

Columbus State University

Policy Name:	Policy on Policies
Policy Owner:	General Counsel
Responsible University Office:	Office of General Counsel
Approval Date	August 2, 2019
Effective Date:	August 7, 2019
Revisions:	None
Policy Number:	TBD
Related Policies:	<u>CSU Delegation of Authority</u> <u>CSU Contract Approval Policy</u>

I. **GENERAL STATEMENT REGARDING POLICY**

Columbus State University's Policy on Policies (PoP) is designed to implement a process in which university-wide policies are developed, reviewed, approved and published in accordance with clear standards fully consistent with Board of Regents (BOR) guidelines.

II. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY:**

To ensure that all policies proposed, reviewed and adopted by the University adhere to the following guidelines, all policies:

1. Must be consistent with and adhere to established Board of Regents policies;
2. Must clearly identify the University department, college, or office responsible for the policy as well as its interpretation, enforcement and guidance;
3. Must be communicated to the appropriate constituencies for review and comment before adoption;
4. Must be published in plain, easily understood language and in a standardized format;
5. Must support the University's mission by establishing clear and well understood standards for individual conduct, clarifying institutional expectations, promoting compliance with law, mitigating risk, and supporting productivity; and
6. Must be applicable to all faculty, staff, students, and to campus unless specifically exempted from its application.
7. Must be reviewed and recommended by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT); and

8. Must be approved by the President.

III. **DEFINITIONS**

Policy: At its most basic level, a policy is a statement or principle adopted by the University that expresses the institution's culture, goals and philosophy; promotes consistency and operational efficiency; enhances the university's mission and mitigates institutional risk. The essential characteristics of a policy are, as follows:

1. established to provide guidance and assistance to the university community in the conduct of university affairs,
2. has institution-wide application,
3. changes infrequently and sets a course for the foreseeable future,
4. helps insure compliance with applicable laws and regulations,
5. reduces institutional risk, and
6. is approved by the President.

Existing Policy: A policy that predates the implementation of the requirements outlined herein. Existing policies remain official University policy until amended or revoked.

Academic Policies: Academic Policies are policies that directly affect the pedagogical and research mission of the university.

Procedure: A procedure is a guideline or series of interrelated steps taken to help implement the policy. Procedures are step-by-step descriptions of the tasks required to support and carry out organizational policies. Procedures articulate the process for accomplishing the policy. Procedures might also document a course of action accomplished in a defined order, ensuring the consistent and repetitive approach to accomplish control activities. The essential characteristics of procedures are, as follows:

1. should identify and link to the applicable university policy,
2. should be written in a format that is easy to follow, using numbers or bullets to delineate steps to be followed,
3. should be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure agreement with the most recent revision to the policy, and
4. do not require formal approval by the President.

Department-Level Policy and Procedures: Policies, procedures or practices of colleges, departments or operating units that do not meet all characteristics of a University policy.

Policy Coordinator: The Policy Coordinator, a member of the Office of General Counsel (OGC), will be responsible for the day to day management of the processes and procedures set forth in this Policy.

Policy Initiator: The Policy Initiator is any faculty, staff member, or student who identifies a university-level issue and develops a policy proposal.

Policy Owner: The Policy Owner is the appropriate University officer (Provost, Vice President, or members of ELT) whose duties principally or substantially covers the subject matter of the policy. Depending upon scope, a proposed policy may have more than one Policy Owner.

Responsible University Office: The Office designated by the Policy Owner that will be responsible for implementing and enforcing the policy once it is approved by the President.

Stakeholder: Stakeholders are university community members or organizations materially affected or impacted by a university policy being developed, amended or revised.

IV. **GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES**

1. A University policy must be approved by the President.
2. A University policy, once approved by the President, will be formatted in a manner consistent with the template in the Appendix to the PoP.
3. Policies are distinguishable from procedure. Policies are guiding principles, require extensive review and executive-level approval, whereas procedures are operational in nature, do not require executive-level approval, and thus, should be distinguished as such in university policy documents.
4. Consistent with Section XI of this Policy, department and college-specific policies, rules, procedures and guidelines are useful and important, but are not subject to this policy because they do not have University-wide applicability. They should nevertheless be clearly written and appropriately available online to affected members of the University community.
5. General responsibility for the development of university policy rests with the President. The President has delegated the responsibility for maintaining the compendium of the university's policies to the OGC, the administrative unit charged with ensuring the appropriate review of new and amended policies. The Policy Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the enforcement and adherence of the PoP by the University community.
6. Every University policy must include the name of at least one Policy Owner and Responsible University Office. It is the Policy Owner's responsibility to designate the appropriate Responsible University Office charged with the tasks of implementing and enforcing the policy.

7. A University policy should be written in a clear and concise manner. It should contain sufficient information on the subject without being excessive in length or complexity.
8. The University reserves the right to amend, modify, delete, or add any policy at any time in order to meet the needs of the University community, in order to comply with law, BOR policy, or for any other reason the President may determine.

