

Charter of Organization and Operation of Research Institutes at HSC*

The research enterprise at UNTHSC has a variety of mission-oriented research programs and projects. In addition, there are Research Areas of Strength where HSC commits significant space, resources and personnel. These areas of strength are organized as Division of Research and Innovation (DRI)-designated Institutes and are managed by their Executive Directors who, in turn, are appointed by and report directly to the HSC Executive Vice President, Research and Innovation (EVPRI).

At the time of this Charter, there are four (4) DRI-designated Institutes at HSC:

- Center for Human Identification (CHI), operating as an Institute
- Institute for Health Disparities (IHD)
- Institute for Translational Research (ITR)
- North Texas Eye Research Institute (NTERI)

A recently created Center for Health Policy (CHP) exists within the DRI, and may transition to an Institute in the near future using the process outlined for formation of new institutes (see below).

HSC Institutes operate with DRI as well as Institute funds supporting operations, and are comprised of Institute staff members and affiliated faculty investigators. There are no “directly hired” faculty within these Institutes; instead, these faculty investigators, including the Executive Directors, must hold appointments within a research unit or an academic Department in a School/College of UNTHSC. Only HSC faculty members may serve as principal investigators on externally sponsored grants and contracts unless special written permission is granted by the EVPRI, in accordance with HSC policy and procedure.

Institute-affiliated faculty have annual contractual and salary commitments through a Faculty Compensation and Workload (FCW) developed and approved in consultation with their respective Department Chairs, School/College Deans, Institute Executive Director, the EVPRI and Provost, in accordance with HSC policy and procedures.

Charter Activation and Modification

This Charter, in part or in entirety, may be modified and amended by the EVPRI in consultation with the Provost and relevant Deans, with authorizing and approval by the HSC Cabinet.

* This Charter is meant to clarify the operation of an Institute at HSC. Where this document does not address or is inconsistent with existing HSC policies and procedures, HSC policies and procedures take precedence. Other issues not covered by the Charter or existing HSC policies and procedures that may occasionally arise will be resolved through consultation between the Provost and the EVPR.

Initial Hire, Recruitment and Appointment of Faculty Affiliated with an Institute

New Faculty Hire

For recruitment of a new faculty candidate who may be anticipating affiliation with an Institute, the relevant Department Chair and Dean will work with a relevant Institute Executive Director to complete an Offer Planning Document prior to initiating a search for new faculty.

The EVPR may contribute funds and/or make commitments to new hires as well as existing Institute-affiliated faculty. These funds will be overseen by the Office of the EVPR.

Standard practice for faculty hires is that new faculty lines are approved via the HSC budget process. Existing vacant faculty lines may be re-assigned to different departments. Allocation of faculty lines to academic departments and schools is determined by the Provost per HSC policies. Start-up requests will be presented by the Provost for approval to the HSC Budget Process for funding, in consultation with the appropriate Dean and the EVPR. The start-up funds will be coordinated by the Office of the Provost. The Office of Faculty Affairs coordinates faculty contracts, end-of-year reviews, promotion and tenure processes, and Interfolio for annual performance reporting. Departments are responsible for creating positions in PeopleAdmin or related software systems. Any transfer of faculty between academic departments must have the approval of the respective Deans and the Provost. Initial faculty contracts are routed via Faculty Affairs.

Faculty Recruitment into an Institute

An existing or incoming HSC faculty member with active research affiliated with an Institute-related area may express an interest in becoming affiliated with an Institute by contacting the relevant Institute Director. The request for affiliation is reviewed by the relevant Director in consultation with the faculty member's academic Department Chair and College/School Dean.

The Institute Director makes a recommendation for faculty affiliation to the Institute. At that time, the Institute Director, academic Department Chair and Dean determine relevant and appropriate research, academic teaching and service workload commitments, and related performance review processes (described later). Upon agreement, the final result regarding affiliation is presented to the EVPR for review and approval.

Note that academic departments hold the state appropriation salary lines associated with faculty members; those funds are retained by the academic Department and College/School and cannot be transferred to an Institute. In the event of an Institute affiliated faculty member leaving the HSC, the faculty line reverts back to the Department and College. The salary support for a faculty member will be paid by funds indicated in the FCW and agreed upon during the planning process.

