

**JOHN GLENN COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

# **Ohio Education Research Center**

Pattern of Administration / 2024



**THE OHIO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

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## The Purpose of this Document

This Pattern of Administration (POA) describes the organization, policies, and procedures of the Ohio Education Research Center, as required by [\*\*Chapter 3335-3-36 of the University Faculty Rules\*\*](#). The POA is not a replacement for college or university rules and procedures but should be viewed as a supplement. Changes to college or university rules and procedures take precedence over statements in this document. . The intent is that this document will be reviewed every five years or when a new center director is appointed by the Dean of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs, the center’s organizational home. The director is responsible for developing and reviewing the POA in conjunction with the Associate Dean for Faculty and Research in the Glenn College and the college’s center oversight committee.



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## **OERC Mission**

The Ohio Education Research Center provides solution-focused data and evaluation to build the education, workforce, and social and housing supports for Ohio communities and government.

## **Institutional Structure**

The Ohio Education Research Center is a unit of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs. It is a college center reporting to the Dean. Some of the projects are directly funded and coordinated through the College of Arts and Sciences Center for Human Resource Research (CHRR). Staff and funding flow from different funders into the centers and the director of the OERC serves as the associate director for CHRR.

# Overview

## Research and Program Strategy

The OERC provides research support and serves as a home for faculty and staff working with state and local government on applied policy research. We support individual faculty and staff as well as students and postdoctoral researchers. The center has a long history of working across the university and in collaboration with other organizations around the country on evidence-based policy and data research. There are three research domains.

1. Administrative Data.
2. Research and Evaluation.
3. Policy Analysis and Support.

## Administrative Data

Administrative data is information produced by government or with government for the purpose of carrying out the business of government. For example, administrative data includes records of enrollment into universities. It also can include tax documents or health prescription records provided to insurers covering people under public programs at the state level.

Administrative data is the basis for scholarship on government. Our work with Ohio data is focused on the systems in the Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA). The OLDA is a program which the OERC established to coordinate secure use of the

Ohio data systems. Up-to-date information on the agencies, data sets and access procedures for the OLDA are on the CHRR website.

## Research and Evaluation

The OERC is a research and evaluation center. Our primary work concerns assessing the effectiveness of government policies and programs. This can take the form of carrying out long-term randomized controlled trials, econometric modeling, or qualitative analysis.

What distinguishes our work from other faculty groups is the collaborative involvement with state and local government. We specialize in those activities where the government requires a partner as well as rigorous and high-quality evidence.

## Policy Analysis and Support

At times our work involves direct support of government policy by converting evidence into a decision support tool, such as a dashboard or a set of reports that inform decision-making. This frequently involves direct work with school districts or county agencies, leading our staff to travel and support the rollout of policies in the state. We have partnerships with national groups, such as National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), that give us a more universal reach in these implementation studies.

# Center Administration

## **DIRECTOR**

The director provides overall leadership and strategic planning for the OERC. The director is responsible for maintaining a high-quality research program, raising funds, and ensuring that the staff capacity is available to fulfill the duties under the contract. The director is appointed by the Dean of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs. The Dean may also appoint an ad hoc committee to hire a new director. Required activities for consideration of a director includes significant experience with writing grants, a strong publication record and teaching record at Ohio State. The director is reviewed annually by the Dean with input from center staff, the Associate Dean for Faculty and Research, and the college's center oversight committee. The director leads the senior management team.

## **ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

The associate director provides oversight and leadership of the day-to-day operations of the center. They are responsible for maintaining financial operations, HR and other personnel policies, and overseeing the strategic relationships with state and local government. The associate director is part of the senior leadership team in the center and reports to the director. The position is classified as a senior administrative & professional

university role.

