

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders
From: Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, President
Subject: UHD Policy and Procedure System

UH-Downtown/PS 01.A.01
Issue No. 16
Effective Date: 9/20/2024
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy statement (PS) establishes a system for developing, organizing, maintaining, and distributing University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) policies and procedures. This policy and procedure system is intended to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations, UH System Board of Regents by-laws and policies, UH System Administrative Memorandum 01.A.01, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) policies, and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policies.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Accessibility: state of a policy where a person with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the policy statement.
- 2.2 Expedited Review: the review of an existing policy such that the owner of the policy determines if a Policy Review is necessary, or if a policy may be reaffirmed according to the policy review cycle without changes, or with changes that are not meaningful to the interpretation or execution of the policy. Examples of policy changes that are not meaningful include, but are not limited to: changing the titles of a person with a role at the University that serves as an owner of a policy, spelling or grammar changes, fixing broken links to websites, etc. In cases where material changes to the policy are required, the Interim Review process is followed.
- 2.3 Interim Policy: A temporary policy, possibly developed outside of the normal policy development process by reason of exigent circumstances. Interim policies should be reviewed by normal policy development processes within one year of posting and either made into policy, or rescinded.
- 2.4 Policy: A principle or set of general guidelines which directs decision making and action in a particular area of University operations.

- 2.5 Policy Advisory Committee (PAC): A standing committee of UHD stakeholders providing oversight to the policy development and revision process. The PAC is chaired by the University Policy Manager, and consists of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (or their designee); the President-elect of the Faculty Senate; Staff Council President; an elected member of University Curriculum Committee, Academic Policy Committee, and Faculty Affairs Committee; an appointee from the division of Student Success and Student Life; and an appointee from the division of Administration & Finance. The PAC shall meet during the academic year as needed.
- 2.6 Policy Review: the formal reading and consideration of new or existing policy language by all stakeholders for the purpose of making edits, language additions, or language removal.
- 2.7 Policy Statement: A document which states a policy, the procedures by which the policy should be implemented, and all other particulars relevant to the policy that are required by this PS.
- 2.8 Shared Governance: the structures and processes through which faculty, professional staff, administration, and students participate in the development of policies and in decision-making that affect the institution.
- 2.9 Substantive Change: A revision to a policy that materially alters its meaning or intent.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 UHD is committed to the principles of shared governance and transparency in the policy development and revision process.
- 3.2 UHD PSs provide the framework by which UHD stakeholders carry out their job duties and behave in furtherance of the strategic goals of the University, while simultaneously providing limits and protections for those stakeholders. UHD PSs provide mechanisms to hold stakeholders accountable for behaviors and actions, while providing mechanisms of due process in an environment that mitigates risk to the institution.

- 3.3 UHD PSs should be in compliance with SAMs and Board policy as well as State and Federal laws and regulations. In the event of conflict, the latter take precedence.
- 3.4 UHD PSs take precedence over by-laws and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of individual units within UHD. In the event of a conflict between a UHD PS or unit by-laws or SOPs with any law or regulation promulgated by a higher authority, the higher authority will govern, and the UHD PS or unit document will be rescinded or revised to bring it into compliance with the law or regulation at issue through the processes outlined in this PS.
- 3.5 PSs that fall under the umbrella of shared governance, academic affairs, or faculty operations, will be created and reviewed through the shared governance policy process articulated in [PS 01.A.03 \(Academic Shared Governance\)](#).
- 3.6 Accessibility
 - 3.6.1. UHD PSs will be accessible to all individuals of all levels of ability.
 - 3.6.2. UHD shall ensure that PSs are posted in a variety of accessible media and are easy to find on the UHD website.
 - 3.6.3. UHD shall adopt a common format for all PSs to provide a framework and logic for presentation.
 - 3.6.4. UHD shall adopt a common policy numbering system to provide a framework and logic for organization.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Format
 - 4.1.1. All UHD policy statements will be developed according to the standard policy template and standard numbering system, which can be found on the [UHD Policy Statements home page](#). Please reach out to the University Policy Manager for assistance with policy numbering.
 - 4.1.2. In addition to the required elements featured on the standard policy template, all UHD policy statements will include, at minimum, the following components:
 - 4.1.2.A Designated personnel responsible for implementing the policy