V. **REVISIONS OF EXISTING POLICIES**

In coordination with the Policy Coordinator, the Policy Owner will review and update policies for which they are responsible on a regular basis to ensure consistency with federal and state laws, system policies and regulations, other university rules and procedures, and the institutional mission and goals. Revision cycles are typically every five (5) years and generally follow the cycle for revision of system policies and regulations.

VI. **REVIEW OF NEW AND REVISED POLICIES BY ADVISORY BODIES**

All policies to be submitted for consideration of approval by the University must be reviewed by one or more of the advisory bodies listed below before the final review and recommendation by the ELT and approval by the President. The Policy Coordinator, in consultation with the Policy Owner, will coordinate the review process.

1. The Deans' Council reviews and may propose university rules and procedures dealing with academic matters, educational policy, faculty, librarians, academic administrators, the role of research, student awards, scholarships and honors, academic support services, and academic standards for students.
2. The Faculty Senate reviews and may propose university rules and procedures dealing with academic matters, educational policy, faculty, librarians, academic administrators, the role of research, student awards, scholarships and honors, academic support services, and academic standards for students.
3. The Staff Council reviews and may propose university rules and procedures dealing with non-academic, staff matters and may review additional rules and procedures at the request of the Vice President for Business and Finance.
4. The Student Government Association reviews and may propose university rules and procedures dealing with student matters and may review additional rules and procedures at the request of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
5. Other departments, advisory bodies, and/or representative bodies may be included in the review process based on the content of the rule or procedure as determined by Policy Coordinator, Policy Owner, or at the request of one of the advisory bodies.

VII. **POLICY TEMPLATE**

All policies proposed for adoption, revision or amendment by the University should adhere to the formatting identified in CSU Policy Template and Instructions. Particular attention should be paid to the distinction between policy and procedure.

VIII. **INTERIM OR EMERGENCY POLICIES**

Where legal or compliance imperatives demand an immediate modification or suspension of policy and practice, an interim policy may be developed and enacted on an interim basis without strict adherence to PoP, provided written explanation is provided justifying the interim or emergency enactment of the policy. All Interim Policies will terminate at the end of six (6) months from the date of its approval unless extended by the President.

IX. **EDITORIAL REVISIONS**

Grammar, title, typographical error, or other minor changes to a University policy or procedure do not require campus-wide review and communication. Such revisions must be approved by the Policy Coordinator.

X. **PERIODIC REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF POLICIES**

Policy Owners will periodically review all University policies for which it is responsible to determine whether a policy requires revision, replacement, or retirement because of a change in applicable law or business process.

XI. **COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC RULES**

Many policies, rules, procedures and guidelines issued by individual departments and colleges are not considered policies of the University because they do not have University-wide applicability. Nonetheless, college or department-specific rules, procedures, and processes represent an integral part of the day to day operation and management of the University, and should be adhered to by all relevant employees, staff, and students. Unless otherwise specified, policies rules, procedures and processes adopted by a specific college or department are subject to interpretation and final review by the head of that department and further subject to discretionary review by the Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs. Policies, rules, procedures and processes that are inconsistent with CSU or USG policies are null and void.

XII. **PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT POLICY ON POLICIES**

The following procedures are applicable to the proposed adoption and approval of new policies:

1. Any individual, department, advisory or governance body of the University may identify the need for and initiate a discussion on the adoption of a new policy, but at least one University officer (Provost, Vice President, members of Executive Leadership

- Team) must agree to serve as the Policy Owner and be accountable for a policy's implementation and enforcement.
2. The Policy Owner is responsible for ensuring the development of a draft policy or revising a current policy in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure all potential impacts of the new policy have been considered.
 3. The Policy Owner, or his/her designee, ordinarily will prepare the first draft of the proposed policy. If the reason for the policy is not apparent, the first draft will be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum addressing the necessity for the policy and how (if at all) it supplements or alters an existing policy.
 4. Once drafted, policies proposed for adoption will be submitted to the Policy Coordinator for review and feedback.
 5. After review and feedback process has been concluded, the Policy Coordinator will inform the ELT of the proposed policy. Thereafter, the proposed policy will be posted on a section of the OGC website called "Policies Under Consideration."
 6. The Policy Coordinator will then instruct the Policy Owner to submit the proposed policy for review and comments by the appropriate advisory body or bodies under PoP, Section VI. The Policy Coordinator and Policy Owner will come to an agreement as to which advisory body or bodies will be provided with the proposed policy for review.
 7. After review by the agreed-upon advisory bodies under PoP, Section VI, the Policy Owner, is responsible for formally presenting the proposed policy to the ELT for review and recommendation. The Policy Owner is responsible for ensuring the matter is placed on the ELT agenda and circulating a copy of the proposed new or revised University policy, with any explanation or background material deemed appropriate.
 8. Changes of a substantive nature to the proposed policy that are made pursuant to Paragraph XII(7) should be reviewed by the appropriate advisory body or bodies that reviewed the policy pursuant to Section VI before final approval by the President.
 9. Following review and recommendation by the ELT and approval by the President, the Policy Coordinator and Policy Owner will:
 - a. ensure that the University Policy is electronically published to the University via the OGC website, and
 - b. ensure that the policy is appropriately distributed and communicated to the University community.
 10. To assist in compliance with any approved policy, the Policy Owner may develop and establish normal business practices, procedures and processes in support of the

implementation of the policy. In addition, appropriate communications with, and training of, members of the College community is expected to facilitate compliance with approved policies.

