UNIVERSITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW GUIDELINES

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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1.   Introduction

Policy development is a dynamic and cyclical process requiring planning, collaboration, and coordination. These guidelines supplement the [Policy on Policies](#) If you have any questions about the policy process, please forward them to the Policy Administrator at policy@uncg.edu.

In order to optimize the effectiveness of the policy process, policies should be:

- **Easy to Understand.** Policies reflect the "rules" governing the implementation of university processes and should be written using simple, concise language that can be understood by everyone in the community, including non-subject matter experts.

- **Organized.** The flow of information and thought in the policy should be easy to follow. The prescribed headings in the [University Policy Template](#) should be carefully followed in order to aid organization.

- **Consistent with Existing Policies.** Policies should use terminology that is consistent with other relevant policies and should not contain guidance that directly conflicts with another existing policy.

- **Reflective of Current Law**. Policies that are derived from or related to local, state, system, or federal laws and regulations must be reviewed regularly to ensure the university is in compliance with external requirements. Policies should list any related external laws or regulations to make it easier to recognize when revisions are necessary in response to changes in external obligations.

- **Reflective of Best Practice.** Policies should support the university's mission, initiatives, and strategic goals and should use cost-effective and efficient operating methods that reflect industry best practices.

2.   Development of New Policies

2.1   Pre-development

2.1.1   Identify the issue. Identifying the issue is a necessary and crucial first step. A well-defined, clearly stated issue will help you determine a solution and develop the substantive procedures needed for successful policy implementation.

- Are there new mandates, Board of Governors rules, or changes in best practice that require a policy change or new policy to be written?

- Can this issue be integrated with or addressed by other policies or documents? (If so, do not write a new policy. Contact the Policy Owners for the existing policy to discuss the identified issue.)

- Policy development is complex and multifaceted, and a broad perspective will help with issue identification. Have you consulted campus stakeholders and peer institutions regarding the issue?

- Policies address high-level issues. They should: (i) include governing principles that mandate or restrict actions, (ii) change infrequently and be applicable for the foreseeable future, and (iii) address substantive and significant topics.

- Administrative procedures and processes should be referred to but not directly included in policies. Such information may be included the policy's Supporting Documents. (See section 4. "Distinguishing Policies from Supporting Documents.")

2.1.2   Identify the Policy Owners.

Policies often require a commitment of resources, and all University Policies must have Policy Owners. The Policy Owners are responsible for implementing, communicating, reviewing, updating, and monitoring policies for compliance and effectiveness.

- Who has the most applicable expertise in the substantive area addressed in the policy?

- Who works closely enough with the substantive area that they will be aware of general trends and/or challenges related to policy implementation?

- Who has the authority to implement the policy and monitor it for compliance and effectiveness?

2.1.3   Complete the [Policy Action Form](#) and submit for review.

Following the process outlined in the [Procedure for University Policy Development and Management](#), the Policy Administrator and Policy Advisory Group will review the proposal for completeness, relevance, and need. Prior to submitting the Proposed Policy Action form, the Responsible Administrator should ensure that the Responsible Executive is aware of and has approved the need for and purpose of the proposed University Policy. Once the Policy Action form is approved, development of the University Policy may continue.

2.1.4   Assemble a team.

Multiple perspectives and collaboration early in the policy development process will result in the strongest policies. A small workgroup can assist with policy development and help with coordination. An inclusive workgroup, including topical and process expertise, policy users, and those impacted by policy will yield a better-written policy. As you assemble your team, you may wish to consult with the Policy Administrator for assistance in identifying individuals whose roles at the University and/or areas of expertise will be beneficial to the development process.

- Whose work is likely to be impacted by the proposed policy?

- Who has content expertise in the substance area at hand?

- Who has the time to devote to the team in order to complete the process on a reasonable timeline?
- Who has strong editing skills?

2.2 Development

2.2.1 Draft the policy and any applicable Supporting Documents

Develop the policy draft using the [University Policy Template](#), stakeholder feedback, and direction from the policy owner. Notify the Policy Administrator as the policy drafting process is approaching completion so that they can prepare to review the policy in a timely manner.

- Is the proposed policy written using clear and concise language?
- Are specialized or unfamiliar terms in the policy defined?
- Is terminology consistent with related university policies?
- Have forms, procedures, and guidelines (or associated documents) been created as needed to support policy implementation?
- Have stakeholders been given ample opportunity to provide feedback? Have any areas of contention been resolved?
- Has the proposed policy been thoroughly edited for 1) adherence to the template; 2) grammatical and typographical errors; and 3) completeness?
- If applicable, have all questions or issues regarding ownership/accountability, governance, and allocation of resources been resolved?
- Has the Responsible Executive been consulted or notified regarding key policy provisions during drafting to ensure that the policy's content reflects the desired outcome and approach?
- Academic, Unit, and University Policies that require the use of pronouns should use gender-neutral pronouns ("they/them/theirs"). Visit ["Why Pronouns Matter"](#) for additional information.