4.1.2.B Methodology for the following:

- Implementing the policy
- Monitoring compliance with the policy and reporting results
- Handling non-compliance

4.1.2.C A timeline for completion of procedures

4.1.2.D A schedule for reviewing the effectiveness of the policy and its attendant procedures that requires a review at least every five years and as necessary, or more often if state and/or federal laws and/or regulations require

4.1.3. The University Policy Manager is responsible for assigning numbers to all new PSs.

4.2 Communication

4.2.1. The Office of the Provost is responsible for making policies reviewed through the academic shared governance process available to the University Policy Manager for posting on the policy website as soon as possible but not later than two working days of their final approval by the President.

4.2.2. The University Policy Manager is responsible for maintaining an index of all PSs and related documents and for making new and revised administrative policies available online in both HTML and PDF formats as soon as possible, but not later than ten working days of their final approval by the President.

4.2.3. The University Policy Manager will ensure all new, interim, newly revised, reaffirmed, or rescinded institutional policies are widely publicized to the University community.

4.3 Development, Review, and Approval of Policies

4.3.1. All academic and faculty policies will be developed, reviewed, and approved according to the provisions of [PS 01.A.03 - Academic Shared Governance](#).

- 4.3.2. Other University policies will be developed through the office(s) of the senior administrator(s) responsible for the area(s) covered by the policy and in consultation with content experts and stakeholders. Campus stakeholders will be consulted in the creation of policy language.
- 4.3.3. The approval of the President, as indicated by their signature on the approval line, must be given for any draft policy to become an official policy of the University.
- 4.3.4. Each PS will contain a section titled Review Process that states the position of the administrator responsible for review/audit and the frequency with which the policy will be reviewed/audited. The party responsible for policy review will recruit content experts and representative stakeholders for the review process. When changes to other university policies affect faculty operations or intersect meaningfully with the academic enterprise, those policies shall be reviewed according to the provisions of [PS 01.A.03- Academic Shared Governance Policy](#).

4.4 Policy Review

4.4.1. Full Review

- 4.4.1.A UHD policy statements will be updated, revised, or rescinded following established procedures when discussion of campus constituents or changes in UHS policy or state or federal law indicates that such action is required.
- 4.4.1.B The major review responsibility for policy statements lies with the responsible party identified in the “Review Process” section of the PS, although proposals to revise or update policies may be made at any time by any member of the University community. Updating, revising, and rescinding policies require the same authority and the same procedure as described in section 4.4.1 of this PS.
- 4.4.1.C A current revision schedule for policies designating the responsible parties will be sent to the President’s Cabinet each September by the University Policy Manager. The schedule will

also provide a tracking mechanism and include revisions not yet competed.

4.4.1.D If during the official review period the responsible party determines no revisions or amendments are needed, the policy will be reaffirmed without revision or amendments as provided for in this policy. If the President's Cabinet concurs with the recommendation to reaffirm the policy, the reaffirmation date will be noted on the footer, and the effective date will be updated.

4.4.1.E A proposal for a policy or policy modification for any reason outside of the regular cycle of review (need for interim changes, policy audit, requests from stakeholders for policy change, proposal for a new policy, etc.) must be sent through the PAC to the appropriate shared governance policy committee or university group with content expertise to edit/develop the policy. In the event that the appropriate shared governance committee is not available and time is of the essence (e.g., need for interim policy during the summer), the membership of the PAC will curate the interim policy until the issue can be addressed by the appropriate shared governance committee.

4.4.2. Expedited Review

4.4.2.A UHD shall adopt a policy audit process that allows for the owner(s) of the policy to determine that there is no need for meaningful changes to policies and reaffirm the policy without sending the policy through the full review process.

4.4.2.B The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) must agree that proposed revisions are not substantive before a policy may undergo expedited review.

