

CAHNRS Policies for Synergistic Interactions Between Departments/Schools/Extension Program Units, Faculty, and R&E and Subject Matter Centers

1.0 Rationale and Role for Centers

Centers¹, Institutes and Laboratories have emerged as widely used interdisciplinary platforms for scientific discovery and service. They have evolved to address the increasingly complex issues of industry and society together with the recognition that individual, disciplinary-specific approaches to addressing such issues are often not sufficiently effective. Centers bring together faculty from traditional departments, schools and/or Extension program units (referred to as ‘core disciplines’) that possess the skills necessary to accomplish the task of answering complex questions requiring multi-disciplinary expertise. Center missions, not unlike departments, may include academic, extension and/or research components, which serve a variety of stakeholder groups, both internal and external to the University. These functions broaden, strengthen, and complement research, teaching and/or extension endeavors, bringing additional capacity to enhance the overall effectiveness of the College. Regarding the implementation of Centers in CAHNRS, Subject Matter Centers focus resources in specific areas and/or on specific problems, while Research and Extension (R&E) Centers address a broader scope of areas/problems.

To be effective, each Center must have a well-articulated mission statement that identifies short and long term goals and that defines the overall purpose of the Center. The mission statement should address how the Center complements or expands existing capacity, as well as the type of expertise required for faculty to be affiliated with the Center. Essential Center expertise is assembled by recruiting faculty members to affiliate with the Center who collectively are able to implement the multidisciplinary approaches needed to address the complex issues within the purview of the Center’s mission.

It is expected, as is practiced now by some Centers, that a faculty member affiliated with a Center have a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or similar formal agreement that defines his or her responsibilities to the Center and clarifies ongoing responsibilities with the academic/home department (see example in Appendix A). In addition, the responsibilities of core faculty who have leadership or administrative roles in the Center should also be defined in the MOA.

Centers should not be viewed as competitors with Departments/Schools/Extension Program Units (henceforth ‘Departments’ is used as the all-inclusive term), but rather as a mechanism for increasing faculty productivity, capacity, and recognition that serves all of the units involved, as well as the College. Competition between Departments and Centers for resources, faculty effort and “credit” may be problematic unless it is well understood how administration evaluates Departments, Centers and the faculty who are actively engaged in both entities.

¹The term “Center” in this document may refer to Research and Extension Centers (Puyallup, Mount Vernon, Wenatchee, Prosser) or Subject Matter Centers (such as AWN, CPAS, CSANR, IMPACT).

2.0 Evaluation of Faculty Affiliated with Centers

Departments are the academic homes for all faculty. Department activities can include conferring degrees, offering courses and other academic activities that ensure competitiveness of graduates, conducting research, and/or delivering Extension programs. Departments have primary authority for recommendations regarding tenure, promotions and salary increases.

The Department Chair evaluates the entire body of work of individual faculty in any of the preceding types of recommendations. Thus, these evaluations, and the recommendations that result from them, must take into consideration each of the faculty members' areas of responsibility, including Academic Programs, Extension, Research, Service/Citizenship, and Center activities (if applicable). The faculty member's performance evaluation relative to Center activities and goals must include consultation with the appropriate Center Director(s), who guide, and can evaluate first-hand, the faculty member's contributions to the Center(s) mission.

It should be recognized that for evaluation purposes, it is reasonable for some faculty output to "count" towards the faculty member's overall contributions to his or her departmental responsibilities, *and simultaneously* towards the mission and successes of the Center. One example is an ongoing research program that is directed toward specific issues under the purview of the Center, and that also results in scholarly articles and conference presentations. It is also reasonable for some faculty output to be focused more heavily on Center activities, with lesser or no direct contributions to departmental expectations, such as Center showcases, open houses, field days, committee service, and presentations. All contributions by faculty, spanning responsibilities in both their Department and Center, need to be accounted for in faculty evaluations and consistent with the faculty member's MOA for a specific Center. Faculty who maintain an appropriate balance of Center participation and departmental responsibilities in academic programs, research, Extension, student mentoring, and citizenship in both units will bring recognition and value to both units, and need to be evaluated as such.

Evaluation Process Details

1. Primary responsibility for initiating and conducting faculty evaluations lies with the leader of the unit (henceforth, 'Unit Leader' is used to refer to the Chair of a Department, or Director of a School or Extension program unit) in which the faculty member's tenure, disciplinary, or functional home resides. This responsibility is critical in the mentoring and evaluation of the faculty member's progress towards tenure and promotion, and for salary and retention decisions.
2. The Unit Leader will seek explicit evaluative input from the relevant Center Director(s) in matters pertaining to the assessment of progress towards tenure, promotion to associate and full professor, and for salary recommendations.
3. The Center Director(s) (R&E or Subject Matter Center(s)) is responsible for providing the Unit Leader with a detailed evaluation of the faculty member's performance in Center-related activities in all relevant situations involving evaluations or recommendations. It is expected that evaluation of performance relative to Center responsibilities be an explicit and readily identifiable component of the evaluation narratives of faculty members affiliated with Centers.
4. The Unit Leader will communicate the overall result of the evaluation back to the relevant Center Director(s).

