

Terms of Reference

UNBC Health Research Institute (UNBC-HRI) Leadership Council

1. Introduction

The UNBC Health Research Institute (HRI) Leadership Council is designed to enable UNBC's experienced and emerging health researchers (faculty¹, staff and students) from across the University community to join for the purpose of furthering health research and innovation in alignment with the UNBC Strategic Plan.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference, composition, and operating arrangements of the HRI Leadership Council.

1.2. Governing Body

This Council is the governing body of the HRI and is accountable to the Vice President, Research and Innovation, UNBC.

1.3. Responsibilities

The HRI Leadership Council functions to manage the affairs and contribute to the core strategic directions of the HRI.:

- Oversee the scientific and strategic direction for the HRI.
- Oversee the functions (e.g., funding decisions, communications) of the HRI.
- Provide constructive advice and suggestions for optimizing the value and success of the HRI Vision and Mission.
- Support principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in recommendations for new Leadership Council members and the processes for appointment to the Leadership Council.
- Assist in the development and monitoring of appropriate operating structures and processes.
- Support increased research capacity that appropriately reflects the thematic priorities and core strategic directions of the HRI.
- Identify opportunities for new research initiatives and local, provincial, national and international linkages.
- Review the annual progress of the HRI (e.g., annual reports and expenditures).
- Sustain the Institute's activities in the long term.

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¹Faculty: for the purposes of the HRI Leadership Council TOR, faculty refers to UNBC professorial faculty, affiliate faculty, senior lab instructors, senior instructors and librarian members.

2. Governance

The UNBC HRI Co-Leads will report to the Vice President Research and Innovation. They will also relate to the Deans of the 5 Faculties and the Division of Medical Sciences, leaders of the other research institutes and the Office of Research and Innovation, and to the UNBC-Northern Health Innovation and Development Commons to ensure services and connections address the strategic directions of the HRI and the needs of its members.

The HRI's strategic plan and finances will be developed and overseen by the Leadership Council. The Institute will maintain regular communications with Northern Health through the Innovation and Development Commons and Northern Health/UNBC Steering Committee of the UNBC-NH Partnership MOU. There is not a formal HRI Advisory Committee at this time.

3. Composition

3.1. Membership

Leading UNBC health researchers will form the Leadership Council.

The HRI Leadership Council has 5-7 UNBC faculty¹ members, two Masters students and one PhD student. These members constitute the voting membership of the HRI Leadership Council. The target composition of the Council will include researchers from across the UNBC Community, including regional campuses and will embrace principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility that will consider stage of career, discipline of expertise, gender, ethnicity, ability/disability and other forms of diversity.

Guests may be invited to attend Leadership Council meetings to provide input on the management and strategic direction of the Institute.

Term of appointment and renewal process: Faculty members of the Leadership Council are appointed for a renewable 3-year term. Student members are appointed for a 2-year renewable term. No more than 4 faculty member positions will be replaced each year.

Elected Members: The Leadership Council will include a minimum of 1 elected member, for which an election is held at the Annual General Meeting. In years when an elected position will be vacant, a call for nominations from the HRI membership will occur at least one month prior to the AGM. Leadership Council members and the HRI Co-Leads (see below) are encouraged to actively seek nominees from the HRI membership to support the process. The remaining Leadership Council positions will be appointed by the Co-Leads, in consultation with the Leadership Council and the VPRI.

3.2 Co-Leads

Co-Lead Appointment: The HRI Co-Leads, who will be members of the Leadership Council, will be appointed by the members of the Leadership Council. The Leadership Council will accept expressions of interest for appointment to HRI Co-Lead from past Leadership Council Members who held their Leadership Council position within the past 5 years.

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Term of Appointment: 3 years (renewable). The term runs from July 1 to June 30 of each year.

The Co-Leads act on behalf of the Leadership Council. They will oversee the activities of the HRI and will facilitate the interface between the University, other research institutes and centres, research programs, individual researchers and external partners.

The Co-Leads will set the agenda and timetable for Council meetings through consultation with Council members. The HRI Administrative Assistant will circulate materials one week prior to the meeting date.

4. Procedures

4.1. Decision Making

Decisions will be made by consensus

Conflict of Interest: A member may withdraw from discussion of a particular agenda item or topic if, in the opinion of that member, there is a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Quorum: The quorum at any meeting shall be one half the currently filled positions plus one.

4.2. Meetings

The Council will meet 1-2 times each semester. Meetings are at the request of the Co-Leads. Discussion during meetings shall be open, frank and free-flowing. All members shall have equal status during discussion. Members shall seek consensus on conclusions and recommendations.

Regular attendance is expected of all members. In the event that the absenteeism of a member becomes a matter of concern, the Chair may request that the Council Members nominate a replacement member.

4.3. Minutes

Minutes shall be prepared within 15 days after each meeting of the Leadership Council and distributed by the HRI Administrative Assistant. Minutes will be prepared by the HRI Manager and subject to review by the Chairs.

4.4. Reports

The HRI will present an annual summary to the Vice President of Research and Innovation on its activities and finances before June 30.