**Guidelines for System-wide Policies**

**Guidelines Information**

**Guidelines Owner:** Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**Approved by:** President’s Office  
**Date Approved:** 07/19/2023  
**Effective Date:** 07/01/2023  
**Date Amended (most recent):** N/A  
**Targeted Review Date:** 07/01/2025  
**Contact:** vpaa@uillinois.edu

**Purpose**

To provide guidance to the University of Illinois System (System) Community\(^1\) on the development, review, and approval of proposals to establish, amend or repeal Policies that apply to the entire System (System-wide Policies); and to establish responsibility for maintaining the currency and availability of System-wide Policies.

**Scope**

These guidelines apply to all members of the System Community.

These guidelines govern proposals to establish, amend or repeal any System-wide Policies. System-wide Policies pertain to the entire System and may fall under several general areas, including but not limited to academics, operations, human resources, ethics and conduct, information technology, etc.

These guidelines do not apply to:

- Proposals relating to the *University Statutes* or the *General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure* as those Policies have prescribed procedures for amendment.
- Proposals directed or exempted by the Board of Trustees unless the Board of Trustees specifies that these guidelines shall apply.
- Proposals relating to matters under the cognizance of Business Services because Business Services has an established Policy governance process, unless the Chief Financial Officer and Vice President or their designee directs that a particular Business Services-related proposal follow the procedures set forth in these guidelines.
- Proposals relating to unit, department, college, university, or hospital policies. However, these policies cannot contradict or be less restrictive than System-wide Policies.

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\(^1\) Defined terms are capitalized throughout these guidelines. Definitions appear in the “Definitions” section of these guidelines.
**Background**

System-wide Policies help coordinate operations across the entire System to ensure the System’s components function as an organic whole in achieving the System’s mission. System-wide Policies also guide the management of activities, resources, and processes by emphasizing efficiency and best practices, promoting consistency, and eliminating unnecessary duplication. Finally, System-wide Policies facilitate compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

**Statement of Policy Guidelines**

All proposals to establish, amend or repeal System-wide Policies (“Policy Proposals”), shall be developed, reviewed, and approved in accordance with these guidelines.

Policy Proposals should be thoroughly vetted with Stakeholders prior to being considered for approval.

To ensure the impact of Policy Proposals is adequately assessed, the President’s Management Council shall review and make recommendations to the Approval Authority regarding Policy Proposals.

Policy Proposals shall be approved by the appropriate Approval Authority as follows:

- Policy Proposals that would apply to the Board of Trustees or its members, or that the Board of Trustees indicates a desire to consider, must be approved by the Board of Trustees unless approval authority has been delegated.

- Policy Proposals that would affect the President’s exercise of authority or impact the areas of responsibility of multiple System Officers or Executive Offices must be approved by the President unless approval authority has been delegated. The President may, in his or her discretion, forward any Policy Proposal to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

- Unless the Board of Trustees or the President directs otherwise, Policy Proposals the President’s Management Council supports and agrees the impact of which is limited to the area of responsibility of a single System Officer, Executive Office or Other Official may be approved by that System Officer, Executive Office, or Other Official.

The Board of Trustees or the President, as appropriate, may authorize Interim System-wide Policies in situations where a System-wide Policy must be established or changed in a time period too short to allow completion of the full process set forth in these guidelines.

Policy Owners may approve minor, administrative updates and corrections to existing System-wide Policies without vetting or President’s Management Council review. In such cases, appropriate notice of the update or correction shall be provided to the System Community.
The University Ethics and Compliance Office shall maintain on its website a list and/or link to all System-wide Policies or groups of System-wide Policies.

**Procedures**

Appendix 1 identifies the System officials serving as Policy Owners for each category of System-wide Policy.

Policy Owners shall identify and maintain a current list of the System-wide Policies for which they are responsible. Policy Owners shall review each Policy on their list at least once every five years and as necessary to maintain accuracy and assess continued applicability. If an existing System-wide Policy does not have an effective date or last modified date from which to establish the initial five-year review period, the Policy Owner shall use the effective date of these guidelines as the starting date.

Policy Owners are responsible for developing and seeking approval for Policy Proposals involving matters under their cognizance.

**Developing Policy Proposals**

Policy Proposals for new System-wide Policies shall be prepared in the format prescribed in Appendix 2. Policy Proposals to amend existing System-wide Policies shall be reflected in a “tracked changes” version of the existing document. Policy Proposals to repeal an existing System-wide Policy shall include a copy of the document proposed for repeal.