Reporting Structure and Support

The unique nature of faculty affiliations with a DRI-designated Institute results in two related reporting lines, involving the Institute Executive Director and the academic Department Chair and Dean.

Faculty appointments and workload follow HSC and School/College Faculty By-Laws and HSC policies.

Promotion, tenure and salary administration for a faculty member affiliated with an Institute must follow institutional policy and procedures, as specified by Faculty By-Laws, HSC policies and School/College requirements. The input and recommendations from the Executive Director of the Institute to the Chair for Institute-affiliated faculty are critical for determining the research and administrative components of promotion, salary, and tenure considerations.

Executive Directors will be evaluated by the EVPR for research and their administrative roles. Teaching and service commitments for the Executive Director of the Institute are reviewed and approved by the relevant Department Chair. Executive Directorship of a DRI-designated Institute may be terminated at any time for cause by the EVPR following consultation with the relevant Chair, Dean and Provost.

Incentive Programs

All HSC regular faculty are eligible for relevant College/School-based incentive plans associated with research and other academic activities. In addition, Institute-affiliated faculty may be eligible for intra-Institute incentive plans based on written guidelines provided by their Institute Executive Directors and approved by the relevant Deans, EVPR, Provost, and HSC HR Director.

Grant and Contract Submission

All Institute applications for grants, contracts and gifts must specify the name of the Institute, relevant Department and College/School on the HSC Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) Electronic Proposal Transmittal (EPT) and be processed accordingly. Awards or contracts will be logged in as specified, and funds will be distributed accordingly. Relevant academic Department Chairs and Deans will be included in the approval chain as part of HSC procedures for any pending submissions, final submissions, and their outcomes.

Research Space and Laboratory/Office Location

Suitable and essential laboratory and office space will be made available for research activities associated with an Institute, in consultation and agreement with the Executive Director of the Institute, the Space Committee and the VP for Operations.

Financial Support for Institute Personnel and Operations

DRI-designated Institutes are expected to have sufficient funds to support operations through externally sponsored grants and contracts, local funds, or direct support from DRI. Faculty affiliated with Institutes may continue to receive salary support directly from the Institute or their primary academic Department for other non-Institute related efforts (such as teaching, clinical service, administrative, etc.)..

Additional personnel support may come from external sources (grants, contracts, authorized OSP-monitored gifts), as well as specific DRI fund transfers.

Operational expenditures are expected to come from external funding and indirect cost recovery amounts (described below).

Faculty salary savings associated with release time generated by external funding are retained by the College/School holding those specific faculty lines. This retention of funds is essential to continue the academic mission of the home Department or School/College that releases time for the faculty member's research engagement with the Institute.

Annual Performance Evaluations and Annual Performance Incentives

The HSC annual Objectives and Key Results (OKR) performance evaluation program applies to Institute-affiliated faculty as it does to all faculty at HSC.

Institute Executive Director Evaluations

Institute Executive Directors develop OKRs, which are submitted to the EVPR for review in consultation with the appropriate academic Department Chair. Regular check-Ins will be conducted by the EVPR, with the annual research evaluation conducted by the EVPR and conveyed to the relevant Department Chair. Teaching and service/administrative assignment evaluations within a faculty role are conducted by the Department Chair.

Institute-affiliated Faculty

Faculty affiliated with an Institute have their research component evaluated and monitored by their respective Department Chair and Dean in accordance with Faculty By-Laws and HSC policies. The Executive Director conveys additional information for the Institute research effort by that faculty member to the Department Chair.

Expectations of Institute Directors and Institute-affiliated Faculty

Institute Executive Directors and faculty affiliated with Institutes are expected to collaborate with other researchers at HSC where appropriate and relevant to the various ongoing research areas of strength at HSC. Such collaborations can be teaching, research, service, and, if applicable, administration, all of which will be recognized as part of their faculty status for promotion and tenure.

Academic Home: Regular OKRs and Annual Evaluations

All faculty at HSC create and submit OKRs pertaining to work assigned in teaching, research, service, and, if applicable, administration. OKRs for faculty are approved and monitored by academic home Department Chairs and Deans. Team OKRs may include projects and/or individuals outside the respective Department and/or School/College. Delegation to others is possible, but the home Department Chair must still review and provide a signature on documentation. All faculty, whether affiliated with an institute or not, must complete end-of-year evaluations, including a faculty activity report via Interfolio.