## **RESEARCH SCIENTIST – OLDA**

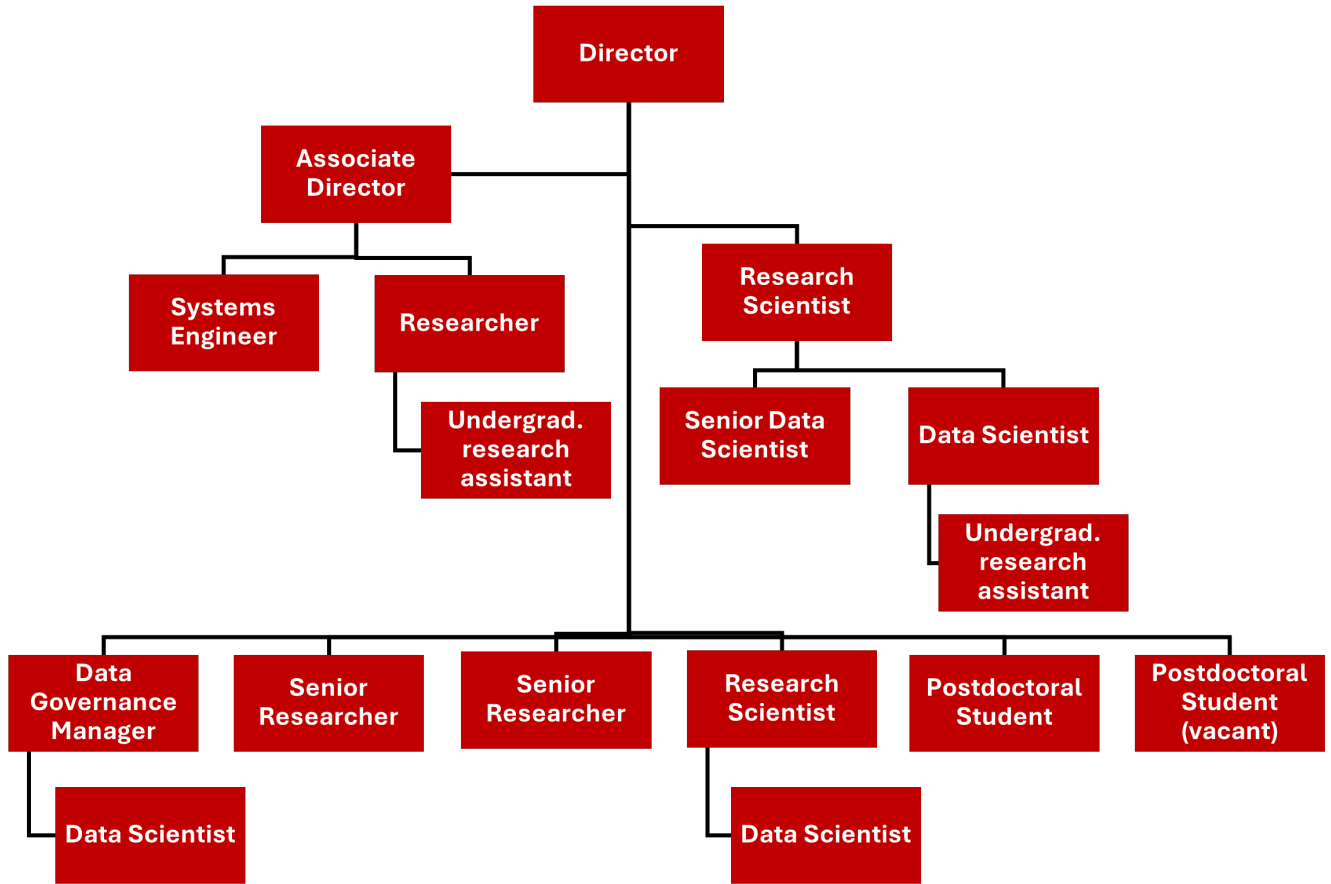
The OERC operates projects through the Center for Human Resource Research period to manage these projects. The center employs a senior research scientist at CHRR to manage the administrative data operations with the state of Ohio, oversee data governance of the OERC and, supervises a team of data scientists doing projects for state and other clients. The individual reports to the director of the OERC who is appointed as Professor and Associate Director at CHRR.

## **STAFFING**

Staff for the center are employed officially in either the John Glenn College of Public Affairs or the CHRR at the College of Arts and Sciences. Our data staff are employed at the CHRR and the policy/administrative staff at the Glenn College. Hiring requirements differ across the two units, but both collaborate with the Director who is responsible for the overall operation of the center. Current staffing capacity is about 15 Full Time Equivalent.

The following chart provides an organizational view of current staffing.