Policy Proposals shall also include a needs assessment in the format prescribed in Appendix 3. The needs assessment explains the Policy Proposal, presents a business case for the change, and analyzes its impact. The needs assessment also indicates relevant Stakeholder positions on the proposal. To assist Policy Owners in identifying relevant Stakeholders, Appendix 1 lists possible Stakeholders for each category of System-wide Policy. Policy Proposals and needs assessments may be modified to incorporate and address Stakeholder recommendations.

**Reviewing Policy Proposals**

Policy Owners shall take the following actions to ensure Policy Proposals are thoroughly reviewed prior to approval.

- Vet the Policy Proposal with relevant Stakeholders and address their feedback, as appropriate.
- Provide the Office of University Counsel and the University Ethics and Compliance Office the opportunity to review the Policy Proposal. These offices’ reviews are intended to identify and address legal considerations, as well as facilitate System-wide compliance efforts, avoid redundant requirements, and promote best practices.
• Present the Policy Proposal to the President’s Management Council for review. The President’s Management Council may recommend the Policy Proposal be approved by the Approval Authority, recommend the Policy Owner modify the Policy Proposal or conduct additional vetting with Stakeholders, or recommend such other actions as the President’s Management Council deems appropriate.

• The Office of University Counsel and the University Ethics and Compliance Office shall be provided the opportunity to review any substantive revisions to the Policy prior to forwarding the Policy Proposal to the Approval Authority.

• Consider whether the Policy should be reviewed by the University Senates Conference based on the guidelines in Appendix 4.

Approving Policy Proposals

The Approval Authority may approve the Policy Proposal, disapprove the Policy Proposal, or take such other actions as the Approval Authority deems appropriate.

Communicating Approved System-wide Policy Changes

The Policy Owner shall ensure approved System-wide Policies are promulgated, including posting to appropriate System websites and disseminating change notices to the System Community. Policy Owners shall maintain an electronic copy of approved System-wide Policies under their cognizance in Microsoft Word or an equivalent format to facilitate future revisions and Policy Proposals.

Definitions

Approval Authority: The Board of Trustees, System Officers, Executive Offices or Other Officials authorized to approve Policy Proposals consistent with these guidelines.

Board of Trustees: The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois or a duly authorized committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois.

Executive Office: An office that reports directly to the President. Such offices are typically identified on the President’s Office website.

Interim System-wide Policy: A temporary System-wide Policy or change to a System-wide Policy to address circumstances requiring an abbreviated approval process. Situations giving rise to Interim System-wide Policies could include the enactment of a change to a state or federal law or regulation.

Other Official: A System Offices employee with System-wide responsibilities and duties as delegated by the President and/or the Board of Trustees.

Policy: Written formal guidance to all or a specified portion of the System Community by the Board of Trustees or an authorized System official, the purpose of which is to provide direction
related to the execution of functions, coordination of activities, operational frameworks, governing principles, or other similar System-wide considerations.

Policy Owner: The System Officer, Executive Office or Other Official responsible for all aspects of approved System-wide Policy maintenance and upkeep, including conducting periodic reviews for accuracy, coordinating proposed changes with Stakeholders, and obtaining approval for any changes (including cancellation).

Policy Proposal: Proposals to establish, amend or repeal System-wide Policies.

President’s Management Council: The senior-level council comprised of representatives of each Vice-President and from the Executive Offices, as well as others as determined by the President.

Stakeholders: Organizations or entities whose members are drawn from the System Community and who would be affected by a Policy Proposal. Depending upon the matter under consideration, Stakeholders may include, but are not limited to, university and hospital units, schools, departments, colleges, and offices; the University Senates Conference; the university senates; and other faculty, employee, and student organizations.

System Community: The System’s Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students.

System Officer: The System Officers are the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Chancellors/Vice-Presidents, the University Counsel, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees/University and such others as shall be designated by the President after consultation with the University Senates Conference.

University of Illinois System: The entire University of Illinois System, including the universities at Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield; the System Offices; and the University Hospital and clinics (collectively, “System”, individually “university” or “hospital”).

Forms, Tools and Additional Resources

If you have any questions on these guidelines or the procedures for processing Policy Proposals, you may contact the University Ethics and Compliance Office at ethicsofficer@uillinois.edu.

