

## R405, Approval of Academic Centers and Institutes<sup>1</sup>

**R405-1 Purpose:** This policy outlines the process for Utah Board of Higher Education (“Board”) review and approval of academic centers and institutes at Utah System of Higher Education (“USHE”) institutions. <sup>2</sup>

### R405-2 References

- 2.1 Board Policy R131, Review and Approval of Centers for Compliance with Equal Opportunity Initiatives
- 2.2 Board Policy R312, Institutional Roles and Missions and Approval of Out-of-Role Instructional Programs
- 2.3 Board Policy R315, Designation of Service Regions and Approval of Out-of-Region Instructional Programs, Branch Campuses, Instructional Service Centers, and Extension Centers
- 2.4 Board Policy R401, Approval and Modification of Instructional Programs and Administrative Units within Role, Mission, and Designated Service Region
- 2.5 Utah Code § 53H-1-203, Establishment of Board - Powers, Duties, and Authority

**R405-3 Board Approval Required:** A USHE institution must seek Board approval of all existing and proposed academic centers and institutes.

**R405-4 Evaluation Criteria:** The Board will review and evaluate each request for approval of a new or existing academic center or institute based on the following criteria:

- 4.1 The center or institute is created by a state or federal law or legislatively established;
- 4.2 The center or institute is primarily funded by private donors;
- 4.3 The center or institute is highly aligned with the institution’s role;
- 4.4 The center or institute is highly aligned with the Board’s and the institution’s strategic plan;

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<sup>2</sup> Technical edits December 1, 2025.

**4.5** The center or institute presents a significant opportunity to advance research, teaching, or public engagement;

**4.6** The center or institute furthers the institution's mission and role and adds value in ways that cannot be addressed through the traditional department, school, or college structures;

**4.7** The center or institute accomplishes tasks not possible through the traditional department, school, or college structures; and/or

**4.8** The center or institute more effectively achieves the stated academic objectives than traditional departmental, school, or college structures.

**R405-5 Academic Center and Institute Proposals:** A USHE institution seeking Board approval of a new or existing academic center or institute shall submit a proposal, on a form provided by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education ("OCHE"), to OCHE. OCHE's form will require institutions to provide information about the actual or expected fiscal impact of the center or institute.

**5.1** USHE institutions shall submit proposals for existing academic centers and institutes to OCHE no later than November 1, 2025. Institutions that have submitted a proposal for an existing center or institute by the deadline may continue operating the academic center or institute until they have received a decision by the Board.

**5.2** An institution must cease operation by December 31, 2025 of any academic center or institute for which they have not sought Board approval by November 1, 2025.

**R405-6 OCHE Review:** OCHE staff will review the proposal submitted by an institution, including whether the academic center or institute meets the evaluation criteria in section 4, and make recommendations to the Board.

**R405-7 Board Approval Considerations:** The Board will review OCHE staff recommendations and determine whether to approve the existing or proposed academic center or institute.

**7.1** When making its determination, the Board shall consider whether the new or existing academic center or institute meets the evaluation criteria of section 4.

**7.2 Additional Information:** When determining whether to approve or deny a new or existing academic center or institute, the Board may request more information or consultation from OCHE or the institution seeking approval.

**R405-8 Program Approval:** Although an institution may receive Board approval under this policy to operate an academic center or institute, a USHE institution must follow all other relevant Board program approval and financial policies.

**R405-9 Academic Center and Institute Review:** Academic centers and institutes approved by the Board must be resubmitted for Board review and approval every five years.