

Policy 1000
University Policy Management

Date of Current Revision: March 2023

Responsible Officer: Assistant Vice President for HR, Training and Performance

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the process of policy management at the university, primarily by the University Policy Committee (UPC). The UPC is a team that is responsible for assisting the president and vice presidents with the oversight and management of those policies that have university-wide impact.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board of Visitors has been authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia to govern James Madison University (JMU). See Code of Virginia § 23.1-1600; § 23.1-1301. The Board has delegated the authority to manage the university to the president.

STATE OR FEDERAL STATUTE AND/OR REGULATION

University policies fall within a greater hierarchy of laws, statutes and regulations, as well as within the following framework; therefore, the university is subject to compliance with laws and regulations instituted by higher levels of authority:

- Federal laws and regulations
- State laws and regulations
- Board of Visitors policies and rules
- University policies and rules
- Divisional policies and rules
- Departmental/Academic Unit policies and rules

3. DEFINITIONS

Division

Division is the largest organizational subgroup of the university. The six divisions include:

- Academic Affairs
- Access and Enrollment Management
- Administration and Finance
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Student Affairs
- University Advancement

The Office of the President, while not considered a division, includes Audit and Management Services, Office of University Counsel, and Strategic Planning and Engagement.

Minor Policy Change

A change that is not substantive that typically pertains to formatting, style, grammar, punctuation, or the updating of office names or position titles.

Policy

A statement of management philosophy and a general statement of a rule, established to provide direction and assistance to the university community in the conduct of university affairs.

Procedure

A statement that prescribes specific actions to be taken to conform to established policies, allowing for the orderly implementation of those policies.

Substantial Policy Change

One or more distinct modifications to a policy that represent a major change to the policy itself or the associated procedures.

University Policy Committee

The group designated and appointed by the president and vice presidents to act as the central body for making recommendations regarding the creation, updating and management of university-wide policies. Members of this committee include the director of human resources, a representative of audit and management services, and one representative from each of the divisions of the university – chosen by the appropriate vice president. University Counsel is an ex-officio member of the committee. The committee is chaired by the assistant vice president for HR, training and performance.

4. APPLICABILITY

University policies and procedures are applicable to all members of the university community, unless the specific policy states otherwise.

The [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) includes only those policies and procedures that are generally applicable to more than one division of the university or that can have impact on the broader JMU community. Matters pertaining to one division or to the internal procedures of a given division, department or office are not considered to be within the scope of this policy or the purview of the UPC.

5. POLICY

The Manual of Policies and Procedures is the official repository of university policies and is available electronically by accessing the [Manual of Policies and Procedures website](#).

Each policy will include the following information:

- Policy number
- Policy name
- Date of current revision
- Responsible officer for that policy
- Such other information on the attached template as may be appropriate for the specific policy

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 The assistant vice president for HR, training and performance will maintain the master list of policies within the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) website.

6.2 An approved hard copy of each policy will be kept on file. The policies will be maintained on the university website and users may print copies directly from the website. (New policies and policies with substantial changes must be approved and signed by the president.)

6.3 The procedures to initiate, review, and approve new or revised policies, and to eliminate policies, are as follows:

- a. The need for a **new** or **revised** policy, or the **elimination** of an existing policy, is identified by a vice president, academic unit or department head, or dean, or representative of the UPC. Any employee of the university community may recommend a new or revised policy, or the elimination of a policy, by contacting his/her director or head. An employee or student may also contact the appropriate stakeholder representative (specified in 6.3.e) with suggestions.
- b. Working in conjunction with the [division's representative serving on the UPC](#), the appropriate dean or academic unit or department head oversees:
 - Creation of a new policy
 - Revision of an existing policy, or
 - Elimination of an existing policy
- c. All policies shall be based on the standard policy template that can be found in the appendix of this policy. If a policy falls within the responsibility of more than one division, any appropriate division may assume the responsibility for drafting and reviewing the policy. The primary responsible office or officer should facilitate review of the policy every two years, however, secondary and tertiary responsible offices should collaborate on and agree to all recommended modifications.
- d. For new policies:
 1. The chair of the UPC sends a copy of the resulting draft to each vice president for review and approval for posting for public review. The chair will make changes to new policies in conference with the appropriate UPC member and the entire UPC based on the feedback received from the vice presidents.

