



Policy Development Guidelines

Approved by Senior Team 2-16-2018

Guilford College strives to create an environment that fosters innovation, excellence, equity, and collaboration, seeking always to do so responsibly, ethically, and with integrity. College Policies are an important way to communicate the College's values and expectations to members of the Guilford College community, and to provide guidance as to their observance. To this end, the development, review, publication, and administration of College Policies should be consistent with these Guidelines. The development of departmental or unit-level policies is not required to follow these Guidelines, but such policies may not conflict with College Policies.

Purpose

The purpose of these Guidelines is to outline a process for the effective and consistent development, review, approval, publication, and administration of College Policies, and to provide guidance on the elements of an effective policy. Accessible and well-developed policies will also promote efficiency, equity and accountability while minimizing institutional risks. These Guidelines are designed to promote best practices in policy development, review, approval, and administration while allowing for robust debate and discussion of draft policies.

Applicability

These Guidelines apply to creating, reviewing, adopting, and amending policies that are intended to apply college-wide or that will impact a substantial portion of the College community.

Definitions

Responsible Office: The "Responsible Office" is the College department or unit responsible for proposing a new policy, reviewing an existing policy and/or answering inquiries about a specified policy. The "Responsible Office" may also be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and ensuring compliance with a policy.

Policy Owner: The Policy Owner is the larger division under which the Responsible Office reports. In some cases the Policy Owner and Responsible Office are the same.

Policy: A formalized, brief, and high-level statement or plan that outlines an organization's general position, belief, goal, objective, and/or intention regarding a specific subject area. Policy attributes include the following:

- They are approved through the formal policy development and approval process established by the college; they are maintained, reviewed and updated by the Responsible Office on an established schedule.

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- They require or prohibit actions in order to achieve compliance; they may be based on federal, state or local laws, or other regulations applicable to the college.
- Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.
- They focus on desired results, not on means of implementation.
- They serve as a guide for developing appropriate procedures for implementing the college's position.
- The official college-sanctioned version of any college-wide policy is posted on the online Policy Library; all other offices link to this official site rather than posting separate versions in other electronic locations.
- Official college policies are communicated using a standardized format that includes specific required elements.
- Any statement in college documents labeled as "policy" do not hold standing as policy unless/until it complies with these provisions.

College-wide Policy: A college-wide policy is a formally-approved guiding or governing principle regarding the conduct of college affairs that [1] states the college's position on a particular issue, and [2] provides guidance for compliance. A college-wide policy is defined by all of the following criteria:

- It has broad application throughout the college
- It helps achieve compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promotes operational efficiencies, enhances the college's mission, or reduces institutional risks
- It mandates action and/or behavior or constraints on actions and/or behavior
- The subject matter requires review and approval of the College President and/or Senior Team for policy issues and major changes
- It is posted on the college's online Policy Library

In the event of a conflict between a college-wide policy and a departmental "policy," the college-wide policy will prevail.

Procedures: Procedures describe a process used to implement a policy or guideline: Who does what, when they do it, and under what criteria. Procedures can be text-based or outlined in a process map that represents appropriate implementation of Policy.

- Procedures define the "how" and serve as the mechanisms to enforce policy.
- They comprise a series of steps taken to accomplish an end goal; also known as a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- Procedures help eliminate the vulnerability of a single point of failure. They provide a quick reference in times staffing transitions, cross training, or error/problem investigations.

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Policy Committee: This is the group charged by the President with creating, reviewing, vetting, revising and updating Guilford College Policies. It is a standing College-wide committee that makes recommendations to members of the senior team and the President.

Proposing and Developing Policies

1. When a new College policy or revision to an existing policy is needed, the appropriate Responsible Office drafts the policy or revisions using the standard policy template (see [LINK](#)) in consultation with the Senior Team member in that area. The Senior Team member will consult with the rest of the Senior Team before giving permission for the proposal to advance to the next step. The Responsible Office may choose to consult with the members of the Policy Committee during the drafting period, but they are not required to. Once the policy is drafted and approved by the appropriate Senior Team member, the Responsible Office submits the policy draft to the Policy Committee for consideration. The Senior Team and/or the Policy Committee itself may also propose new policies for consideration.
2. The Policy draft proposal must be accompanied by a written statement prepared by the Responsible Office setting forth the rationale for the new policy or changes to an existing policy along with any associated costs/resource requirements. The Policy Committee will confirm whether the proposed policy is a College Policy and will determine the level of review required. Any substantive changes recommended during the review process are returned to the Responsible Office for consideration. The revised draft College Policy and the accompanying statement of rationale are discussed by the Policy Committee.
3. Draft College Policies that propose substantive changes to current practice or new guidance will be disseminated to the campus for their review and feedback. The level and extent of campus review will be determined by the Policy Committee, based on the extent and/or applicability of the proposed change.
4. Once campus reviews are completed, College Policies will be submitted to legal counsel for review. If substantive changes are recommended, these will be reviewed by the Policy Committee and possibly re-submitted for campus review, depending on the extent of changes required by legal counsel.
5. Draft policies that have completed committee, campus and legal review will be submitted to the Senior Team and the President for approval, and if appropriate, to the Board of Trustees.
6. Following approval, the Policy Project Coordinator will assure that the new or newly revised policy is posted on the College's policy web site and that appropriate notice is provided to the campus of the new and/or revised policy.

Policy Format

To ensure consistency, Guilford has adopted a standard policy template. This facilitates the adoption of policies throughout the College that are clear and concise. The format will identify the Responsible

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Office, next review date, approving authority, the office responsible for ensuring policy compliance, etc. All policies should conform to the Guilford College Policy Template and all sections must be included. If a section does not contain any information or is not applicable, "N/A" should be entered under the section heading.

Policy Dissemination

College Policies are posted on the Policy Library on the Guilford College website by the Policy Project Coordinator. Any electronic republication of, or reference to, a College Policy must be by hyperlink to the official Guilford College Policy Library. An email to campus will notify the campus community of new and currently reviewed College Policies.

Updates, Review Dates and Amendments

Each College Policy should indicate the effective date and the next review date. These dates are an important management tool, as they are used to notify the Responsible Office when it is time to review the policy. Policies remain in effect even if the review date has passed.

The Responsible Office should conduct an initial assessment of any new policy or major policy revision one year after its effective date, and thereafter should review the policy a minimum of once every three years. The Responsible Office is also responsible for updating the policy between scheduled review periods to respond to any changes in applicable law or business practice.

Revisions/amendments to existing policies generally are subject to the procedures outlined above for adopting new policies. Routine revisions that do not change the substance of a policy (such as changing hyperlinks, cross references, position titles, or contact information in a policy) can be implemented by the Responsible Office, in consultation with the Policy Committee, without formal review.