5. The Center Director(s) will sign all faculty evaluation/recommendation forms, which will acknowledge that the Center Director(s) has had explicit input into the evaluation and/or recommendation process. Normally, the evaluation will represent a consensus view of the Unit Leader and Center Director(s). In the event that consensus cannot be reached, including the assignment of an annual review merit score, the Center Director(s) will have the option of providing an addendum to the evaluation and/or recommendation that documents points of disagreement.
6. The Unit Leader and R&E Center Director(s) will meet jointly with the faculty member (in person, and at the faculty member's Center location, unless circumstances prevent this) on an annual basis, during annual review, for the purpose of discussing performance and goals of the faculty member relative to Department and Center needs and expectations.

3.0 Resource Allocation and Management Cooperation Between Departments and Centers

A number of issues relating to resource allocation and management require cooperative efforts between Departments and Centers. The principal issues are delineated below.

3.1 Resource Allocation Synergies

Departments and Centers receive core budget allocations based on the scope and success of their mission (Academic Programs, Extension and Research) and not on the percent of effort that faculty direct to Departments and Centers, per se. Thus, Departments and Centers that share productive faculty would *both* be expected to benefit from positive synergies existing between the units during times of resource allocation.

Strategically, Department and Center leadership should cooperate in soliciting resources (including new hires) that will be mutually beneficial and allow each to address unit and college priorities. Center involvement in resource requests is an expectation when priorities clearly fall within the mission scope of a particular Center.

Resource requests emanating from a Department and Center coalition will be viewed more favorably than if the request comes from one or the other separately when addressing issues common to both units, and for which synergies are attainable. This does not preclude either unit from negotiating for resources on issues unique to the unit, but all parties should at some point be involved in discussion of any financial arrangements that directly or indirectly impact them.

3.2 Interrelatedness of Reassigning Faculty Responsibilities

Reassignments of a faculty member's functional responsibilities by a Unit Leader can impact core Center support. When such reassignments occur, a Unit Leader must either provide an explanation for how core support to Centers will be maintained (or enhanced), or else provide the rationale, in terms of department need, for why it is believed that core Center support must be reduced. Any such faculty reassignment plans, or more generally any departmental decisions that would result in reductions in core Center support, must be evaluated by the Dean, and can only commence with the Dean's approval.

3.3 Distribution of F&A Funds

Distribution of F&A funds is made to the unit or units that provide the facilities and administration in support of an extramurally funded project. The distribution of F&A must be described explicitly on the eREX form at the time the proposal is submitted, and must be approved by the appropriate Associate Dean(s), Unit Leader and Center Director(s).

F&A from grants to faculty who are located and performing grant work at R&E Centers should be allocated entirely to the Center if the Center provides the entire facilities and administrative support. Otherwise, an appropriate negotiated prorata share of F&A should be allocated to the Center based on the proportion of grant administration and facilities that are being provided by the Center.

Analogous to F&A distributions to R&E Centers, grants to faculty associated with Subject Matter Centers must apportion F&A funds to units in proportion to the relative provision of facilities and administration in support of the project. These same rules apply whether or not a Subject Matter Center is physically located within an R&E Center.

If the apportioning of F&A cannot be resolved by the unit leaders involved, so that the apportioning cannot be reflected explicitly on the eREX form at the time a proposal is to be submitted, the Dean will decide the apportioning after discussion with the appropriate unit leaders. See the *CAHNRS F&A Policies* document for further details on F&A allocations across Departments, Centers, and faculty.

3.4 R&E and Subject Matter Center Colocation Issues

CAHNRS allocates financial and physical resources to R&E Centers and Subject Matter Centers on the basis of the specific and differentiated activities and objectives of the R&E and Subject Matter Centers. When Subject Matter Centers are physically located within an R&E Center, issues can arise relating to the allocation and cost of shared physical infrastructure (space, equipment, laboratories, and administrative services) and the cooperative use of human and financial resources.

CAHNRS Administration provides a base level of financial, human, and infrastructural resources to Departments, Centers, and Programs, subject to the total college resources available. It is the responsibility of Departments, Centers, and Programs to supplement that base level of resources with grants and other external funds that provide for an enhanced level of functionality, output, and impact.

As Subject Matter Centers evolve over time, needs can evolve in terms of the use of additional or different space, human, and/or other infrastructural resources that are managed and supported

financially by an R&E Center. In such cases, it is appropriate for the Subject Matter Center and the R&E Center to seek mutually beneficial arrangements for the use of needed human and/or infrastructural resources, which may include financial compensation to the R&E Center by the Subject Matter Center for the use of resources.