Faculty affiliated with Institutes will have their research component monitored (e.g., check-ins) by their respective Executive Director. That information will be conveyed to the appropriate Department Chair after each OKR check-in. The EVPR meets with Institute Directors to review institute-level OKRs. Check-ins will be conducted by the EVPR, with the annual research evaluations conducted by the EVPR and conveyed to the relevant Department Chair. Team OKRs involving Institute activities will be evaluated and approved by the Department Chair and the EVPR.

OKR Performance Check-ins

All faculty participate in regular check-ins regarding assigned work with their home Department Chair. Overall Institute-related strategy is approved by the EVPR and will be communicated to all Institute-affiliated faculty and staff by their respective Institute Director. Team OKRs associated with Institute goals will be coordinated between the Institute Director and the relevant Department Chair.

Faculty Compensation and Workload (FCW) Forms

This form serves as the proxy for the annual faculty contract. It reflects the assigned workload for teaching, research, service, and administration. The Department Chair is responsible for updating and approving this form. Institute Executive Directors or their designees approve changes to the research workload assigned to the Institute-affiliated faculty.

Institute-affiliated faculty have annual contractual and salary commitments through the FCW developed and approved in their home departments with consultation with their respective Chairs, Deans, and the Provost. For research activities occurring within an

Institute, the Executive Director, in consultation and agreement with the faculty member, and concurrence with the respective Chair and Dean, determines the overall effort allocated to research.

The FCW forms of the Executive Directors are reviewed and approved by the EVPR, relevant Chair(s) and Dean(s). The FCW is reviewed and approved by the Provost when salary adjustments are made. The Office of Faculty Affairs creates reports that summarize the distribution of workloads, such as changes in Components A, B, C, or D of faculty salary.

End-of-Year Performance Reviews for Executive Directors

Institute Directors are expected to collaborate with other researchers at HSC where appropriate and relevant to the various ongoing research areas of strength at HSC. Such collaborations can be teaching, research, and service, all of which will be recognized as part of their faculty status for Promotion and Tenure. End-of-year evaluation will be performed by the EVPR in consultation with the relevant Department Chairs, Deans and Provost following existing procedures.

Promotion and Tenure

Tenure track faculty will follow the HSC and academic home Department and School/College guidelines for promotion and tenure expectations. The Department Chair is responsible for guiding this process. All tenured faculty are also required to undergo periodic post-tenure reviews. The input and recommendations from Institute Executive Directors may be included as allowed by the University and School/College policy and procedures.

Salary Administration

All HSC faculty receive market-based and performance-based salary administration following the Salary Administration Policy and Procedures set forth and approved by the Provost. Institute Directors or designees will be consulted regarding salary administration. As such, Institute Directors may provide input into salary discussions pertaining to Institute-affiliated faculty. In consultation with the Chair, Institute Directors may also provide payment as part of the HSC's Incentive Program (Component D) for Institute-related work above and beyond that of the assigned faculty responsibilities, with prior approval of the EVPRI. However, salary adjustments of Components A and B of institute-affiliated faculty reside within the College/School. The Office of Faculty Affairs coordinates the implementation of HSC market and/or performance payment for faculty.

Note that Institutes do not hold state-appropriated faculty salary lines. Those are retained by academic units and cannot be transferred to an Institute, Department or College/School unless approved by relevant Deans and the Provost.

Administrative Stipend

Faculty affiliated with Institutes may be assigned administrative roles beyond those of faculty responsibilities (e.g., Component C) with the approval of the respective Chair, Dean, EVPR and Provost. Note that the EVPR has final approval for all faculty *administrative* assignments within a given Institute. The FCW will be updated to accurately reflect the entire distribution of workload and salary for faculty, including any administrative components.

Patents, Licenses and Inventions

All HSC faculty members, whether affiliated with Institutes or not, are expected to cooperate and assist in developing intellectual property, including patents, licenses and inventions, where relevant.

Indirect Cost Recovery Distribution from Awards Occurring within the Institute

Since Institutes are expected to manage their own operational tasks associated with staffing, purchases, and other facilities and administrative components, Institutes will receive 5% of Indirect Cost Recovery.