2.2.2 Submit the policy draft to the Policy Administrator at policy@uncg.edu.

The Policy Administrator will initiate the review process with the Policy Advisory Group and others as appropriate for quality control purposes and may provide preliminary comments as to the completeness, clarity, consistency, substance, style, and format of the proposed policy.

- Has the proposed policy been thoroughly edited for 1) adherence to the template; 2) grammatical and typographical errors; and 3) completeness? *If this criterion is not met, the policy will be returned to the Policy Owner for correction prior to further review.*
- Is the proposed policy written using clear and concise language?

- Are specialized or unfamiliar terms in the policy defined?

- Is terminology consistent with related university policies?

- Have forms, procedures, and guidelines (or associated documents) been created as needed to support policy implementation?

- Have stakeholders been given ample opportunity to provide feedback? Have any areas of contention been resolved?

- Are the relationships between the proposed policy and other related policies, laws, or regulations made clear?

- Is the policy current? Does it align with legal requirements and best practices in higher education?

- Does the policy clearly communicate University values as well as the general purpose for the policy?

2.2.3 **Respond to any feedback provided during the review process and make changes accordingly.**

If you have any questions about the feedback you receive, contact the Policy Administrator or the individual who provided the specific feedback.

- Did you highlight changes or use "track changes" so that proposed changes are apparent?

- Have you responded to all feedback provided?

The Policy Administrator and Responsible Administrator will ensure that the Responsible Executive who oversees the Responsible Administrator approves the final draft before it is submitted to the Chancellor's Council for review.

2.2.4 **Be prepared to briefly present the new policy to the Chancellor's Council.**

The Policy Administrator may request that you present the policy during a Chancellor's Council meeting. If so, the Policy Administrator will work with you to identify a Chancellor's Council meeting that works with your schedule.

- If requests for changes are made, send a revised version back to the Policy Administrator for review. The Chancellor's Council will not vote on whether to recommend that the Chancellor approves a policy until all requested corrections are addressed. *If there is urgency related to approval of the policy, the Chancellor's Council may elect to vote electronically in-between meetings (the Chancellor's Council usually meets every two weeks).*

- If no requests for changes are made, the Chancellor's Council may immediately vote to recommend that the Chancellor approve the policy at hand.

- Final approvals should be documented on the [Proposed Policy Action Form](#) that was used to initiate the development process.

3. Review, Revision, and Rescission of Existing Policies

The process for the review, revision, and rescission of existing policies generally follows the same guidelines as above, with the following exceptions:

3.1 Non-Substantive Changes

Policy Owners may request that the Policy Administrator make non-substantive changes to a policy. If the Policy Administrator agrees that the proposed changes are non-substantive in nature, the Policy Administrator will make the changes and post the revised version on the university policy website.

3.2 Review of Existing Policies

In addition to the criteria listed in section 2 above, the following criteria are added to the review of existing policies:

- Is the policy still necessary? Would the purpose of the policy be better met if presented as procedures or guidelines?

- Is the policy being followed in practice, or is there a need to improve implementation via changes in the policy and/or any associated procedures and guidelines?

3.3 Rescinding Policies

Following the process described in the [Policy on Policies](#), **a policy may be rescinded if:**

- it has become inconsistent with legal or policy requirements;

- it no longer reflects the University's practice; or

- it is consolidated into other policies, guidelines, or procedures.

4. Distinguishing Policies from Supporting Documents

4.1 Policies

Regardless of category, a policy is a written statement that provides governing principles on a specific topic to faculty, staff, students, and/or campus visitors. Policies generally meet the following criteria:

a. Enhance the University's mission;

b. Reduce institutional risk;

c. Ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations;

d. Promote effectiveness and efficiency;

e. Change infrequently and are applicable for the foreseeable future; and

f. Include governing principles that mandate or restrict actions and are therefore enforceable.

4.2   Supporting Documents

Supporting Documents are procedures, standards, guidelines or other documents that contain specific mechanisms or processes related to and authorized by a policy to establish how that policy should be carried out. Supporting Documents may include detailed instructions, steps, and/or forms that facilitate compliance with a policy. Supporting Documents should be drafted and submitted for approval along with the policy they support.

4.2.1   Procedures: Procedures are written statements of specific instructions that facilitate implementation of an established policy through specific, prescribed workflow, operational steps, actions, and/or constraints, which may be subject to changes in staffing or organizational structure and usually contain more logistical detail than policies. Procedures often pertain to implementing a University Policy. Procedures may also provide guidance for behavior on issues that are not dictated by a University Policy.

4.2.2   Standards: Standards are the minimum acceptable limits or rules that may be used to achieve implementation of a University Policy. While Procedures provide specific instructions for organizational units (e.g, how to use specific applications to encrypt data in the HR department), Standards set overarching minimum requirements that must be met by all (e.g., minimum encryption strength for use with sensitive information throughout the university).

4.2.3   Guidelines: Guidelines are general statements, recommendations, or administrative instructions designed to achieve the policy's objectives and streamline processes. Guidelines suggest best practices and are not mandatory.