

**The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh**  
**Policy # 000**  
**Policy on Policy**



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## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish and codify the protocol for developing, revising, monitoring, publishing, and enforcing institutional policies at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, hereafter, the University. The purpose is also to ensure that policies are managed effectively, transparently, and in a timely fashion. This includes ensuring that policies are reviewed on a three-year basis and revised as needed, that policies and the policy development process are transparent and accessible for all constituents, that all constituent voices are fairly heard and incorporated, and that policy development and revisions proceed in a timely manner.

## **2. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER**

The Chancellor delegates authority to the Provost as the Responsible Officer for the Policy on Policy.

## **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all institutional policies at the University.

## **4. BACKGROUND**

A clear set of rules is important to effectively govern a complex organization such as an institution of higher education. Constituents must be able to easily locate and understand the requirements of the University. The process for reviewing and revising existing policies, as well as developing new policies, must be clear and easy to follow. The process itself must be governed, published, and understood. A “policy on policy” serves to establish that process and inform constituents as unambiguously as possible.

## **5. DEFINITIONS**

**Institutional Policy:** A set of related rules that has been adopted by the University and applies to constituents beyond the span of authority of a single department head.

**Institutional Policy Management Process:** The defined set of steps the University follows to introduce and implement a new policy or a substantive policy revision.

**Policy Process Designee:** An individual at the University designated by the Chancellor to act as a central point of contact and coordination on all matters pertaining to institutional policy. The Policy Process Designee is accountable for ensuring that policies are maintained, published, and reviewed, as well as providing guidance and oversight of the Institutional Policy Management Process.

**Responsible Officer:** An institutional leader assigned to oversee a policy or category of policies as well as monitor and guide institutional compliance.

**University:** The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

## **6. POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **Oversight and compliance**

1. All constituents of the University shall comply with institutional policies as well as UW System Administration and UW Board of Regents policies, and applicable local, state, and federal laws.
2. All supervisors of the University shall enforce institutional policy compliance within their respective units.
3. The Chancellor is the final decision maker on all matters pertaining to institutional policies, informed and advised by institutional leaders and shared governance representatives, who in turn are informed and advised by their constituents.
4. The Chancellor may delegate authority for the oversight of institutional policies and compliance to appropriate institutional leaders, hereafter referred to as Responsible Officers, who may further assign tasks of policy management within their respective units as needed.
5. The Chancellor may delegate oversight of the Institutional Policy Management Process to an individual within the University, hereafter referred to as the Policy Process Designee.
6. The Provost represents and acts on behalf of the Chancellor in the oversight of all matters pertaining to institutional policies.

### **Institutional Policy Management Process**

7. All institutional policy developments or revisions shall follow a prescribed process herein referred to as the Institutional Policy Management Process.
8. The Policy Process Designee shall serve as the central point of contact for all matters pertaining to institutional policies. The Policy Process Designee shall:
  - a. Publish all policies on a central website.

- b. Maintain information on the website that informs constituents of the status of all policies in development or revision, as well as the contact information of the Responsible Officer and/or policy team lead.
  - c. Ensure that Responsible Officers and individuals working on policy development or revision are adhering to the Institutional Policy Management Process.
  - d. Respond to constituents' inquiries regarding matters pertaining to policy or the status of policy development or revision.
  - e. Assist constituents with requests for policy development or revision.
  - f. Educate constituents and institutional leaders on the principles and best practices of policy development and revision.
  - g. Support teams of constituents and subject matter experts working on policy development or revision by answering questions and providing guidance and information.
  - h. Act in the role of Responsible Officer on any policy matters where a Responsible Officer is not clearly defined or identified.
- 9.** Throughout the Institutional Policy Management Process, both the Provost and Responsible Officer shall jointly approve policy drafts to move from each stage of the process to the next or previous stage.
- 10.** Stage One: Discussion. Any constituent may request a new policy or revision by presenting that request to any member of Leadership Council. All policies proposed for development or revision shall be announced for discussion at the Leadership Council meeting by the Policy Process Designee or Responsible Officer. During the Discussion stage, the Leadership Council shall:
- a. Advise whether the proposal constitutes an institutional policy that should go through the Institutional Policy Management Process as described herein.
  - b. Advise whether it is a negligible change that does not need formal processing.
  - c. Advise on the appropriate membership of a policy development team to draft new or revise existing policy to meet the needs identified.
- 11.** Stage Two: Development. When a proposed policy development or revision is accepted into the Institutional Policy Management Process, the Responsible Officer or their delegate shall initiate the Development stage by convening a Policy Team to develop the policy or policy revision.
- a. The Policy Team shall be comprised of appropriate subject matter experts and constituent representatives as recommended by the Leadership Council.
  - b. The Policy Team shall consult with appropriate experts as needed as well as constituencies impacted by the outcome of the policy development or revision.
  - c. When the Policy Team has developed a reasonable draft they shall submit the draft to the Policy Process Designee for clearance to move to the Feedback stage.
  - d. The Responsible Officer and Provost shall approve the final draft to advance to the Feedback stage or return to the Development stage for further work. If further work is needed, the Responsible Officer and Provost shall explain the work needed to the Policy Team.
- 12.** Stage Three: Feedback. When a policy draft has been approved for feedback:

