and goals of the Research Institute
Guidelines for the Establishment of New Research Institutes

1. Organize a group of researchers from UMass Lowell and colleagues/researchers external to the University who have expertise in the focus of the proposed Research Institute. Each member should have a background that will further the mission of the Research Institute and be able to demonstrate a history of research studies, funding, and publication in the research area. Research Institutes that bring together researchers from several disciplines are preferred, as they have the capacity to enhance diversity and interdisciplinary research opportunities. An Institute Director, Co-Director, or leadership structure appropriate to the Research Institute should be identified.

2. The Research Team that includes researchers from UMass Lowell and colleagues/researchers external to UMass Lowell should meet to establish the mission and goals for the Institute, as well as determine space and administrative support needed to enhance sustainability.

3. A proposal for a new Institute must be submitted to the appropriate Academic Deans, Chairs, and the Vice Provost for Research prior to a meeting with the Vice Provost for Research. The proposal must include:
   - The name of the proposed Institute
   - The researchers, University rank, Department and expected contribution to the Research Institute of each member, including strengths that the researchers bring to the Institute. The credentials of each researcher external to UMass Lowell must be included.
   - Director, Co-Directors, or leadership structure of the Research Institute
   - The mission and goals of the proposed Research Institute.
   - The need for the Research Institute and an explanation of why the Research Institute structure is required to complete the planned research activities. Include a description of the strength that establishing a Research Institute would bring to the University and the value that is added to the University by the Institute. The added contributions of researchers external to UMass Lowell must be described.
   - Interdisciplinary research activities that provide evidence of the potential for collaboration of researchers within the Research Institute.
   - A biosketch of each Institute researcher, not to exceed 4 pages per researcher.
   - A record of past funding and the potential for attracting external funding, including sources of potential funding to further the goals of the Research Institute.
   - Resources that have been secured from external sources and a rationale for resources requested of UMass Lowell
   - MOU(s) or equivalent with institutions external to UMass Lowell

4. The appropriate Chairs and Academic Deans should be engaged in discussion about the Research Institute to seek support, including commitment regarding space, funding, and administrative support.
5. Following obtaining support from the appropriate Academic Dean(s), a meeting should be planned with the Vice Provost for Research to engage in a discussion related to the support required from administration, if the new Institute is approved.

6. Inform the University community about the proposed formation of the new Institute to encourage feedback and additional membership through web-based communications and by hosting a seminar for University faculty, administration, and staff related to the goals, proposed research, and plans to address the goals of the Research Institute.

7. Decisions about approval of the Research Institute will be made by the Vice Provost for Research with input from the Research Center and Institute Advisory Committee. The 7-10 faculty member Research Center and Institute Advisory Committee will be appointed annually by the Vice Provost for Research following recommendations for membership by the College Deans.

**Annual Research Institute Report**

University Research Institutes will be reviewed by the Research Center and Institute Advisory Committee every three years once the designation of Research Institute is formally approved. New Institutes may be asked to undergo full review in 1 or 2 years. Full reports are required for seed institutes, proposals for new institutes, and existing entities interested in being elevated to University Institute status. Existing University research or engagement institutes are encouraged to submit an annual report summarizing their activities and goals for purposes of University promotional activities.

The Annual Research Institute Report should include the following using the Annual Report template:

- The Institute Mission, noting any changes in mission, goals, or focus of research activity that have occurred over the previous year
- Progress toward goals in the previous year
- List of all researchers and staff involved in the Institute over the past year
- List student involvement in the Institute and community and industry partnerships.
- Activities to forward Institute goals that are proposed for the following year
- Publications and professional conference presentations that are a part of the Institute’s programs for the past year (please do not include articles or presentations prior to the past year). List articles that are published or in press only.
- A listing of new research funding received, including source, amount, and title of project for the past year only.
- Total amount of current internal and external funding
- A listing of up to 10 highlights that reflect the accomplishments of the Institute over the past year that should be promoted by the University internally and externally
- Copies of updates in MOUs and new MOUs (or equivalent)
The Three-Year Review of Existing Research Institutes

All Research Institutes will be reviewed by the Research Center and Institute Advisory Committee, Academic Dean, and the Vice Provost for Research every 3 years. Any annual reports from the previous three years will also be reviewed. A letter from the Director of the Research Institute to the Academic Dean(s) of the College and the Vice Provost for Research summarizing the accomplishments and work of the Research Institute over the previous 3 years should be submitted with the Annual Report in the Institute review year. The 3-year review will provide feedback on whether the Institute continues to meet Research Institute criteria. Those Research Institutes who are no longer meeting Research Institute criteria will be issued a warning letter from the Vice Provost for Research with recommendations for action to meet Research Institute status. The Research Institute with warning status will then undergo review in 1 year and action on continuation of Research Institute status will be determined by the Vice Provost for Research with recommendations from the Academic Dean(s) and the Research Center and Institute Advisory Committee.

The purposes of the Research Institute 3-year review are:

- To provide feedback to Research Institutes for self-evaluation
- To provide feedback to administration on the performance of Research Institutes
- To recognize active Research Institutes to justify future support or expansion
- To assess appropriate utilization of resources
- To assess inclusiveness of members across Departments and Colleges as appropriate, including new faculty involvement
- To assess involvement and contributions of researchers from institutions external to the University