4.5 Interim Policy Development

4.5.1. The President may authorize appropriate administrative officers to develop and implement new policies and procedures or to revise established

policies and procedures on a provisional basis until they complete the normal review process provided for in the above sections (4.4.1). Should the relevant shared governance committees fail to review and revise the policy within one academic year, the interim policy (or policy changes) stands as a permanent policy and its review process is governed as any other. Such authorization is granted, however, only for clear and compelling reasons.

4.5.1.A A clear and compelling reason for interim policy development is one that either 1) emanates from an external oversight or accreditation entity (examples include but are not limited to the state legislative or executive branch of government, the THECB, or SACSCOC) AND there is an implementation or event date imposed upon UHD by the external oversight or accreditation entity that requires a new policy or a change in policy, or 2) has broad university support. In either case, affirmation of the aforementioned "clear and compelling reason" will be granted from PAC after consultation with the stakeholders they represent.

4.5.2. In instances where a University stakeholder or group intends to pursue an interim policy, the PAC and various stakeholder groups may submit feedback on the question of whether the issue rises to the level of "clear and compelling" to justify an interim policy during this period. Campus stakeholders, under the advisory of the PAC, will be consulted in the creation of interim policy language.

4.6 Distribution

4.6.1. The University Policy Manager shall prepare and make available all approved policy statements online and notify the university community as defined in section 4.2.

4.6.2. The University Policy Manager maintains one historic set of UHD policy statements, which includes all official versions of each policy.

4.7 Authority of UHD PSs

4.7.1. When a University policy question arises, the official UHD policy statements must be consulted. If the question is treated there, those guidelines take precedence. If not, those practices which have guided such situations in the past at UHD and are consistent with principles of shared governance should be followed, and the steps outlined in this policy statement should be taken to initiate or revise a UHD policy to cover the question or situation.

4.8 Review and Approval

4.8.1. After a draft of a non-academic policy has been developed, it will be reviewed by the President's Cabinet. The University Policy Manager will simultaneously circulate the policy to the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government Association as an information item with each group given two weeks to make comments prior to the President signing the policy. The senior administrator responsible for the draft policy may agree to modifications, which are suggested during this review period prior to the President signing the policy.

4.8.1.A Senior administration is responsible for reviewing the [SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy](#) to ensure that new policy proposals and policy changes adhere to SACSCOC substantive change policy in accordance with [PS 03.A.32, Monitoring and Reporting of Substantive Changes](#) and submitting a completed [UHD Required Compliance Change Form](#) to the SACSCOC liaison, if applicable.

4.8.2. Upon approval of the President's Cabinet and President's signature, The University Policy Manager will post non-academic policies online at the [UHD Policies Table of Contents](#) and notify the University community. The Office of the Provost will post academic affairs and faculty policies online at the [UHD Policies Table of Contents](#).

4.8.3. Unless otherwise specified, a policy becomes effective the date the President signs it.

4.9 Policy Tracking

4.9.1. The VP for HR (or designee) will track the status of non- academic policies and the Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost (or designee) will track the status of academic affairs and faculty policies under review and/or revision.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer):	Shared Governance Task Force
Responsible Party (Approver):	President
Review Period:	Every five years on or before May 1, and as necessary

Signed original on file in Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 08/11/81 (as Policy #01.01)
Issue #2: 08/11/83
Issue #3: 01/16/85
Issue #4: 07/15/86
Issue #5: 10/13/89
Issue #6: 04/25/94
Issue #7: 08/01/96
Issue #8: 07/24/00
Issue #9: 10/10/07
Issue #10: 02/07/11
Issue #11: 03/18/14
Issue #12: 08/15/16
Issue #13: 05/10/18
Issue #14: 05/15/19
Issue #15: 02/17/23
Issue #16: 09/20/24 (this issue)

7. REFERENCES

[PS 01.A.03, Academic Shared Governance Policy](#)
[UHD Policies Table of Contents](#)
[PS 03.A.32, Monitoring and Reporting of Substantive Changes](#)
[UH System Memorandum 01.A.01](#)
[SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy](#)
[UHD Required Compliance Change Form](#)

8. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this PS.