XIII. **PROCEDURES TO REVISE EXISTING POLICIES**

The following procedures are to be followed for the proposed revision of existing policies:

1. The Policy Coordinator, in coordination with the Policy Owner, is responsible for ensuring that existing policies are consistent with the existing law and associated system policies/regulations. When revisions to existing policies are required, the Policy Owner will submit an annotated version showing tracked revisions to the published policy to OGC and will initiate the campus review process described below. Out-of-cycle reviews may occur and will follow this same process.
2. All university policies must complete the campus review process within six months of an associated BOR policy and/or regulation's publication. For procedures not required by the BOR, extension requests for good cause may be submitted in writing to Academic Affairs.
3. Departments, units, and the advisory bodies listed in Section VIII of this policy must inform the Policy Coordinator and/or Policy Owner if they determine a university rule or procedure needs to be updated outside of the regular review cycle. The Policy Coordinator, in consultation with the Policy Owner, will review the document and coordinate the review process.

XIV. **LOCATION AND COMMUNICATION OF POLICIES**

1. Columbus State University policies will be uniformly available on the web page of the University Office of General Counsel (<http://www.generalcounsel.columbusstate.edu>) and will contain the most current approved version of all university policies, with links to applicable procedures, documents, or relevant statutes and/or regulations.
2. An electronic announcement will be sent to the campus community via *In the Know* or University-wide email (depending on impact and reach) containing information about interim, new, and/or revised policies, which will constitute the promulgation of the policy or revision.
3. It is expected that all University offices, departments and colleges collaborating directly with University Relations in the maintenance and development of their own web page will ensure consistency of same with University policies, will appropriately identify their policies, procedures, and processes as applying only to that specific office, department or college, and use hyperlinks to the official University Policies web page when referencing University-wide policies or documents.

CSU POLICY TEMPLATE

(1" margins; Calibri 12 point font; new language indicated by red underlined text;
language marked for deletion by ~~strikethrough text~~.)

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

(this is the heading to be used for proposed policies)

Policy Name:

Policy Owner:

Responsible University Office:

Approval Date:

Effective Date:

Revisions:

Policy Number:

Related Policies:

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING POLICY

This template is designed to assist policy writers to organize the content of a policy according to the official policy template used by Columbus State University. The Office of General Counsel is responsible for enforcement of the Policy on Policies. The OGC's Policy Coordinator will be the primary contact to ensure compliance. Below are the general guidelines for drafting policies.

I. HEADING

The Heading section above should be used when submitting policies for review or consideration under the Policy on Policies, although some of the information (such as Effective Date and Policy Number) will not be known until the policy approval process has been finalized. Other than the Heading section, the instructions set forth in this template is designed for some flexibility in the manner in which the policy is written.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

Include a brief description of what the policy is intended to accomplish and who must follow the policy. The goal of this section is to not state the policy but to state in general terms what the policy is about and to whom the policy is applicable. Depending upon the policy, the statements regarding Purpose and Scope may be stated separately.

III. DEFINITIONS

A section including the definition of keywords and acronyms is optional. The University encourages the inclusion of a definition section for policies containing terms and phrases that are not commonly used or known by the university as a whole.

IV. POLICY SECTION

This section is where the substance of the policy will be articulated. The description of policy should be clear, precise and as brief as possible. The goal is to state the policy in broad terms and to leave the details of executing the policy in the Procedures section below. Substantive changes to this section of the Policy will require the approval of the President; accordingly, this section should contain the terms of the policy which will not be subject to change by any mechanism other than Presidential approval.

V. PROCEDURES

This section should contain procedures that are directly related to compliance with and implementation of the policy. As noted, the official policy should describe higher-level aspects of procedures, whereas this section will detail the steps or processes in place required to comply with the policy. Changes to procedures do not require approval by the President; rather, they can be changed at the discretion of the Policy Owner.

VI. RELATED BOARD OF REGENTS' POLICIES

All University policies should be consistent with BOR Policy. Policies which are inconsistent with BOR are null and void. It is thus important to ensure that relevant BOR policies are reviewed and understood when drafting CSU policies, including specific reference to all related BOR policies, as well as any existing CSU policies that might be also be related.

VII. LINKS

Where applicable, all policies should link to any related websites or webpages that will assist the reader in the understanding or adherence to policy. As a matter of course, related BOR policies should be accessible via a direct web-based link. Forms that are required by the policy to be submitted in order to seek approval or compliance shall be accessible via a direct web-based link.