In discussing arrangements for the use of various types of resources at an R&E Center, the expectation is that the overriding tenor of any discussion will be one of cooperation and synergy between R&E and Subject Matter Centers. The R&E Center Director is responsible for the successful operation of all programs at the Center, including Subject Matter Centers. In making resource decisions, the R&E Director will thus consider the needs and potential outputs of the Subject Matter Center as well as the needs and outputs of the other programs at the Center when deciding an appropriate allocation, or reallocation, of resources at the Center. Likewise, when a Subject Matter Center is a member of the portfolio of programs at an R&E Center, the Subject Matter Center Director will acknowledge the array of resources needed by all programs at an R&E Center, and in discussing resource requests, will work cooperatively with the R&E Center Director to arrive at an appropriately balanced allocation of R&E Center resources.

In the event that an R&E and Subject Matter Center Director cannot reach an agreement relating to a resource request initiated by either party, the Dean and relevant Associate Dean(s) of CAHNRS will stand ready to provide additional guidance to the resource allocation discussion, and if necessary, adjudicate the request.

3.5 Use of Support Services

Faculty, Unit Leaders and Center Directors will utilize support services aligned with the location of their permanent office and/or laboratory and the source of their salary. In most instances faculty will use administrative services and grants processing managed by their respective business center and/or local grants office. Grants will be submitted and administered through the appropriate business center/local office (not less than 2 days prior to due date to allow time for review), and transmitted through the CAHNRS grants office to the University (OGRD). All Department / Center / CAHNRS / University commitments must be documented in writing (i.e., on the eREX form or by email) that includes approval by the appropriate CAHNRS Associate Dean or University official *prior* to grant proposal submission.

4.0 Membership, Reporting Responsibilities, and Supervision of Faculty at Centers

The role of Centers is to provide an administrative unit for faculty from a variety of disciplines to combine efforts in order to address complex problems. For this to occur efficiently and effectively, not only must the faculty function in a collaborative and complementary fashion, but the administrative processes that provide a framework for faculty evaluation, tenure, recognition and financial resource allocation must also function in a collaborative and complementary manner.

4.1 Center Membership and Faculty Reporting Responsibilities

Membership in Centers for current CAHNRS faculty members may be at the discretion of the faculty member with approval of the Center Director and Unit Leader. Alternatively, faculty can be hired directly into a specific position located at one of the four R&E Centers. Regardless of the circumstances underlying a specific faculty member's Center membership, it is the faculty member's responsibility to inform the Center Director and the Unit Leader of all relevant activities and contributions relating to both the Department and Center. The faculty member fulfills this responsibility by:

- a. Completing an MOA (see attachment for an example) that describes the faculty member's responsibilities to the Center. The MOA is negotiated via mutual agreement for existing faculty who elect to affiliate with a Center, or is derived from the job description associated with the faculty position if the faculty member is hired directly into a Center. The MOA is reviewed by the relevant Associate Deans, and the final MOA document is signed by the faculty member, Unit Leader and the Center Director(s) who are associated with the faculty member's program.
- b. Reporting annual or cumulative contributions in detail on annual review forms, tenure and promotion forms, and on any other evaluation document that requires faculty input.

4.2 Supervision of Faculty in Centers

Tenure Track and Non Tenure Track faculty positions will generally be assigned a department home. Positions located at R&E Centers or affiliated/assigned to Subject Matter Centers will generally be managed and supervised collaboratively by the Center Director(s) and the Chair of the faculty member's home department. If a faculty member is physically located at an R&E Center, day to day management and supervision of faculty will generally be the responsibility of the Director of the R&E Center.

It is expected that Unit Leaders and Center Director(s) will remain cognizant of a faculty member's full array of responsibilities and performance expectations in order to inform decisions that can affect the ability of the faculty member to fulfill their responsibilities and expectations.

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE of a CENTER MOA

Center for Precision & Automated Agricultural Systems (CPAAS) Affiliated Faculty Agreement

The WSU Center for Precision & Automated Agricultural Systems (CPAAS) offers affiliated faculty a venue for multidisciplinary collaboration to assist them in pursuing common interests, and achieving both individual and common (Center) goals. To facilitate this collaboration the following responsibilities of affiliated faculty have been established by the faculty.

Each affiliated faculty is required to actively contribute to the CPAAS mission by:

- Being lead or serving as core member of CPAAS team proposal at least once yearly
- Attending no fewer than 3 CPAAS Monthly Affiliated Faculty meetings
- Attending the Annual External Advisory Committee Meeting
- Participating in the annual CPAAS Expo and/or field day

CPAAS will provide:

- Organizing and/or facilitating trans-disciplinary research and grant proposal development
- Use of fabrication facilities as outlined in CPAAS policies.
- Engineering technician support (charged to project at hourly current rate)
- Fleet vehicles use (will be charged to project at per diem rate per mile)
- Administrative support as applies to CPAAS
- CPAAS Director will participate in Affiliated Faculty member annual reviews and tenure/promotion reviews (upon request) by either (select one):
 - Attending the departmental annual review with affiliate and chair
 - Providing a written evaluation of affiliates participation in CPAAS to department chair for consideration in annual review and tenure/promotion reviews

Affiliate
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Department
Chair _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Department _____

R&E Center Director _____ Signature _____ Date _____

(If faculty member is physically located at an R&E Center)

Qin Zhang, CPAAS Director _____ Date _____