

Policy Management Standards and Procedures



This guidebook is prepared for documenting the Policy Office, managed by Risk Management and Safety Services, procedures related to the facilitation, development, implementation, and maintenance of university policies.

Managed by: The Policy Office | Risk Management and Safety Services
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Record of Changes

This is the initial publication of this guide.

Date	Section	Summary	Issue Number

Guidebook Issue Summary

Issue Number	Date Issued	Approved by
2025.1	1/13/2025	Tyson Hill, Associate Vice President for Risk Management and Safety Services

Sonoma State aims to foster an environment of innovation, excellence, and collaboration, always striving to do so responsibly, ethically, and with integrity. University policies play a key role in communicating the university's values and expectations to the Sonoma State community and providing guidance for compliance. Therefore, the development, publication, and management of these policies must align with these standards and procedures.

Purpose

These standards and guidelines aim to establish a clear process for the consistent, effective development, approval, publication, and management of University policies. They also offer guidance on crafting policies that are both effective and accessible. Well-developed policies promote efficiency, strengthen accountability, and help minimize institutional risks.

Policy Development and Process

Policy Identification and Initiation

Any department, unit, or employee may initiate a University Policy. A formal request for a new policy can be submitted to the Policy Office via email at policies@sonoma.edu. Each request must include the justification, scope, and expected impacts, and any supporting documentation of the proposed policy.

Before developing a new policy, the Policy Office will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, in consultation with senior administrators, including a review of current SSU and CSU systemwide policies to ensure there is no overlap or conflict.

Once a request for a proposed policy has been vetted and recommended by the Policy Office, the responsible policy owner will be notified by the Policy Office. The responsible policy owner will be prompted to draft the proposed policy within PolicyStat. Throughout the drafting process, the policy owner is responsible for proactively seeking input on and documenting policy development from the stakeholders identified in the proposal, along with other appropriate members of the Sonoma State community.

Template, Format, and Structure

To ensure consistency, all university policies will follow a uniform format. Consistent formatting will allow for the identification of specific policy sections using common terminology and references. The policy template includes the following sections:

- I. Purpose

Background information explaining the need and result of the policy. Generally, 1-2 sentences, the purpose (reason for this policy) cites the university's commitment to a value or strategic goal, why the policy must exist, the problem or conflict the policy seeks to address, or cites any legal, regulatory, stewardship or other requirement the policy aims to meet. This information is helpful when the policy needs to be reviewed/updated.

- II. Policy Statement (Optional)

A well-articulated, authoritative expression of philosophy and direction. Does not change frequently. Generally, in 1-2 paragraphs, the “Policy Statement” states the policy’s intent, when the policy applies, and any mandated actions or constraints. It doesn’t describe procedures.

III. Scope

Required elements for any procedures supporting the policy. All categories of people, processes, and governance to which the policy applies. This could change frequently.

IV. Definitions

Unique terms that by being defined, add to the reader's understanding of the policy.

V. Responsibilities

A list of units or individuals responsible for various aspects of the policy, along with their primary responsibilities.

VI. Policy Details

The core content of the policy outlines the governing principles that guide actions. Do not include procedural steps in this section.

VII. Related Information

Links to related policies, statutory authorities, applicable legal or regulatory references, or any other relevant information.

When drafting or updating a policy, ensure that any relevant Executive Orders are explicitly referenced and incorporated, providing clear context and alignment with the directives outlined in the order. Live links are recommended to existing references to ensure relevant materials may be directly referenced by readers.

Formatting within Sections

Use the following hierarchical outline format for all sections:

Roman Numeral (I, II, III, ...)

Capital Letter (A, B, C, ...)

Number (1, 2, 3, ...)

Non-capital letter (a, b, c, ...)

Policy Management & Review

Policy Management Responsibilities

PolicyStat designates the following positions with direct policy management responsibilities:

Policy Owner - The policy owner is responsible for a policy throughout its lifecycle, including development, approval, implementation, training, monitoring, updates, and retirement, if applicable. Policy owners may also be responsible for ensuring applicable standards, procedures, or programs are developed to support policy implementation. Policy owners serve as the point of contact for questions, feedback, or requests for training and information on policies.