IDC Distribution rates for Others (Principal Investigators, Department Chairs, Deans, University) will be set by the EVPR as needed and published on the DRI web page.

Recognizing that College/Schools Deans have some research administrative tasks and expenses associated with faculty affairs linked to Institute members, a separate special amount from the Office of the EVPR will be allocated to each Dean annually. This fund transfer will be based on the previous fiscal year amount verified and agreed upon by each Dean and the EVPR to cover documented research-related costs associated with faculty member involvement with Institutes.

Research Institute Governance

DRI-designated institutes are managed by their Executive Directors who, in turn, are overseen by and report to the HSC EVPR. Day-to-day operations are managed for each Institute as seen fit by the Executive Directors and their affiliated faculty and staff.

Long-term strategic operations, progress, and mission relevance of Institutes and Centers will be advisory through an HSC research governance oversight board (RGOB) consisting of the relevant Dean(s) (or a designated Chair/Associate Dean for Research), the Provost, COO, a Faculty Senator, ad hoc members, providing community as well as specialty guidance, as chosen by the HSC Cabinet, and the EVPRI. The Institute Executive Director may serve as an ex-officio non-voting member at the discretion of the EVPRI. The RGOB will meet annually to evaluate current Research Areas of Strength, progress, and operational and funding needs, as well as evaluation of leadership effectiveness and any necessary future planning, and viability and consideration for the development of additional Institutes. Additional meetings may be convened as needed.

The EVPR will present updates from these RGOB meetings and assessments to the HSC President's Cabinet periodically for their consideration.

Every four (4) years, an overall review of each Institute shall occur with the RGOB and external reviewers (selected with a process similar to P&T evaluation) to assist in a longer-range assessment with recommendations regarding whether to continue, expand, or re-configure Institute operations. This evaluation will be presented by the EVPR to the HSC cabinet for a final determination. During this four-year review, or at any other time, a special meeting of the RGOB may be called to consider the discontinuation of any Institute. Recommendations for such discontinuation and the transition process will then be presented to the HSC Cabinet for final decision and action.

Formation of New Institutes

A need for a new HSC DRI-designated institute should be demonstrated with evidence that the new Institute will not duplicate activities pursued by existing Institutes or comparable units. A new Institute must have faculty members from more than one School or College.

Faculty who wish to establish a new Institute at HSC should submit a letter of intent to the HSC Research Advisory Committee (RAC). This letter should include a brief, 3-page description of the need for the new Institute at HSC and its purpose in furthering the strategic mission of HSC. The letter of intent should contain information on:

- (1) the mission of the new Institute,
- (2) proposed program activities,
- (3) business plan (how it will sustain itself financially),
- (4) proposed performance and impact evaluation,
- (5) start-up resources/funding needed, source and justification for these resources,
- (6) a list of core (initial) faculty participants and responsibilities.

The RAC will review the letter of intent and make a recommendation to the EVPR on whether or not a full proposal should be invited. If the recommendation to proceed is successful, a full proposal (maximum 12 pages, inclusive of 1 through 9 below) should be submitted to the EVPR and include:

1. Institute Name
2. Recommend Executive Director: Name, Department/School or College Affiliation
3. Purpose and Mission of the Institute
4. Current Activities of Proposed faculty with Justification for New Opportunities
5. Organizational Structure
6. Faculty Participation and Membership Procedures
7. Program Description for the first 3-5 years – Research, Teaching, and Service Components, including a detailed timeline for milestones

8. Financial Plan for the first 3-5 years, listing existing sources of support, plan for external funding, and any request for HSC support, space, and equipment
9. Institute staffing and administration
10. Written Letters of Endorsement by relevant Deans and Department Chairs
11. NIH-style Biosketches and letters of support from all Initial faculty members

The EVPR will review such proposals and convene an *ad hoc* group of reviewers to evaluate the proposal for scientific merit and fiscal sustainability, including input from relevant Deans, Chairs, other Institute Executive Directors and members of the HSC Faculty Senate. If all parties agree to the concept, the full proposal will be brought to the HSC Cabinet for strategic, scientific and fiscal review and value. If the HSC Cabinet agrees to the proposal, the new Institute will begin at the start of the next fiscal year.

Approved and enacted by UNTHSC Cabinet, August 16, 2022.