# OERC Organizational Chart



Current as of August 1, 2024

# Governance

## Internal Governance, Committees and External Engagement

The OERC governance is a combination of internal and external governance teams. Internally, we have a senior management team, a data team, and a center oversight committee appointed by the Dean of the Glenn College. The Center Director also has coordinating meetings with the Dean of the Glenn College and Director of CHRR separately. Externally, the center maintains two standing committees – a Data Stewards committee and the Policy Council.

### Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team is composed of the four senior staff (Associate Director, Research Scientist-CHRR and two senior staff researchers). The team meets monthly to coordinate staffing, project deliverables and troubleshoot. The Center Director meets periodically with the senior management team when requested or when activities overlap.

### Data Team

The Data Team at CHRR meets monthly, coordinated by the Research Scientist in charge. This team is responsible for managing state administrative data and serves as a mechanism to document and solve problems with data documentation and access for research purposes. Membership includes the Data Engineer, Database Administrator, and Data Science teams.

### College Center Oversight Committee

In accordance with *The Ohio State University's Faculty Rule 3335-3-36* re: centers and institutes, the Director of the OERC is to consult with an oversight committee appointed by the Dean of the Glenn College. It is led by the Associate Dean for Faculty and Research and comprised of a mix of Glenn college faculty and research and administrative staff, with at least two-thirds of the members being faculty in the Glenn College. The Director consults regularly with the oversight committee on issues pertaining to center governance, mission and programming in alignment with college priorities. This committee will meet twice per year, once in fall semester and once in spring semester. At the spring meeting, the oversight committee will review the OERC goals for the year and any policy or governance changes. At the fall meeting the oversight committee will review the OERC annual report, including activities completed during the prior academic year.

### Data Stewards

The data stewards are representatives from each state agency that contributes data to the OLDA. Staff from the OERC and CHRR serve ex-officio on this team. The data stewards meet monthly to oversee the technical development of the OLDA and deal with problems that arise in analyzing state administrative records. Each state agency has at least one representative. The chair rotates on an annual basis among state agencies, and the OERC/CHRR staff are

responsible for maintaining archival records of the center. The contact for the data stewards is the Research Scientist – OLDA employed by CHRR.

### **Policy Council**

The policy council is composed of representatives from each state agency involved in the OLDA, as well as individuals from the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation as well as agencies collaborating in the OLDA but not actively contributing data. The council meets quarterly and is staffed by the Associate Director of the OERC and their staff. The OLDA is chaired by a rotation of state agency officials on an annual basis.

### **Ad hoc Committees**

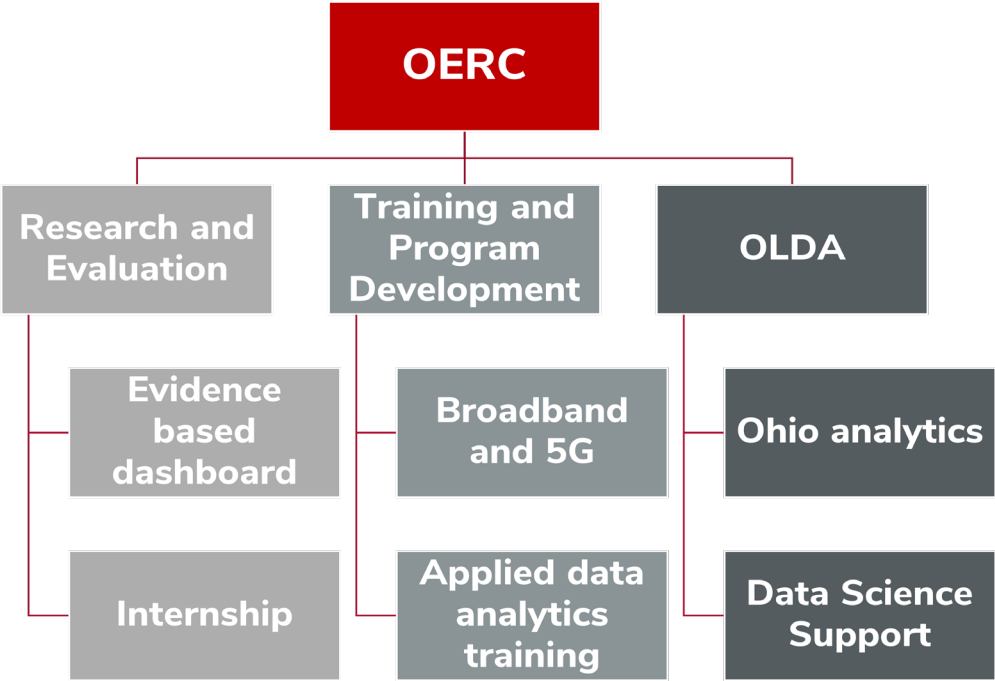
The team has several periodic ad hoc committees, usually in service of a specific project. The work is coordinated by the PI for the project or by the Center Director/Associate Director.