The Policy Owner is responsible for ensuring that policy consultation, formal or informal, occurs with all appropriate departments, committees, or personnel. See Policy Consultation for more information.

Policy owners must be Associate Vice President or equivalent or higher position.

Policy Reviewer - The policy reviewer is responsible for reviewing the policy to ensure it is effective, relevant, and compliant with applicable laws and regulations. They are responsible for assessing the policy's clarity and impact, ensuring it aligns with university objectives and values, and ensuring that the policy can be effectively implemented based on available resources.

Policy reviewers must be a Vice President or equivalent position.

Policy Approver - The policy approver serves as the sole authority for approving all university policies. Upon approval, policies have the authority and expectation of the president to be fully and successfully implemented.

Policy Area - The policy area (or "Area" as described in PolicyStat) is the division that is responsible for the policy. The policy reviewer will generally be a member of this division.

Recommended by - As labeled in PolicyStat is the primary committee or formal body that recommended or endorsed approval of the policy. In Policy Stat, this designation is optional and failure to designate such a body does not imply failure to properly consult or exercise shared governance rights.

Review

Policies must undergo a formal review every three years to ensure relevance, compliance, and effectiveness. The review process will be documented in PolicyStat.

Policies may be updated off-cycle due to changes in laws, regulations, or university operations. Minor revisions (e.g., title changes, and grammar updates) do not require full consultation, while substantive revisions must undergo the consultative process.

Determination and Submission of Minor Revision

Minor revisions are changes that do not alter the substantive content, purpose, or scope of the policy. These may include:

- Updates to job titles or department names.

- Corrections to grammar, spelling, or formatting.
- Updates to references, links, or contact information.

Non-substantive clarifications that improve readability without changing the meaning.

Revisions will be considered minor if they meet the following criteria:

- Do not change the policy’s intent or its impact on university operations.
- Do not introduce new compliance requirements or significantly affect stakeholder responsibilities.
- Do not require consultation with additional stakeholders or departments.

The Policy Office will review the proposed minor revisions to ensure they meet the criteria for minor updates. If the revisions are determined to be substantive, the Policy Office will inform the Policy Owner and advise on the necessary steps for a full review.

Consultative Process

When considering which offices to consult on a new policy or a revision to an existing policy, Policy Owners should consider the following offices, their stakeholders, and their perspectives on the impacts of policies. This list is not intended to include all offices to be consulted in policy matters. Each policy should be evaluated to ensure all potentially impacted stakeholders have representation.

Department	Contact
<p>Academic Senate Policies that influence or impact academic operations, instruction, curriculum, academic advising, faculty, student access to academic activities, co-curricular activities, research, funding of academic activities, facility access, or other issues that directly impact the delivery of instruction or academic activities of students or faculty.</p>	<p>senate@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Office of the Provost/Academic Affairs The same policies may be consulted with the Academic Senate.</p>	<p>provost@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Human Resources Policies that impact the working conditions of any non-faculty employee may require consultation with employee unions. Additionally, Human Resources should be consulted on policies impacting employee working conditions, training, or prescribed actions to ensure that employee interests are considered.</p>	<p>Chandra Holte chandra.holte@sonoma.edu Erin Taylor erin.taylor@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Faculty Affairs and Success</p>	<p>Diane Guido</p>