- a. The Policy Process Designee shall publish the draft on the policy website and announce its availability.
  - b. The Policy Team shall meet with constituencies and shared governance groups to explain the policy and solicit input, incorporating feedback into the draft as appropriate. The Policy Team shall resubmit substantive revisions to the Policy Process Designee.
  - c. Shared governance and other constituent groups shall address, discuss, and submit concerns or changes in a timely manner, before the Feedback stage closes.
  - d. The Policy Team shall incorporate feedback, resolve conflicting requests, and explain their resolutions to constituents, in a timely manner, throughout the Feedback stage.
  - e. The Policy Process Designee shall publish revised drafts to the policy website and announce their availability.
  - f. The Responsible Officer shall monitor the language of substantive revisions to ensure conformance with other institutional requirements or constraints.
  - g. When the Policy Team determines that the language of the policy draft is stable and has incorporated as much feedback as was feasible, they shall submit the final draft to the Policy Process Designee.
  - h. The Responsible Officer and Provost shall clear the final draft to advance to the Recommendation stage or return to the Feedback stage if they believe additional feedback is needed.
- 13. Stage Four: Recommendation.** During the Recommendation stage, shared governance groups shall formally vote to recommend to the Chancellor whether the policy final draft should be adopted as institutional policy, or not.
- a. Before new substantive changes may be incorporated during the Recommendation stage, the Policy Team shall confer with the Responsible Officer and Provost to request clearance to return the draft to the Feedback stage.
  - b. New substantive changes may only be accepted if the Responsible Officer and Provost clear the draft to return to the Feedback stage so that all constituents may have opportunity to give feedback to the new changes.
  - c. Policy Team reps may attend shared governance meetings when voting is scheduled to answer any remaining questions or participate in discussions.
  - d. When shared governance groups have voted on the policy recommendation, the Policy Process Designee shall compile the voting results.
- 14. Stage Five: Decision.** During the Decision stage, the Policy Process Designee shall submit the final policy draft and Recommendation voting results to the Chancellor.
- a. Upon deciding, the Chancellor shall inform Leadership Council of the final decision.
  - b. The Policy Process Designee shall publish the approved policy in the appropriate section of the University policy website and announce the publication to all constituencies.

### **Requesting institutional policy development or revision**

15. Any individual may request a policy to be developed or revised by approaching the Policy Process Designee
16. The Policy Process Designee, in consultation with the Responsible Officer as needed, shall advise the requestor on the feasibility, necessity, or lack thereof, of their proposed policy.
  - a. The Responsible Officer or Policy Process Designee shall explain the challenges and rationale why that request is not feasible;
  - b. The Responsible Officer or Policy Process Designee may point out related policies that address the concerns raised, rendering an additional policy duplicative or unnecessary;
17. Upon consideration of all pertinent facts, should the Responsible Officer not support the policy request, the requestor may appeal to the Provost.
18. Only an appropriate Responsible Officer, in consensus with the Provost, may stop a proposed policy development or revision from proceeding.
19. Should the appropriate Responsible Officer, in consensus with the Provost, stop a proposed policy development or revision from proceeding, the requestor may appeal to the Chancellor to override that decision.

### **Departmental rules**

20. Any unit head who desires to establish a rule affecting constituents outside their span of authority, i.e. beyond their direct reporting lines or department, shall consult with the Policy Process Designee, who shall determine whether the proposed rule likely constitutes an institutional policy, or not.
  - a. If the Policy Process Designee determines that the rule constitutes an institutional policy, they shall consult with an appropriate Responsible Officer or the Provost as needed or take the proposed rule directly to Leadership Council for discussion.
  - b. If the Policy Process Designee determines that the rule does not constitute an institutional policy, they may advise the unit head to proceed without further consultation.
  - c. If the unit head does not agree with the determination of the Policy Process Designee, they may appeal to the Provost for consideration.
  - d. Only the appropriate Responsible Officer, or if none is identified the Policy Process Designee, in consensus with the Provost, may make a final determination whether a proposed rule constitutes an institutional policy that shall go through the Institutional Policy Management Process.
21. If any constituent believes an existing or proposed rule should constitute an institutional policy that should go through the formal policy process, they may request a determination from the Policy Process Designee.

### **Appealing determinations and seeking assistance**

**22.** Any individual may:

- a. Request assistance, professional judgment, or guidance from the Policy Process Designee at any time on any matter pertaining to institutional policy management.
- b. Appeal any determination of the Policy Process Designee to a Responsible Officer or to the Provost.
- c. Request further discussion by the Responsible Officer and Provost on any advisement of Leadership Council.
- d. Appeal any determination of a Responsible Officer to the Provost.
- e. Appeal any joint decision by a Responsible Officer and the Provost to the Chancellor for final decision.
- f. Appeal any departmental or supervisory rule to their division leadership, shared governance representatives, or the Human Resources office.

**23.** Appeals shall be resolved within 30 days.

**7. REFERENCES**

Institutional Policy Management Process diagram

**8. PROCEDURES**

Procedure # 000: Procedures for contacting and working with the Policy Process Designee.

**9. REVISION HISTORY**

11/30/2017	Policy origin.
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