

Tennessee State University

Policy No. 1.1

Policy Development and Review Process

Effective Date:

I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the institutional standard for the orderly development, modification, review, and approval of policies related to Tennessee State University's ("University" or "TSU") administrative policies and procedures. By implementing this uniform process, the University seeks to enhance operational efficiencies, best practices, effective decision making and compliance with laws and rules across the University, while ensuring that University Policies are consistent, easily accessible, widely disseminated, and reviewed and approved in an appropriate way.

II. SCOPE

The TSU Board of Trustees is charged with approving Board and specified University policies. The Board has delegated to the President the authority to approve institutional policies not expressly reserved for Board approval. *See* TSU Board of Trustees Policy No. 003, Section III. Part D. This policy and its related procedures do not apply to the development and approval of Board policies. The development and review of policies at the institutional level shall be governed by the process set forth below.

III. DEFINITIONS

Board. Tennessee State University's Board of Trustees, a governing body as set forth in Tennessee Code Annotated Section 49-8-101 and related provisions.

Cabinet Member. Any person who is a member of the President's cabinet. Current cabinet members include the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Business and Finance, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Vice President of Research & Institutional Advancement, Associate Vice President of Public Relations & Communications, Chief of Staff & Associate Vice President, Chief of Police, Athletics Director, and University Counsel. It is recognized that Cabinet Members may change from time to time.

Initiator. The Vice Presidents, Cabinet members, University committees, Deans, budgetary heads, or department/unit heads that create a proposal for a new policy or changes in an existing policy. The Board, or a Board committee, may also be an initiator by directing the President, a Vice President, or the University Counsel to draft or revise a policy.

Responsible Official. The Vice Presidents, Cabinet members, University committees, Deans, budgetary heads, or department/unit heads that develop, coordinate, and maintain University policies or modifications in an existing policy that falls under his or her jurisdiction.

University Policy. A statement of general principle, plan, or course of action that guides the University, its employees, and students in the management of duties and responsibilities, obligations, and expectations. University Policy may also include procedures for the implementation of institutional policies.

University-wide. Describes policies or procedures that have an application to the University in its entirety. Policies or procedures that relate to a single division or to the internal processes of divisions are not considered “university-wide.” Certain University Policies may be generated from a single division or departmental unit having university-wide application. All other policies shall be deemed to be department, college and unit policies.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. **Implementation and Update.** The Vice Presidents and other Cabinet members shall be deemed the Responsible Officials for the implementation of institution-wide and division policies that fall within their area of responsibility. Responsible officials shall ensure that such policies are accurate and kept current.
- B. **Legal Review, Posting, and Publication.** All University Policies shall be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel for legal sufficiency and approved by the President, or the Board as appropriate, before implementation. When a policy becomes final, the policy will be posted on the University Counsel’s policies webpage, and other appropriate webpages.

V. DEVELOPMENT & MODIFICATION OF POLICIES

In order to provide for the standardization and clarity of policies, all drafts submitted for inclusion shall conform to the following procedures. Policies will be categorized into five major areas:

- 1. Board Policy
- 2. University-wide Policy
- 3. General Division Policy
- 4. General College Policy
- 5. General Department/Unit Policy

A. Development of University Policy

- 1. **Initiation.** The Initiator can initiate proposals for new policies. The Initiator should include explanation(s) of the policy revision or need for a new policy. Questions regarding the substance of the policies should be directed to the Initiator of the policy. No individual or group may implement, develop, modify or rescind a policy without following the process prescribed under this policy.
- 2. **Numbering System:** University Policies will be classified and numbered according to the University’s Policy Numbering Directory.
 - 1. General
 - 2. Academic
 - 3. Athletic
 - 4. Student Affairs
 - 5. Business and Finance
 - 6. Personnel/Human Resources
 - 7. Equity and Inclusion
 - 8. Campus Health, Safety, and Security
 - 9. Research
 - 10. Information Technology

The first digit(s) will designate the major University administrative office or area having ultimate responsibility for the policy followed by a period (.) and consecutive numbering within that office or area.

- 3. First Page Format:** The first page of the policy will provide information pertaining to the policy identification number, effective date of the policy, number of the policy superseded (if it is a new policy, “none” will be included in this space), date of the superseded policy, and the title of the policy.
- B. Modification of University Policy.** Major or substantive revisions to an existing policy must be treated the same as new policies as described in Section VI of this policy. Accordingly, proposals shall be submitted to the appropriate Vice President/Cabinet member, Dean, department/unit head for initial review and approval.
- C. Issuance of Interim or Emergency Policies.** Notwithstanding the provisions set forth in this policy governing the review and approval of policies, the Responsible Officials may issue interim/emergency policies, after the General Counsel Office’s review and President’s approval, without following the review and approval process contained this policy, when necessary to meet urgent needs or in special or emergency circumstances. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, instances involving the health and safety of the campus community or when a policy or modification to a policy is warranted to ensure compliance with federal, state or local laws, regulation or applicable standards or rules of any other legal body.
- D. Development & Modification of Division, College and Department/Unit Policies.** Procedures governing the development and modification of division, college and department/unit policies shall be formulated under the authority of the appropriate Vice President, Dean, and department/unit head.
- E. Non-substantive or Editorial Revisions.**

Non-substantive, editorial revisions, such as correcting typographical errors, formatting changes, updating position titles, or similar revisions, will only require notice to the appropriate Cabinet Member and the President.

