

## UNIVERSITY RULE

### **15.01.99.M7 Administrative Framework for Interdisciplinary Programs**

*Approved December 14, 2006*

*Next Scheduled Review: August 3, 2012*

#### 1. GENERAL

- 1.1 An Interdisciplinary Research Program (IRP) involves a group of faculty, from more than one discipline representing single or multiple colleges, organized and administered by the procedures outlined in this rule for the purpose of enhancing research and scholarly activities beyond what is possible through the traditional administrative structure.
- 1.2 An Interdisciplinary Degree Program (IDP) involves a group of faculty from more than one discipline representing single or multiple colleges, organized and administered by the procedures outlined in this rule for the purpose of enhancing research and scholarly activities and overseeing graduate and/or undergraduate education for a degree program that does not exist in an existing academic unit. The approval of the interdisciplinary degrees themselves are approved through the normal degree approval process.

#### 2. ESTABLISHING INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS

- 2.1 For a group of faculty to establish an IRP or IDP, they must;
  - 2.1.1 Develop a set of bylaws for the IRP or IDP including a mission statement, membership criteria, and procedures for selecting an Executive Committee (EC) and its leadership (*e.g.*, a chair or co-chairs).
  - 2.1.2 Identify a department or set of departments (called sponsoring departments) and the corresponding colleges (called sponsoring colleges) to act as advocates for the proposed program during the creation/evaluation process.
  - 2.1.3 In conjunction with the sponsoring units, identify a department in which the IRP or IDP will reside administratively. This department is called the administrative department, and the corresponding college is called the administrative college.
  - 2.1.4 Submit a proposal for the establishment of the IRP or IDP containing the items in Section 2.2 of this rule. This proposal

originates with the faculty group seeking to establish the IRP or IDP and is routed for approval through:

- a. The sponsoring department heads, through
- b. The sponsoring deans, through
- c. The Dean of Graduate Studies (DGS) if the proposal includes a graduate degree program, and/or the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs (APUP) if the proposal includes an undergraduate degree program, through
- d. The Vice President for Research (VPR), to
- e. The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academics

2.2 The proposal for establishing an IRP or IDP must contain the following items:

2.2.1 The rationale for the creation of the IRP or IDP.

2.2.2 The bylaws described in Section 2.1.1 of this rule; including the identification of the administrative units as described in Section 2.1.3 and listing roles and responsibilities of the administrative units.

2.2.3 A description of the Council of Participating Deans (COPD) which consists of the deans of the colleges having faculty participating in the IRP or IDP, together with the VPR, and the DGS for IDP's offering graduate degrees and/or the APUP for IDP's offering undergraduate degrees. One of the college deans, to be selected by the COPD, will serve as the lead dean.

2.2.4 A list of the participating department heads (PDH), that is, the set of department heads having faculty participating in the IRP or IDP.

2.2.5 A budget (and budget justification) for the operating costs of the IRP and IDP.

2.3 The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academics, in consultation with the COPD, will make the final decision as to whether the proposed IRP or IDP should be established. Establishment of and funding for the operating budget is the collective responsibility of the COPD and other participating units.

### 3. PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

Annual reports will be submitted to the COPD who will ensure that the report is distributed appropriately. A yearly meeting of the COPD, PDH, and EC will be held. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the COPD.

- 3.1 It is responsibility of the COPD to establish a review schedule. This review will involve the COPD, PDH, and EC.
- 3.2 As part of the normal annual review of faculty, each participating department head will review with each of their involved faculty members their future level of participation in the IRP or IDP as well as the results of their previous participation. These discussions may be incorporated into promotion, tenure, and merit raise decisions.
- 3.3 A rigorous periodic review of all IDP's and IRP's will be conducted by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academics to determine if the program is performing successfully and if it should be continued. In addition, graduate degrees granting IDP's will also be externally reviewed as part of the University's academic program reviews.

4. COORDINATION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TAMU SYSTEM

IRP or IDP efforts may include faculty from other Texas A&M University System members as outlined in the program's bylaws. A memorandum of understanding must be initiated between the System member(s) and Texas A&M University, as represented by the Vice President for Research, to establish the level of participation of the System member(s) in the IDP or IRP.

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY: [Vice President for Research](#)