

## **Policy Development Best Practices**

Administrative policies are intended to be useful, usable, understandable documents, providing general guidance to the campus population to ensure appropriate conduct and compliance with federal and state regulations, and systemwide policies. These best practices are designed to facilitate the development of administrative policies that meet these goals.

### **Provide Appropriate Balance of Information**

Each policy section should contain enough information so as to be understandable and usable by the general campus population, including an appropriate level of procedure, but not so much detailed information as to become quickly inaccurate. Detailed process should be maintained on the policy owner's Web site rather than in the policy section.

Procedures that are required to maintain compliance or are regulatory in nature should always be included in the policy section.

Generally, campus policies should not repeat information provided in systemwide policies. Best practice is to provide references to the systemwide policy with appropriate links instead. Providing links will reduce the time required to maintain campus policies and ensure continued compliance when systemwide policy changes.

### **Focus on Target Audience**

Campus policies may be used by a wide variety of campus users, including individuals who are new to campus; are taking on new responsibilities, and therefore, are new to the procedure; or are responsible for a business function that is completed only rarely.

When providing information in campus policy sections, the policy developer should remember that the target audience will not likely have the knowledge of subject matter experts, and attempt to explain the policy and procedure clearly, using plain language as much as possible.

### **Prioritize Review for High Risk Areas**

While it is important that all campus policies be maintained accurately and are updated in a timely manner, department heads should pay particular attention to those policies identified as high risk areas or where a compliance issue has been identified.

It is best practice for departments to review those high risk policies more frequently than the required four year cycle to ensure continued accuracy and to fine-tune areas that would benefit from greater clarification.

High risk campus policy areas should be identified in consultation with Internal Audit Services, Campus Counsel, the Chief Compliance Officer, and the Campus Policy Coordinator.

### **Standard Structure and Organization**

Maintaining a standard structure and organization throughout the PPM will help campus users locate and understand the information provided in the policy section. While some deviations are necessary, the standard structure is intended to be flexible to accommodate the wide range of policy subjects addressed in the PPM.

When writing or updating a campus policy, policy developers are encouraged to consult with the Campus Policy Coordinator if questions arise regarding structure and organization.

**Procedure vs. Process**

Procedures can and should be included in the PPM when the information is required to ensure compliance and accountability. Process, however, may be maintained on a department's own Web site. For example, PPM Section 310-30 includes procedural information regarding submission of directives, required elements of directives, and the approval authority. It does not contain instructions for logging on to the system or using the submission form. Those detailed instructions, which are not regulatory in nature, are maintained outside of the PPM for ease of maintenance.

**Regularly Review Campus Policies**

Policy requires campus administrative policies to be reviewed at least once every four years. When a policy enters its review cycle, the policy developer should read the policy as soon as possible to determine what, if any, changes need to be made. When a policy remains accurate as written, a request to reissue the policy should be sent to the Campus Policy Coordinator. Reissuing the policy requires the normal approvers to verify its accuracy, and clearly communicates to campus users that the policy has in fact been reviewed and can be trusted as an accurate source of information.

It is best practice for a department to immediately review campus policy when a related law or systemwide policy is updated, and develop a realistic plan for any necessary updates.