

I. Definitions

Policy: A policy is a statement of philosophy and direction, established to provide guidance and support to the university community in pursuing the university's mission. A university policy:

- is a governing principle that either mandates or constrains actions,
- has institution-wide application,
- changes infrequently and sets a course for the foreseeable future,
- helps ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations,
- reduces institutional risk,
- is approved at the executive levels of the university (president, provost, vice presidents) or Board of Trustees, and
- is archived in the IRO office.

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

Administrative Policies: Administrative Policies are non-academic policies governing the operations of the university.

Student Policies: Student Policies are non-academic policies that directly affect student life at the university.

Procedure: A procedure is a guideline or series of interrelated steps taken to help implement a policy. University procedures:

- identify and link to the applicable university policy,
- are written in a format that is easy to follow, using numbers or bullets to delineate steps to be followed,
- are reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure agreement with the most recent revision to the policy, and
- generally require formal approval by appropriate university officials (typically Heads of Units).

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

Responsible Executive: The Responsible Executive is the appropriate University officer (president, provost, vice president) whose jurisdiction covers the subject matter of the policy.

Stakeholder: Stakeholders are university community members who are affected by the university policy being developed. Typically, stakeholders' input is sought in the process of preparation and/or review of the policy.

Policy Administrator: Respective administrative head.

II. Who Is Affected by This Policy

All academic programs and administrative units of the University

III. Who Administers This Policy

This Policy is administered by the Institutional Research Office.

IV. Policy Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the American University of Armenia engages in transparent policy development and that the AUA community has ready access to well-developed, clearly-written and understandable university policies. Policies that are clear, concise and easily accessible will:

1. promote the university's mission.
2. achieve accountability by identifying the offices responsible for policy adherence.
3. provide faculty, staff and students with clear, concise guidelines.
4. document how the university conducts business.

University policies are:

1. presented in a common format and include date of and process of adoption and/or revision.
2. formally approved by the authorized body.
3. maintained centrally at the Institutional Research Office and accessible online to all relevant parties.
4. linked electronically to procedures for implementing the policy.
5. kept current within the framework of an organized system of review.

Policies are clearly distinguished from related procedures according to the definitions provided above. Internal policies that apply to the operations of specific units or programs may not conflict with university-wide policy.

V. Policy Statement

A. Policy Development

The Policy Initiator may identify a university-level policy issue and develop it into a policy proposal. The Policy Initiator identifies the Responsible Executive and submits the policy proposal for review and endorsement. If the policy proposal is endorsed, the Responsible Executive appoints responsible office(s) to develop a draft policy, following the format outlined in Section V(B) of this Policy.

The Responsible Executive will review the draft policy and consult with appropriate stakeholders regarding the policy's likely impact on the members of the university community, including legal and, if appropriate, faculty senate review.

After review and input, the Policy is formally approved by the relevant authority.

Once the policy is approved and signed, the Responsible Executive will forward an electronic copy to the IRO.

The IRO will maintain copies of signed university policies and policy revisions and publish them on the University's Policy web site.

The Policy Administrator notifies responsible parties when particular policies are scheduled for review or revision.

As identified in the particular policy, the responsible office will monitor policy compliance.

B. Policy Format

A standard policy format ensures clarity and consistency. Although not all policies will contain all of the format elements, University policies will be written and maintained following the format described below:

1. Header information: (mandatory element)

- a) Policy name
- b) Policy category (see list of categories below)
- c) Effective Date (*if different from approval date*)
- d) Entity responsible for review
- e) Approval process including date of initial approval and/or recommendation dates by relevant entities

2. Definitions: (optional element) Meaning and interpretation of terms used in the policy.

3. Scope: (mandatory element) Identification of parties governed by the policy.

4. Policy Administrators: (mandatory) Staff expected to enforce the policy or process transactions related to it.

5. Policy Rationale: (optional) Purpose of the policy and the statement of philosophy, position, rule, regulation or direction.

6. Policy: (mandatory element) The actual policy covering topics which include: duties assigned to responsible parties; information specific to a particular policy subject as needed; and a description of the compliance review process and specific authority to impose penalties or other remedies when noncompliance occurs, if applicable.

7. Related Documents: Other policies referred to in the policy. This should also include references to the procedures and guidelines that need to be followed for implementation of the policy.

**** NOTE:** For AUA policies that predate this policy, the format described above is not applicable. Revisions to any predated policies should be written in the approved policy format.

C. Location of Policies. To ensure ready access to University policies, AUA will maintain an official University Policies web page (<http://www.aua.am/policies>) with the current approved version of all university policies and links to applicable procedures. The web page will be maintained by the university's Institutional Research Office in a standard electronic format and will follow the structure described in Section V (D) below. The documents on the University Policies web page will constitute the official electronic depository for all university-wide policies. The depository will also include the archive of previous policies.

To maintain an organized system of change control, and to ensure consistency throughout the university, individual departmental or program web sites should not contain separate copies or edited versions of university policies or applicable procedures. Instead, departmental web sites that reference university policies and procedures must use hyperlinks to the documents on the official University Policies web page. This does not preclude departments from maintaining internal departmental policies and procedures on their web sites, provided the internal departmental policies and procedures are not identified as official university policies and procedures, and do not conflict with official university policies.

D. Structure and Organization of University Policies

The University Policies web site will list all policies by name and category and will provide links to related procedures. Policies will be assigned to one or more of the following categories:

Administrative – Policies that are of a general administrative or operational nature.

Academic – Policies related to teaching and learning at the university and focusing on faculty and students.

Admissions – Policies related to all activities from initial contact with prospective students to the admission of students to the university.

General – Policies covering a range of topics and/or stakeholders that is wider than a single category.

Human Resources – Policies related to the employment status for faculty and staff.

Information Technology – Policies that cover information technology systems, access, and related issues.

Financial – Policies related to accounting, budgeting, procurement, travel and other financial functions.

Library – Policies related to the operation of the university library.

Institutional Advancement – Policies governing the university's external and internal communications as well as public and donor relations.

The list of categories is tentative and can be changed at a later date, based on the needs of the University.

Related Documents

Policy Approval Form