# Programs from the OERC

OERC activities are focused on three domains. Much of the work is technical and involves administrative data from the State of Ohio. A second area focuses on research and evaluation using administrative data. Finally, the center has increased operations with training program development in data science and in terms of policy development with the agencies.

## Program Overview



## Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive

The center operates the Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive (OLDA). The OLDA is on administrative arrangement with the State of Ohio to store and use for research unit record data kept by state agencies. Currently there are six state agencies that are members of the OLDA. This includes the Department of Job and Family Services, the Department of Education and Workforce, the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Developmental Disabilities, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. These six agencies sign a biannual MOU with The Ohio State University to allow these data to be archived at Ohio State.

These administrative records are utilized for a variety of research and evaluation tasks as well as serving as the source for dashboards and scorecards requested by the State of Ohio. Use of these resources are governed by a data governance manual which is maintained by CHRR. Agencies or researchers apply to use the data through forms available online.

## **Research and Evaluation**

The OERC conducts research and evaluation projects. The work includes traditional federally funded activities from National Institutes of Health or National Science Foundation, as well as state-sponsored efforts initiated by policy review. Additionally, there are many research efforts from external and internal researchers based on individual goals and objectives.

The primary focus of the research work has been on education and the workforce broadly speaking. However, the center has also dealt with housing, disability services, rehabilitation, engineering education – and a host of other projects. The mission of the research area is to contribute to the application of state administrative data and improve evidence-based policy in state government. As the center has grown it has added expertise in implementation and qualitative research as well as labor economics, areas that open new research areas.

## **Training and Program Development**

We have increased program work with agencies and local government, as well as training in data science. Some of the program work is technical, such as building a website or dashboard, while others are organizational, such as developing a training program on data science. One example is the training program with the Coleridge Initiative, which provides a standard program of training in Applied Data Science. We have conducted two training programs as the coordinator for this effort.

# **Partnerships and Collaborations**

The center has a significant set of relationships within Ohio State and externally. The most significant is the interaction with CHRR, which is a center in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Director of the OERC serves as a Professor and Associate Director at CHRR simultaneously. This allows coordination across colleges and provides the OERC with significant additional staff capacity. Our Data Science, Data Based Administrators and Security teams are based at CHRR. The CHRR also provides access to survey expertise and hosts a data Enclave that gives external researchers access to the OLDA resources when provided permissions.

A second significant partnership is with the Coleridge Initiative and Midwest Collaborative, a collective of states providing access to data in a FEDRAMP (Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program) secure environment. Ohio is a member of the collaborative and has provided access to the data system (ADRF) for select OERC projects.

# Policies

The OERC is an administrative unit of the John Glenn College and partners extensively with the CHRR in the College of Arts and Sciences. Therefore, any official administrative policies (fiscal, HR) follow the rules of the university and the procedures of the two colleges. To coordinate across the units, we have a standing fiscal committee which generates additional center specific operational policies. These are detailed here, although subject to change when required.

## Fiscal Coordination

The center finances are coordinated through the two colleges, and costs are shared based on the location of the staff/faculty appointments. In the case of the Director the budget resources are split as they are appointed in two colleges. Financial proposals for funding using the Sponsored Project system are recorded in the ePA-005 system using the following rule: all indirect cost (IDC) calculations are split by direct costs.

## Budget

The center does not produce a stand-alone budget as a unit. However, individual project budgets are integrated into a single document for planning purposes. This document is maintained by an ad hoc committee composed of the Director, Associate Director and representatives of the finance staff from CHRR and Glenn. This facilitates entry of time and effort monthly, coordination of effort and certification on a periodic basis, and general planning purposes.

## Externally Funded Projects

All externally funded projects are managed by one of the two units. However, individual principal investigators are the designated manager for specific projects. Principal Investigators are accountable to their supervisor for management of externally funded projects and adhere to OSU policies for Principal Investigators. All projects generate indirect costs which are shared between the units involved according to direct costs.