<p>Policies that impact the working conditions of any faculty employee may require consultation with the union. Additionally, Faculty Affairs and Success should be consulted on policies impacting faculty working conditions, training, or prescribed actions to ensure that faculty interests are considered.</p>	<p>diane.guido@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Office of the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD)/ Title IX Policies that intersect with Title IX regulations and/or any matters relating to sexual misconduct or discrimination; this office can also consult on the use of inclusive and respectful language.</p>	<p>Julie Vivas julie.vivas@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Office for Institutional Equity and Belonging Policies that may impact students, employees, or members of the public in an inequitable, unfair, discriminatory, or preferential manner; this office can also consult on the use of language that is inclusive and respectful.</p>	<p>Tramaine Austin-Dillon tramaine.austindillon@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>University Police Department Policies that may impact the application and enforcement of laws on campus or that may impact the safety of persons on campus or the security of university facilities.</p>	<p>Chief Nader Oweis nader.oweis@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Facilities Management Policies that may impact the use, construction, maintenance, or acquisition of university grounds or facilities</p>	<p>Dana Twedell dana.twedell@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>CSU Office of General Counsel Policies intended to comply with federal or state regulation or law and policies that may intersect with existing policy, law, or regulation, or expose the university to liability or legal exposure.</p>	<p>Elisabeth Sheh Walter ewalter@calstate.edu</p>
<p>Student Affairs Policies that influence or may impact students, student access to campus, academic advising, student clubs and co-curricular activities, student conduct, student housing, or other matters related to the student experience.</p>	<p>Gerald Jones gerald.jones@sonoma.edu</p>
<p>Entrepreneurial Activities</p>	<p>Neil Markley neil.markley@sonoma.edu</p>

Policies that influence or may impact commercial activities, sales, events, parking, or vehicles.	Jessica Way jessica.way@sonoma.edu
Associated Students Policies that influence or may impact students, student access to campus, student governance, or other matters related to the student experience.	Erik Dickson erik.dickson@sonoma.edu AS President as.president@sonoma.edu
Risk Management Policies that may impact exposure to claim, liability, compliance, or other legal action or policies that impact employee and/or campus safety, hazardous material, or regulatory compliance.	Tyson Hill tyson.hill@sonoma.edu Missy Brunetta missy.brunetta@sonoma.edu
University Advancement Policies related to the gifting of property, monies, or other material to the university or its employees, or policies that may influence matters that impact the reputation, marketing, or image of the university.	Ian Hannah ian.hannah@sonoma.edu Alicia Hodenfield alicia.hodenfield@sonoma.edu

Rights of Consultation

To ensure that all potential impacts are considered and potentially impacted stakeholder representatives are consulted before policy approval, prior to submission to the appropriate Vice President for approval, the Policy Owner will provide the final draft policy to the Policy Office, by emailing policies@sonoma.edu. The Policy Office will distribute the draft policy to offices with Rights of Consultation (see below). If not previously consulted, the designated entity may exercise its right within 10 days of notice of a final draft policy.

If an office with Rights of Consultation requests additional time to review the policy or indicates they need to examine it further, the following steps could occur:

1. Notification to the Policy Office and Policy Owner:

The office exercising its Right of Consultation must notify the Policy Office and Policy Owner within the designated 10-day consultation period, indicating their intent to review the draft policy.

2. Extended Review Period:

If additional time is required, the Policy Office may coordinate with the Policy Owner to determine a feasible extension, ensuring that the review doesn't unduly delay the approval process.

3. Addressing Feedback:

The consulting office provides their feedback, concerns, or proposed revisions. The Policy Owner may revise the draft policy based on this input to address any identified issues.

4. Policy Revisions and Redistribution:

If significant changes are made to the policy as a result of feedback, the updated draft is redistributed to all offices with Rights of Consultation for further review and input, ensuring transparency and collaboration.

5. Resolution of Concerns:

The Policy Owner works directly with the consulting office to resolve outstanding issues. This may include holding meetings, and discussions, or providing supporting documentation to address specific concerns.

6. Final Approval:

Once all concerns have been resolved, the revised policy proceeds through the final approval process, submitted to the appropriate Vice President.

Entities with the Right of Consultation:

- Academic Senate
- Associated Students/Student Government
- Human Resources
- Office of Faculty Affairs and Success
- Risk Management
- University Police Department
- Student Affairs
- Office of the Provost
- Office for Institutional Equity and Belonging
- Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD)/Title IX

Rescinding/Retirement

To rescind or retire a policy, the Policy Office will collaborate with the policy owner to evaluate the rationale for its removal, ensuring it is no longer required due to redundancy, obsolescence, or changes in institutional or regulatory requirements. A formal proposal for rescission must be submitted to policies@sonoma.edu, including supporting documentation and an analysis of potential impacts. Once approved, the policy will be archived within PolicyStat and stakeholders will be notified of its retirement.