VI. APPLICATION OF POLICY

- A. Approval and Adoption of Existing TSU Policies.** Policies in existence prior to the effective date of this Policy and included in the TSU policy inventory attached as Appendix A are hereby deemed approved and shall, to the extent lawful, remain in effect until otherwise revised or repealed. This Policy applies to policies developed, adopted, revised, or repealed after the effective date of this Policy.
- B. Adoption and Application of Tennessee Board of Regents Policies.** Under the Focus on College and University Success (FOCUS) Act, all policies previously adopted or approved by the Tennessee Board of Regents effective July 1, 2016, are deemed to be institutional policies unless rescinded or modified consistent with this Policy or independent Board action.

VII. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF POLICIES

Policies will be categorized into four major areas as outlined in this Section V. For each respective area, there will be a separate review and approval process of policies. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Vice President, Dean, or department/unit head to make certain that the proposed new policy or modifications in existing policies are in compliance with guidelines, existing TSU policies and any applicable statutes.

A. University-wide Policy

1. **Initial Approval.** All proposals for new policies or modifications to existing policies must be submitted to the appropriate Responsible Official for initial approval.
2. **Initial Review.** After approval by the Responsible Official, the draft version of the policy will be provided to the Office of the General Counsel for review. As part of the review, the proposed policy or policy modification may be shared with appropriate and interested faculty members, staff, students and other campus constituent groups for review and comments prior to implementation of the policy.
3. **Comments and Final Review.** Comments shall be considered and additional revisions made as deemed appropriate. If additional revisions are made, the Responsible Official will again review and approve the draft. After completing review of the proposed policy, the General Counsel's Office will prepare the final draft of the new or modified policy for review and approval by the President. Once approved by the President, the policy will be posted on the University Counsel's policies webpage, and other appropriate webpages.
4. **Policies Requiring Board Approval.** Some policies require the Board's review and approval prior to implementation. The General Counsel shall designate policies that are subject to Board approval.
5. **Policies Requiring Rulemaking.** Certain policies may require the promulgation of rules by the University in accordance with the Tennessee Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (TUAPA). The General Counsel shall determine and designate the policies requiring rulemaking and institute the rulemaking process at the University and state level.

B. General Division Policy

1. **Initial Review and Revision.** All proposals for new policies or changes to existing general division policies will be reviewed and revised, when deemed necessary, by the Vice President in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel. Said policies may be shared with staff and other appropriate constituent groups as deemed appropriate prior to implementation of the policy.
2. **Final Review.** The policy will be forwarded to the Vice President for final approval and signature. Once approved by the Vice President, the policy will be posted on the University Counsel's policies webpage, and other appropriate webpage.

C. General College Policy

1. **Initial Review and Revision.** All proposals for new policies or changes to existing policies will be reviewed and initially approved by the appropriate Dean.

2. **Final Review and Approval.** The policy will be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for final approval and signature. Once approved by the Vice President, the policy will be posted on the applicable College webpage.

D. General Department/Unit Policy

1. **Initial Review and Revision.** All proposals for new policies or changes to existing policies will be reviewed and initially approved by the appropriate department/unit head in consultation with other appropriate staff.
2. **Final Review and Approval.** The policy will be forwarded to the appropriate Vice President for final approval and signature. Once approved by the Vice President, the policy will be posted on the applicable department/unit webpage.

- E. Consistency with University Policy.** All division, College, and departmental/unit policies must be consistent with existing University and Board policies and procedures.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS

The President may grant exceptions to the provisions of this policy, including, but not limited to, the drafting, review and approval processes set forth herein, if the President deems such exceptions to be in the best interest of the University.

IX. PUBLICATION

Once the President and, if applicable, the Board, approves a policy as prescribed herein, the policy shall be posted on the University's policies webpage.

X. CONFLICTS

- A. Consistency.** All policies must be consistent with federal and state laws, rules, or regulations, as well as consistent with Board policies. Any provision of any policy that conflicts with controlling laws, rules, regulations, or policies will be considered null and void.
- B. University-wide policies.** Should there occur at any time a conflict between any two TSU University-wide policies, the most recently approved policy will control. Should there occur at any time a conflict between a TSU University-wide policy and any Division, College, or Department/Unit policy, the TSU University-wide policy shall supersede the Division, College, or Department/Unit policy.
- C. Written Statements.** In cases where a university-wide policy conflicts with any other written statements, the university-wide policy will control, except as the President may authorize in writing.

Approved: Interim – February 15, 2020; Final June 25, 2020