Website Address for these Guidelines

TBD
## Appendix 1

### System-wide Policy Owners and Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Policy Owner</th>
<th>Affected Units</th>
<th>SME(s)</th>
<th>Univ. Counsel</th>
<th>Ethics &amp; Comp</th>
<th>Audits</th>
<th>System HR</th>
<th>Business Services</th>
<th>Labor Relations</th>
<th>Univ. Relations</th>
<th>University leadership (Chancellor, Provost, VCR)</th>
<th>Affected Univ. Staff</th>
<th>CDRO</th>
<th>USC</th>
<th>Students (VCSA)</th>
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</table>

**Note 1:** In the table above, categories of Policies are reflected in the Policy Area column in **bold** font. Examples of Policies within the Policy categories appear in normal font and are not meant to be an exclusive list of the Policies within the category.

**Note 2:** If the correct System Officer, Executive Office, or Other Official is not readily apparent, the Policy Proposal should be submitted to the University Ethics and Compliance Office for routing to the most directly related official.
Note 3: Audit may review Policies in a consultative and advisory role, including an opportunity to provide commentary.

Note 4: Based on the Policy area or Policy content, other stakeholders will be consulted as appropriate.

Abbreviations used in table:
AVP – Associate Vice President
BOT – Board of Trustees
Comp – Compliance
ED – Executive Director
Pres – President
SAVP – Senior Associate Vice President
SMEs – Subject Matter Experts
SOEEA – State Officials and Employees Ethics Act
USC – University Senates Conference
VCR – Vice Chancellor for Research [and Innovation]
VCSA – Vice Chancellors of Student Affairs
VPAA – Vice President for Academic Affairs

07/26/2023
Appendix 2

Template for System-wide Policies

<Insert Policy Name Here>

Policy Information

Policy Owner: [Official Title]
Approved by: [Official Title of Approval Authority]
Date Approved: xx/xx/xxxx
Effective Date: xx/xx/xxxx
Date Amended (most recent): xx/xx/xxxx
Targeted Review Date: xx/xx/xxxx
Contact: Contact@email.edu, first preference is for a resource mailbox.

Purpose

Short statement indicating what objective the Policy is intended to achieve.

Scope

Specify the members of the System Community subject to the proposed Policy.

Background (optional)

Short paragraph providing context for the Statement of Policy.

Statement of Policy

Succinct statement of the System-wide Policy.

Violations (optional)

Identify any categories of sanctions that might apply for violating the proposed Policy. For example, sanctions could include disciplinary action taken by the System, as well as civil or criminal enforcement actions taken by the federal, state or local government.

Procedures

Describe the steps necessary to comply with the policy.

2 Existing System-wide Policies need not be reformatted to comply with this template unless and until their content is revised/updated/changed in any way.
Definitions (optional)

Define key terminology used in the Policy.

Training (optional)

Set forth training requirements and designate the office responsible for conducting or sponsoring the training.

Forms, Tools and Additional Resources

Provide links to additional information, such as a System website further explaining the Policy, or provide an office telephone number where people can obtain additional information about the Policy.

Website Address for this Policy

TBD
Appendix 3

Template for Policy Proposal Needs Assessment

Policy Proposal Needs Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Proposal Title</th>
<th>□ New Policy</th>
<th>□ Amends Policy</th>
<th>□ Repeals Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognizant System Officer, Executive Office or Other Official</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Initiator telephone and e-mail</td>
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Introduction
--Provide a brief introduction, including a description of the events or conditions that gave rise to this Policy Proposal.
--Attach a copy of the proposed new Policy, the existing Policy with any proposed changes tracked in, or the existing Policy proposed for repeal.

Reason for Policy Proposal
--Why is this Policy Proposal necessary? What legal, regulatory, financial, operational, accreditation, technological, social and/or other requirements are driving the Policy Proposal (attach a copy of relevant documents or include link[s])?
--Identify any implementation deadlines and the consequences for not meeting those deadlines.
--Include a summary of the existing Policy, if relevant.

Overview
--Clearly and briefly state the essence of the Policy Proposal.
--Indicate the scope of the proposed Policy Proposal.
--Identify any significant procedures the Policy Proposal requires the System Community to adopt.

Cost
--What is the cost of implementing the Policy Proposal? Identify what resources (human, financial, physical, operational, technological, and other) will be needed to implement and maintain compliance with the Policy Proposal.
--Consider any investment required in new systems or modifications to existing systems.
--Will implementation result in any anticipated cost savings?
--What is the cost of not implementing the Policy Proposal? Include a cost/benefit analysis, if applicable.

