

## 1.1 Academic Centers and Institutes at Saint Mary's College of California

The primary purpose of an academic center or institute is to organize research, communication, and public relations around an area of knowledge not traditionally found within an academic discipline or existing department or program at the College.

Academic centers and institutes are vital parts of a college or university that strives to make a contribution to society and its local community, and to advance the mission of the College. An academic center or institute may be organized when there is a clear indication that it will enhance the College's academic profile, further research in a field, and/or enhance the teaching or public service provided by the College's faculty.

### *Criteria for a Center or Institute*

An academic center or institute is established primarily for the coordination and promotion, on a continuing basis, of a particular research field or subject area. An academic center or institute may be interdisciplinary, involving the research of students and faculty members representing different disciplines, departments, and programs. A center or institute may also be created in order to further research interests of faculty in designated major areas. The center/institute should enhance the College's academic profile in areas consistent with academic and strategic plans. The center/institute should have a public impact through outreach, consulting, or programming stemming from research. Academic centers/institutes may not offer regular academic curricula nor confer degrees.

### *Process for Approval and Review of a Center or Institute*

A proposal for the approval of an Academic Center or Institute should include:

- Evidence of long-range needs for research in the subject field
- Discussion of the center/institute's relation to the strategic and academic plan
- Discussion of the center/institute's relation to and support of the College mission
- Anticipated effects of the center/institute's activities (on SMC curriculum, the public, students, etc.)
- Anticipated impact on particular departments (on staffing courses, etc.), including independent assessments by the chairs or program directors of impacted departments or programs.
- Business plan (including projected budget)
- Facilities needs and other anticipated impacts, such as library, staff, etc.
- Description of faculty governance, administrative oversight, and external advisory board

### *Approval*

Academic centers and institutes are approved by the president in consultation with the provost, vice president for finance, the academic dean, and the Academic Senate. After approval, academic centers and institutes are registered with the Academic Senate via a report from the president, provost and/or academic dean.

*Annual Review*

Academic centers and institutes are required to provide an annual report to the academic dean or other administrator overseeing the center/institute. This report should include a budget, an assessment of strategic objectives, a report on the impact of departmental workloads, and an action plan. Annual reports will be forwarded to the provost and housed in Academic Affairs.

Approved by the Council of Deans and presented to the Academic Senate as an item of concurrence, December 4, 2008.