In the OERC, the only difference is that an individual PI receives some portion of the indirect back based on their status as the PI (funds are managed as part of the college OSA). These resources can serve as seed funding for new proposals opportunities to invest in professional development for individual PI teams. The principal investigator should become familiar with their college's rules on sharing of indirect costs.

## **Academic Rights and Responsibilities**

The center is an academic institution and pursues research and evaluation for the intent of advancing the research mission of The Ohio State University. This implies that projects proposed and delivered should be connected to research activities, such as data collection, analysis, and writing reports. This also implies that staff should be writing, presenting, and promoting the activities as research in the university, state and among their colleagues in other associations.

There is an expectation that senior staff and faculty will produce scholarship in line with their role. The Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) handbook for the College describes knowledge creation criteria for tenure-track faculty in the college. The Glenn College APT handbook also includes information about performance expectations for non-tenure track faculty in the college.

## **Education and Training**

Staff in the OERC are not required to teach in the Glenn College or another unit. All formal university instruction happens outside the regular job and must be approved by the unit director as well as compensated outside the regular pay. If an individual staff member is hired to teach in the university the position must reflect that assignment, and salary recovery from the unit must flow to the center.

## **Grievances**

The center follows the grievance procedures outlined in the John Glenn College of Public Affairs Pattern of Administration document. These procedures include salary grievances, misconduct, promotion and tenure appeals, student complaints and student conduct.

# Administration and Decision-Making

The OERC is focused on research and evaluation. The activities of the center are coordinated with the State of Ohio through committees, and within the university through collaborative decision-making within the Glenn College and the CHRR. The main work is conducted by senior research staff employed by the center. The staff are hired to perform specific project work, and after a certain time can exercise increasing discretion over their own work. The following broad guidelines cover hiring, day to day operations, and team decision making.

## Hiring

Hiring in the center is dependent upon funding. There are no set positions other than the Director. Individual staff are hired with specific skills, such as Data Science or Policy Analysis. Degrees and experience are considered when there are advertised positions, in accordance with OSU policy. Hiring is normally on a term basis (one or two years) until the senior staff member secures funding for their position. Thereafter, continued employment is dependent on funding and performance. As a small unit in a very large university, the center requires very few long-term staff.

There are postdoctoral researchers in the team, usually one or two at any given time. Hiring for postdoctoral researchers is dependent on project demands and funding and follows OSU policies for hiring post-doctoral scholars.

## Day-to-Day Operations

The center is organized into project teams. The Director, the Associate Director and the OLDA Director at CHRR provide supervision of the overall work. These senior staff supervise a range of teams that collaborate with each other on multiple projects. There are no two projects with the same staffing, although individual roles do stay relatively consistent. For data security we maintain role differentiation according to the NIST Moderate Baseline standards.

Following current university and college policy that allows for flexible work arrangements, staff have the option to work remotely, in a hybrid schedule or fully in person depending on the needs of the assignments and the approval of supervisors. Work is done within a normal business schedule, although some flexibility is allowed with staff permission. Given the nature of the work there are times when individual effort must be coordinated closely with other workers and contractors.

Meetings and other collaborative work are a regular requirement. We have standing monthly meetings for the whole center, at least two times a year these occur in person and require half

day training and work. Individuals also commit to extra data security training depending on their job duties for the State of Ohio or the CHRR Center.

## **Decision-Making**

The center decision-making is coordinated by the Director and Associate Director. However, individual oversight is delegated to project leaders. These individuals have broad authority over staffing, assignment of work, and deliverables. Our primary principle for decision-making is to ensure that staff have reasonable discretion to determine their work priorities and recognize what qualifies as high-quality deliverables.

We have several preexisting decision tools to ensure that staff are supported. First, we have vertical staffing in both policy analysis and data science, leading to depth in skill and ability. This enables most of our difficult coding and analysis questions to be answered internally. Second, we have collaborative teams that are multi-disciplinary. By having teams that consist of specialists in different disciplines we can ensure that the overall work products are high quality.

## **Additional Resources**

This document is subject to continuing revision. It supplements the [Pattern of Administration](#) for the John Glenn College of Public Affairs.

For additional resources about the center, please see the [OERC website](#) and its [strategic plan](#).

## **Contact Information**

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