

Guidance on MRU Governance and Operations

July 2017

Guidelines for the oversight and administration of UC Multicampus Research Units (MRUs) are set forth in the [2014 Compendium](#) (Section V, pp. 29-37)¹. The recommendations outlined here on MRU governance and operations, including bylaws and Advisory Council structure, are optional and offered to support the MRU's success. Given the complexity of managing a typical MRU, directors are advised to follow best practices wherever possible.

Advisory Council (also called a “Governing Board” or similar committee name)

- Each MRU should consider convening an Advisory Council to inform and strengthen the MRU's pursuit of its mission and goals. Typically, advisory councils are made up of UC faculty experts as well as other individuals whose expertise helps the MRU achieve its goals. Some MRUs may have multiple advisory committees (for example, one devoted to external outreach and another focused on informing internal decisions).
- Advisory Council membership should include broad representation and diverse perspectives and expertise from the participating UC campuses. Participation from other UC campuses and additional UC- and non-UC affiliated organizations to add outside perspectives, as appropriate to the scope and structure of the MRU, should be considered.
- Advisory Council members should be appointed for well-defined and staggered terms to maintain a balance of continuity and new perspectives. Member appointments are typically three to four years in length, though terms of other lengths may be defined in the bylaws. (See “Bylaws” below.) A member's term may be renewed once, but membership should be regularly refreshed to maintain the vitality of the Council.
- Advisory Council leadership typically includes a Chair and Vice-Chair, as outlined in the bylaws. The Chair and Vice-Chair should not be the MRU Director, though the MRU Director may serve in an *ex-officio* capacity on the Council. The Chair should have a well-defined term, generally two to four years in length.
- A quorum of the Advisory Council should meet in person at least once per year. Quarterly or semi-annual meetings by teleconference are recommended if more frequent in-person meetings are not possible.
- Advisory Council members do not need to be approved by the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI) unless specifically required by the MRU's bylaws. The VPRI should be informed of changes to the Advisory Council when they occur, and the roster should be included with each annual report.

MRU Modification Procedures

- Advisory Council input and recommendations should be sought for any significant changes to the MRU scope and mission. Requested changes should be reviewed and approved by the host campus VCR, VCRs of other affected campuses, and other campus leadership as required by local rules. Once local approval is obtained, the request and required documentation should be forwarded to the VPRI.

¹ Additional guidance is provided in the [1993 Regents Policy 2307](#) and the [1999 Administrative Policies and Procedures Concerning Organized Research Units](#).

Bylaws

- MRUs should consider having written bylaws that outline processes for decision-making and orderly operations.
- MRUs should consider including the following in their bylaws:
 - Mission and scope
 - Governance structure, roles, and responsibilities
 - Meeting frequency
 - Voting, quorum requirements, and a process for amending bylaws
- Bylaws should be reviewed at least every five years to ensure that they remain up to date.
- Bylaws should be composed in accordance with campus and universitywide guidelines for research units. A copy should be provided to VPRI when any changes are made.

For additional information on policies governing MRUs, see:

- *Compendium: Universitywide Review Processes for Academic Programs, Academic Units, & Research Units* (2014). http://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/compendium_sept2014.pdf
- *Administrative Policies and Procedures Concerning Organized Research Units* (1999). <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2500488/ORU>
- *Regents Policy 2307: Policy on Organized Research Units* (1993). <http://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/2307.html>