

Northeastern University

Policy on Policies

GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL

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16, 2013

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23, 2017

Supersedes: N/A

Related Policies: N/A

**Responsible
Office/Department:**
Compliance

Keywords: policies;
compliance; procedure;
template

I. Purpose and Scope

University policies promote the university's mission, enhance operational efficiency and university governance, and communicate expectations relating to conduct, thereby reducing institutional risk. Northeastern University expects faculty, staff and students to be familiar with and adhere to all applicable university policies. In order to promote accessibility to current policies, as well as consistency and clarity of content, this policy establishes a framework, common format, roles and responsibilities and process for adoption, review, revision and dissemination of all university policies as defined in this policy.

This policy applies to all new university policies that are drafted and adopted after the effective date of this policy, and to existing university policies as they are revised after that date, but does not apply to the Faculty and Student Handbooks, the Athletics Compliance Policies Handbook, or the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogues.

II. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

A Policy is a high-level statement of guiding principles and standards that articulates the institution's values and communicates behavioral expectations and requirements related to a specific topic or area.

A University Policy is one with broad application across the university, or to major components of the university, that enhances the university's mission, addresses issues of compliance with laws, regulations, and/or internal standards, promotes operational efficiencies, or seeks to reduce institutional risk.

A Unit-level Policy is one that applies only to a specific unit, or that is an internal operational policy for a specific division or department. Examples include, but are not limited to, parking policies specific to the different campuses or properties of the university, or dress or access policies specific to different lab/research areas at the university. No unit of the university may adopt or maintain a Unit-level Policy that is inconsistent with, conflicts with, appears to or otherwise expands the obligations of the university beyond those set forth in official University Policies.

Procedures set forth identified steps for implementing a policy.

The Responsible Office/Department is the university office responsible for developing and administering a policy, which includes dissemination of the policy, development of procedures where appropriate, communications and training related to the policy, and timely revisions.

[The Policy Template](#) is the standard format that University Policies must follow. It includes a short, descriptive title; statement of the purpose and scope of the policy; any applicable definitions and exclusions; the policy itself; additional information, such as enforcement; and contact information for questions or guidance on the policy.

III. Policy

a) Authority

Responsible Officials are charged with overseeing the initial development, regular review, and proposed revisions of University Policies related to their area of responsibility. Approval of most University Policies will be by the Senior Leadership Team, except where approval by the Board of Trustees is required or appropriate. Unit level Policies must be approved by the Senior Vice President or Vice President responsible for the unit.

b) Development & Format

University Policies may be initiated by individual departments, colleges, schools, institutes, or other administrative or operating units. New University Policies must be sponsored by the Responsible Office/Department with oversight in that area. Each policy must follow the format provided by the Policy Template, should generally refrain from including Procedures, and be drafted in clear, concise language.

c) Review and Approval

All University Policies require central institutional approval, either by the Senior Leadership Team or by the Board of Trustees where approval by the Board is required or appropriate. The Responsible Office/Department is accountable for confirming a schedule for obtaining final approval. If approval will be by the Senior Leadership Team, such approval will typically not exceed 2 weeks from submission to the Senior Leadership Team.

Prior to submission for such approval, draft University Policies must be presented for legal review by the Office of General Counsel, as well as review by any office(s) directly responsible for implementing a substantive aspect of the policy. Where there are any objections that are not reconciled, the Responsible Office/Department will note those reservations. The draft policy will then be submitted by the sponsoring Responsible Office/Department to their area senior leader for final review before submission, as required, to the Senior Leadership Team or Board for approval. Policies submitted to the Senior Leadership Team or Board for approval shall also include an attached proposed dissemination and communication plan. Once approved, the policy may be disseminated to the university community consistent with the approved plan.

d) Training

If training on a new policy or revisions to a policy is necessary or advisable, the Responsible Office/Department will work with the Compliance Department in consultation with Human Resources Management to develop or identify, and provide or make available appropriate training for the university community or relevant sub-group within the university community.

e) Review/Revision

The Responsible Office/Department will schedule regular review of its policies and also review particular policies when there are changes in applicable law that might affect provisions of the policy. Proposed revisions are subject to the provisions of this Policy for drafting, formatting, review and approval, as well as dissemination and training where appropriate.

f) Archiving/Prior Versions

If the Responsible Office/Department concludes that a policy within its area has no continuing applicability it may propose retirement of the policy through the same review and approval channels set forth in Section III(c) of this Policy. Retired University Policies

will be archived but accessible from the [University Policy website](#). All previous versions of amended or revised policies must be archived.

IV. Additional Information

Nothing in this Policy limits the authority of the university to issue, amend, or withdraw a policy.

Additional resources can be found on the [University Policy website](#), including:

- [Policy Communication and Implementation Plan](#)
- [Policy Development Guidelines](#)
- [Policy Proposal Form](#)
- [Policy Template](#)
- [Policy FAQ's](#)

V. Contact Information

Compliance Department, (617) 373-8102

Human Resource Management, (617) 373-2230