Stakeholders
--Identify key Stakeholders, whether they concur with the proposal, and whether they submitted any comments or proposed modifications to the proposal.
--If you successfully addressed their comments, say so.
--If key Stakeholders non-concurred or you were unable to address their comments, accurately summarize their objections or comments and include them as attachments.
--Identify any key Stakeholders not given the opportunity to comment and explain why.

Additional Considerations (address as appropriate)
--Does the Policy Proposal entail any significant training requirements?
--Are there any implementation timing considerations?
--Is any change to System culture and/or behaviors required?
--Provide any additional relevant information (e.g., how other universities have handled this issue and whether the proposed approach is consistent).
Appendix 4

Guidelines to Determine the Role of the University Senates Conference (USC) in the Policy Development Process

1. USC may be presented with a Policy Proposal that invites one of four different levels of consultation: (1) information; (2) preliminary review and advice; (3) formal review and advice; and (4) approval/endorsement.

2. Whenever a System-wide Policy is either created or revised, the Executive Vice President/Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVP) will at minimum present the Policy Proposal to USC for information.

3. The USC and EVP will then determine jointly whether presentation of the Policy Proposal may be information only, or whether there is a need for formal review and advice from USC to meet basic principles of shared governance, based on whether the Policy Proposal is of an academic nature or has an impact on faculty.

4. Even if a Policy Proposal is not of an academic nature and does not have an apparent impact on faculty, the EVP may ask for review and advice from USC on the Policy Proposal. Similarly, the EVP may sometimes ask for preliminary review and advice from USC during the early development of a Policy Proposal, sometimes on a confidential basis, if necessary. Preliminary review and advice of this kind should be clearly distinguished from formal USC review and advice on—or approval or endorsement of—a Policy Proposal.

5. Although USC’s statutory role is primarily advisory, the System may in some circumstances request USC to endorse or approve a Policy Proposal or an indication of approval or endorsement may be appropriate or required under some rule or bylaw. USC can only approve or endorse a Policy Proposal after having the opportunity to provide formal advice and review. Endorsement or approval requires a formal majority vote. In some circumstances consistent with its advisory role, USC may wish to refrain from endorsing or not endorsing a Policy Proposal even when asked.

6. Policy Proposals involving new Policies or existing Policies with substantial proposed revisions will typically be sent to USC for review and advice. If such Policies are not of an academic nature and do not have an impact on faculty, considerations of jurisdiction and prudence suggest that the level of review should typically be attenuated.

7. Policy Proposals involving revisions that are minor or editorial, are required by law, or are federally or state mandated, will typically be presented for information only. Consistent with guideline 3, the processes for determining whether presentation of the Policy Proposal requires further USC review and advice will be made jointly by USC and the EVP.
8. As part of the process of obtaining USC review and advice, either USC or the EVP may suggest that the Policy Proposal go to the three university senates for information, review, and/or advice before USC provides its formal review and advice. While USC is the shared governance body that provides advice to the System, and the three senates are the shared governance bodies that provide advice to their respective universities, there could be instances where the impact of a Policy Proposal is sufficiently broad or controversial that its development would benefit from senate review and advice to USC. 

9. Even in cases of Policy Proposals that may prove controversial or have wide impact, timing and efficiency considerations may sometimes make it necessary for USC to provide its review and advice without first engaging in more extensive consultation processes with each senate. Necessity claims may be brought to USC from the EVP, but judgments of necessity should be made jointly by USC and the EVP after consultation. USC should exercise its discretion thoughtfully when making necessity judgments, so as to ensure both a strong and appropriately informed voice for shared governance and a workable and timely mechanism for Policy development. Policy Proposals that obtain USC consultation of this kind could then be sent to the senates for information.

10. In addition to the above processes for USC consultation, the EVP should consider early inclusion of faculty representation on the bodies that are creating and revising System-wide Policies, especially if they are of an academic nature or have impact on faculty. Faculty representation on such bodies cannot substitute for the USC review and advice needed to meet basic principles of shared governance. Nor can such faculty representation guarantee future buy in by USC or any of the faculty senates. Faculty representation is nevertheless advisable to help avoid some problems later in the process and ensure the best Policy Proposals are developed with the widest chance of broad faculty support.

11. The President at any time can recommend that a Policy Proposal be sent to USC for information or any other level of consultation.

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3 The Illinois Statutes, Article II, Section 2(b) states in relevant part: “The University Senates Conference shall assist the senates to communicate . . . with the system and university administrative officials, and with the Board of Trustees through the president, and may develop and implement procedures to enhance such communication.”