BOARD OF TRUSTEES
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

ACTION ITEM
Request to Discontinue the Human Environmental Sciences Center for Research.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
The Human Environmental Sciences Center for Research, established in 1969, no longer serves the purposes for which it was created and has not functioned in the true capacity of a center. There are other offices on campus (Office of Research and Public/Private Sector Partnerships, Office of Sponsored Programs, Office of Contracts and grants and the HES Office of Research) that will fulfill faculty research-related and funding-related needs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION
It is recommended that the Board of Trustees of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro approve the discontinuation of the HES Center for Research.

A. Edward Uprichard
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Form C
Request to DISCONTINUE an Institutional Center or Institute

This form must be submitted and approved prior to closing an institutional center or institute. This form may not be used to discontinue an inter-institutional center or institute.

A request to discontinue may be initiated by the individual who has primary responsibility for the center/institute (the Provost / Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, an Associate Provost, or academic Dean.)

Reasons to discontinue a center/institute may include such things as a changing need for the center’s work or research, loss of key personnel, or unavailability of funding.

Submit three copies of all materials to the Associate Provost for Research and Public / Private Sector Partnerships, Provost’s Office, 201 Mossman, Campus

Contact Information:
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1. General Information

Name of Center/Institute: The Human Environmental Sciences Center for Research

Organizational structure
☐ Center
☐ Institute

Proposed Status
☒ Institutional (UNCG campus only). Complete this form.
☐ Inter-Institutional (involves more than one UNC system campus)

STOP: If you checked “Inter-Institutional,” you must follow a different. Contact the Associate Provost for Research and Public / Private Sector Partnerships at 256-0426 for more information.

Type of Center / Institute
☒ Research
☐ Public Service
☐ Instructional
☐ Membership
II. Reasons for the Decision to Discontinue The HES Center for Research

The Human Environmental Sciences Center for Research (initially, the Home Economics Center for Research) was established in 1969. The mission of the Center was to serve as a vehicle to facilitate research activity within and across departments of Home Economics by (i) organizing seminars and workshops on research-related topics (e.g., grantsmanship), (ii) sponsoring visiting scholars’ seminars, (iii) providing consultation and technical research services for graduate students and faculty, (iv) serving as a clearinghouse for graduate student theses and dissertations and faculty research presentations and publications, and (v) publishing technical reports, newsletters, monographs and bulletins summarizing the School’s research activities and describing the ‘applied’ implications of these activities and those of the N.C Extension Service for lay audiences. There is no evidence that the Center conducted programs of original research or submitted or received research contracts or grants.

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the Center appears to have been staffed by a Director (a faculty member funded 10% salary by the NC Agricultural Experiment Station), and a Graduate Research Assistant responsible to provide research consultation and technical support for faculty. The Home Economics Foundation provided a $1,000 stipend for the RA and an additional $3,000 to $4,000 each year for general operating expenses and for a ‘visiting scholars’ lecture. However, the historical documents suggest that most of the work of the Center was carried out by volunteers associated with the Center (“...interested faculty members serving in various ways”).

Although the School of Human Environmental Sciences has until now retained the Center as a structural unit, and has assigned a budget line in the name of the Center (overseen by the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs), the Center no longer serves the purposes for which it which it was created. We believe that the Offices of Research and Public/Private Sector Partnerships, Office of Sponsored Programs, and Office of Contracts and Grants, in concert with the HES Office of Research, will be able fulfill faculty needs for research-related and funding-related training workshops and information-provision. However, HES does need an entity that serves as a liaison between campus research administration and the School’s faculty, and that can monitor, stimulate, and provide supplemental resource support enabling faculty to better position themselves to compete for external funding. We believe that such an entity should function as the HES Office of Research.

III. Transitioning from the HES Center for Research to the HES Office of Research and Terminating Contractual Obligations of the Center

As indicated by the above rationale, the HES Center for Research was not designed to produce original research, and in recent years, has not functioned in the true capacity of a center. Funds assigned to the HES Center for Research have been allocated by the Associate Dean to enhance HES faculty efforts to prepare themselves to be competitive for external funding. These functions to support faculty research productivity and funding efforts will continue as fundamental responsibilities of the HES Office of Research. The Office of Research will, in addition, (i) serve to identify internal and external sources of funding and research travel support for faculty, (ii) provide assistance
with proposal development, budget preparation and communications with the Offices of Sponsored Programs, Contracts and Grants, Research Compliance, and Technology Transfer, and (iii) provide post-award assistance with project accounting and purchasing needs. Transitioning to the Office of Research will require no major change in entity activities or faculty support functions.

The HES Center for Research has no formal contractual obligations to entities outside of HES. Financial commitments made previously to HES faculty and graduate students from the budget line attached to the HES Center will be honored at future dates, and we expect that the budget line presently tied to the Center will continue as a line tied to the HES Office of Research.

IV. Alternate Employment Needed for Center Staff

The HES Center for Research has no attached employee lines for which alternate employment needs to be arranged.

V. Proposed Effective Date of Discontinuation

We propose to discontinue the HES Center of Research, and Initiate the HES Office of Research on July 1, 2006.