The chair of the UPC posts a copy of the resulting draft to the UPC website for ten business days so that it may be reviewed by the campus community. The draft may be viewable through authentication only through use of a university username and password. The chair of the UPC will notify the university community of the presence of the draft policy via the University Policy Listserv. Campus community members may opt in to the listserv by clicking the link on the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) webpage. Listserv members will receive a notice of the posting and it will be shared with stakeholder representatives (the Employee Advisory Committee co-chairs, the speaker of the Faculty Senate, and the president of the Student Government Association, or their respective designees) who are members of the listserv.

2. The draft policy remains posted for a minimum of ten business days, during which time the UPC will accept comments from the university community. During this posting period, EAC co-chairs, the faculty senate speaker and SGA president (or their respective designees) will have an opportunity to notify the UPC committee chair of any request to attend the next UPC meeting to provide comments to the UPC on behalf of these organizations. During breaks between semesters or other extended periods of time when stakeholder representatives are not available to provide comments, stakeholder representatives will be asked to present any comments they may have to the UPC within the first ten business days of the following semester, but the publication of the policy may not be postponed.
 3. If the EAC co-chairs, the senate speaker, and/or the SGA president (or their respective designees) make a request to attend the next UPC meeting, the UPC will hear from the stakeholder representative(s) at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the UPC, according to a schedule set by the UPC.
 4. The comments received by the UPC from the university community and from any of the three stakeholder groups are advisory in nature and will not obligate the UPC to make any changes in its recommendations concerning the policy under consideration or elimination. After considering comments, the UPC will amend the draft of the policy.
 5. The chair of the UPC will send a copy of the resulting draft to each vice president for final review and approval. The chair will make changes to the policy based on the feedback of the vice presidents.
 6. Once the draft is adjusted to consider relevant suggestions from the vice presidents, the chair of the UPC forwards the resulting draft to the president's office for final review and approval.
 7. Physical and electronic files that contain pertinent supporting materials applicable to the development of each new policy and procedure will be maintained by the chair of the UPC.
 8. Once the president has approved a final draft, the chair of the UPC will ensure that the new policy is published to the web-based [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#).
 9. A notice will be sent to the University Policy Listserv of any new policies (any employee may gain access to the listserv by visiting the landing page of the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) and clicking on the "subscribe to the Policy ListServ.")
- e. For revised policies:
1. Policies that are revised shall be designated by the UPC members as receiving substantial revisions or minor revisions. Substantial revisions are major changes that dramatically impact the policy or related procedures. A policy may be designated as having minor changes due to cosmetic adjustments, administrative title changes, updated hyperlinks, or slight changes in related laws, regulations, or compliance standards.

2. **Revised policies with substantial revisions:** When policy changes are considered by the committee to be substantial, meaning they include one or more distinct modifications that represent a major change to the policy itself or the associated procedures, the policy approval process steps shall be identical to those of a new policy as noted above.
3. **Revised policies with minor revisions:** When policy changes are considered by the committee to be minor, the policy review process shall be managed by the appropriate divisional representative on the UPC who will request a review by the Responsible Office, or Officer, and the UPC. If, after their review, the policy is still deemed as having minor revisions, the policy shall be published to the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) webpage and a notice shall be sent to the campus community and the Stakeholder Groups via the University Policy Listserv. All modified policies shall include cover sheets that briefly describe the modifications made to the policy. These cover sheets will be included as attachments to the email sent to the University Policy Listserv members.

f. For deleted policies:

1. Circumstances may dictate that a policy be eliminated. For example, a statute may change that will force JMU out of compliance if a related policy continues to be maintained. The need for the elimination of an existing policy can be identified by any member of the campus community.
2. The elimination of the policy and the rationale will be reviewed by the UPC.
3. The Chair of the UPC will send a recommendation with rationale to the Vice Presidents.
4. Once approved by the vice presidents, the elimination with rationale shall be posted on the University Policy Listserv for ten business days so that input can be sought from community members and the university policy stakeholder groups.
5. After consideration of any comments received, the UPC may adjust the rationale for elimination or change the recommendation.
6. The resulting decision shall be shared with the Vice Presidents so they may further comment.
7. If the recommendation is to eliminate the policy and the vice presidents concur, the president will review the resulting recommendation and rationale, then approve or deny the elimination. If it is decided that a policy should **not** be eliminated, the UPC will consider revising the policy. If it must be revised, the appropriate UPC representative shall follow the steps listed above to process the policy.
8. The chair shall maintain records of all eliminated policies including rationale. The designated policy numbers and names of such policies are retired and shall not be used with future policies.
9. A notice will be sent to the community and stakeholders announcing the elimination of deleted policies and the rationale for doing so.

6.4 Emergency Policy Implementation (Fast-track) - It may be necessary to rapidly establish or modify a policy due to a natural or man-made disaster, fiscal exigency, substantial legal changes, or government mandates. The above-listed procedures will be modified to include only those steps necessary to implement such a policy (or policy change) on a timely basis. The comment period will not be included in any fast-track policy review until after the policy is published to the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) webpage. Modifications to the policy may continue based on community input and any adjustments would be handled as described above. It may be necessary to fast-track the elimination of a policy. For example, a legal statute may change that will force JMU out of compliance if a related policy continues to be maintained. In all cases, the campus community will be notified via the listserv including rationale for the action.

6.5 Information about new or changed policies will be published to the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) webpage using the [Policy Change Notification Template](#). (A sample of this template can be found in the appendix of this policy.) To keep the university community informed about new campus-wide policies, deleted campus-wide policies, and campus-wide policy changes, the UPC will distribute updates twice each year. On completion of each fall and spring semester, a list of policy additions and revisions finalized during the previous semester will be posted on the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) website, and the publishing of the summary information will be announced via the University Policy Listserv.

The policy change notification email will include four sections:

New Policies: Including policy number, name, and URL.

Minor Policy Changes: Including policy number, name, URL, and a brief description of the changes made.

Substantial Policy Changes: Including policy number, name, URL, and a brief description of the changes made.

Deleted Policies: Including policy number, name, and rationale for deletion.

A date range representing the dates of the policy activity will be included, as well as contact information for the chair of UPC.

6.6 The UPC schedules a regular cyclical review of all university policies, ideally resulting in a review of each policy approximately every 24 months.

6.7 The UPC may make changes to policies in the process of updating them.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

The AVP for HR, Training and Performance (the UPC Chair) has been identified as responsible for the collection, review, and distribution of new and revised policies.

Primary Responsible Office or Officer for each policy is responsible for accuracy, timeliness, and implementation of the policy and facilitates policy updates and ensures that secondary offices or officers collaborate on all updates.

The UPC assists in this process. Members of the committee are responsible for identifying areas within their divisions that need new or revised policies, for recommending appropriate policies, and for reviewing university-wide policies. The UPC may also recommend the elimination of policies.

The vice presidents review new, substantially updated policies and suggested policies to be deleted (with rationale). The vice presidents provide related feedback for each situation on a timely basis when requested.

The heads of academic units and departments are responsible for assuring adherence to established policies in the conduct of their area's affairs. They are also responsible for directing the appropriate individuals on their staffs to the UPC and for working with the appropriate divisional representative on the UPC to create new and modify existing policies as needed.

Only the president has the authority to issue university policies.

Faculty and staff are responsible for adhering to all policies and for informing their respective directors and academic unit and department heads if they feel that a substantial change must be made to a university policy.

Stakeholders are responsible for reading listserv announcements, obtaining comments from the groups they represent, and communicating suggestions to the UPC.

All departments, offices and employees that generate, receive, or maintain public records under the terms of this policy are also responsible for compliance with Policy [1109](#) – Records Management.

8. SANCTIONS

Any sanction for violation of a policy should be listed in that policy.

Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense and may include termination of employment for employees, expulsion from the university for students, removal of affiliate status for affiliates and loss of privileges and/or no trespass orders for any individual.

9. EXCLUSIONS

The president has the authority to sign into effect, waive or temporarily alter any policy necessary to address an emergency or temporary situation, without utilizing the procedures outlined in this policy.

In the absence of the president and with the support of the other vice presidents, the vice president who is in a supervisory or reviewer status over the responsible officer or office listed for the policy may temporarily sign a policy into effect in an emergency, subject to ratification by

the president. If the president fails to ratify the temporary policy by signing it within three months, it will automatically become void.

10. INTERPRETATION

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the president and is generally delegated to the assistant vice president for HR, training and performance.

Previous version: January 2021

Approved by the president: October 2018

Appendices

Template for Policies
Policy Change Notification Template

Appendix I

Manual of Policies and Procedures Template for Policies

Policy # - A number provided by the University Policy Committee on initial inception of the policy.

Title - Official name of the policy.

Date of Current Revision - Month and year that the latest version of the policy was published to the [Manual of Policies and Procedures](#) website.

Primary Responsible Office or Officer- Person responsible for accuracy, timeliness, and implementation of the policy. Facilitates policy updates and ensures that secondary offices or officers collaborate on all updates.

Secondary Responsible Office or Officer - Person responsible for accuracy, timeliness, and implementation of the policy in the absence of the Primary Responsible Officer.

1. PURPOSE

Subject of the policy and what it is trying to accomplish, in one sentence, if possible.

2. AUTHORITY

Each policy shall use the same statement, which reads, "The Board of Visitors has been authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia to govern James Madison University. See Code of Virginia § 23.1-1600; § 23.1-1301. The Board has delegated the authority to manage the university to the president."

STATE OR FEDERAL STATUTE AND /OR REGULATION

Describe the supplemental authority granted by the state or federal government that allows JMU to establish and enforce this policy. Cite any other relevant regulations that govern the operation of the university here.

3. DEFINITIONS

Definitions of words that might be confusing, have different possible meanings, or are being used in a specific way.

4. APPLICABILITY

Describe to whom the policy applies (board members, administrators, faculty, staff, students, affiliates, visitors, etc.).

5. POLICY

Describe the policy by phrasing each statement separately in numbered paragraphs of one sentence in length, if possible.

6. PROCEDURES

Describe the detailed steps associated with implementing the policy.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Describe in detail which offices/individuals have the task of determining that the policy and procedures are current and effective. This includes the office or officer with primary responsibility.

This standard statement appears in all policies: All departments, offices and employees that generate, receive, or maintain public records under the terms of this policy are also responsible for compliance with Policy [1109](#) – Records Management.

8. SANCTIONS

Describe what happens to violators, including the range of possible punishment. The following standard statement may be inserted here: “Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense and may include termination of employment or expulsion from the university.”

9. EXCLUSIONS

Note any closely or tangentially related circumstances or individuals not covered by the policy to ensure effective communication of the scope of the policy.

10. INTERPRETATION

Identify who is empowered to describe what the policy means and how to apply it.

Previous version

The date when the previously published version was posted on the Manual of Policies and Procedures website.

Approved by the president

The date that the president last approved the policy as affirmed by his signature. (note, the president only approves policies when they are new and when they are changed substantially)

President’s name and title appear here.

(The president signs all new policies and subsequently after full approval of each substantial change that is made to any policy).

APPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

APPENDICES

Anything that would help to implement the policy (i.e., a form or example of a memorandum or a template).

Appendix II

Policy Change Notification Template

UNIVERSITY POLICY COMMITTEE SEMI-ANNUAL POLICY CHANGE NOTIFICATION POLICY CHANGES IMPLEMENTED FROM XX/XX/2X - XX/XX/2X *Corrections (Typos, etc.) not Reflected					
Status	Policy Number	Policy Name	Date Added or Updated	URL	Description of Changes
New, Minor, or Substantial					

**For further information, please contact Rick Larson, Chair, University Policy Committee @ larsonrd@jmu.edu or (540) 568-4248.*