

Policy on Policies

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Goucher College community has ready access to well-developed and understandable college policies. Providing the community with policies that are easy to find, read, and understand will:

- Support the college’s mission;
- Achieve accountability by identifying the offices responsible for policies; and
- Provide faculty, staff, and students with clear, concise guidelines for conducting college activities.

Goucher College requires that all college policies be developed according to the standards and procedures described in this policy.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Policies are guiding or governing principles formally approved by authorized college officials to provide assistance in the conduct of college affairs. This definition encompasses only college-wide policies and does not include departmental policies and procedures. Policies help to promote compliance with applicable laws and regulations and reduce institutional risk.

Only those policies approved under this policy will have the force of college policy and will be published on the college policy website. In the event of a conflict between a college-wide policy and a departmental policy, the college-wide policy will supersede the departmental policy, unless the departmental policy is more restrictive and was approved by the department’s vice president.

- B. The Policy Committee (the “Committee”) provides oversight for the process of policy development and dissemination and works to ensure that the guidelines in this policy are communicated to and followed by members of the college community. The President has delegated responsibility for management of the Committee and internal policy process to the Contract and Risk Manager and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies, who are co-chairs of the Policy Committee. Other representatives of the Committee are appointed by the President, upon consultation with the President’s Cabinet.

The Policy Committee’s mission is to review college policies for content and form, and to ensure that:

- There is a clear process for proposing, approving, updating, and disseminating policies;
- There is consistency in the format and presentation of policies;
- Conflicts between policies are eliminated;

- All policies required by law or other external regulation are in place, well-communicated, and current;
- Policies are properly electronically archived;
- All policies are consistent with the mission of Goucher College; and
- A mechanism exists for coordinating web and print dissemination of policies.

C. Procedures are statements that provide for orderly implementation of established policies through specific, prescribed actions and are more detailed than a policy. Procedures:

- Should identify and link to the applicable college policy;
- Should be written in a format that is easy to follow, using numbers or bullets to delineate steps to be followed;
- Should be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure agreement with the most recent revision to the policy; and
- Generally, do not require formal approval by senior College officials.

D. Responsible Official is the college official charged with overseeing administration of the policy.

E. Policy Administrator is the chair of the Policy Committee.

III. POLICY APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Recommendation for new or revised policy

Any member of the college community may make a recommendation to develop or update a policy. These recommendations should be submitted for approval to policies@goucher.edu.

2. Appointment of Responsible Official for the Policy.

Once the Policy Committee approves a policy proposal, they will appoint a Responsible Official for the policy who, in consultation with appropriate individuals, will develop a draft policy.

3. Development and review of draft policy

The Responsible Official is encouraged to consult with the Policy Committee at any step of the policy development process. The Responsible Official will forward a draft policy to the Policy Committee for review of the policy's consistency in format and presentation, potential conflicts with other policies, and compliance with laws and external regulations.

4. Approval by President's Cabinet

Once the policy has been reviewed by the Policy Committee, the Policy Administrator will seek approval for the policy from the President's Cabinet. Where required in the Bylaws of the College or otherwise determined either by established policy, legitimate past practice, or a decision of the President, some policies may also require the approval of the Board of Trustees.

5. Dissemination of Policy

After approval by the President's Cabinet and/or the Board, the Policy Administrator will post the policy to the college policy website. The Responsible Official for each policy is responsible for disseminating new policies.

Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, some policies are approved by the Board of Trustees directly (e.g. the Investment Policy) and do not go through the policy process. In such instances, the Policy Administrator and Responsible Official remain responsible for coordinating dissemination of the policy as set forth above.

Other policies that adhere to federal and/or state regulations will be exempt from being reviewed by the Policy Committee as familiarity with regulations is beyond the scope of the members of the committee. They will be sent to the chairs of the Policy Committee before the responsible office seeks approval from Cabinet members.

Finally, the Policy Administrator will not seek Cabinet approval for revisions that are limited to edits or updates that reflect administrative restructuring.

IV. REVIEW OF POLICIES

Each Responsible Official must ensure that policies are reviewed no less than every three years, and sooner if there is a change in the law or other circumstances that necessitates review or potential revision. The Policy Committee will provide oversight to ensure that such regular review occurs.

V. ROLE OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL

The Responsible Official will be responsible for enforcing, regularly updating and disseminating the policy. Each of the respective Vice Presidents shall assign a Responsible Official for all existing policies within their area of operations and to any newly generated policies. If no Responsible Official has been assigned, the Vice President for that area of operations will be considered the Responsible Official.

VI. POLICY TEMPLATE

A standard template will be used for all college wide policies. Policies should include as many relevant sections as necessary:

- Policy name (*required)
- Scope - who the policy applies to
- Policy statement
- Purpose [e.g., the policy addresses a compliance or regulatory requirement]
- Definitions
- Procedures [necessary to administer policy]

- Responsibilities
- Resources/FAQ
- Responsible Official or Responsible Office or Contacts (*required) [note that this should include the responsible department/office email, rather than an employee' name and email]
- History [dates of adoption and revisions] (*required)

VII. INTERIM POLICIES

The President, Provost, or a Vice President may put an interim policy into place in situations where a college policy must be established in a time period that is too short to permit the completion of the process delineated in this policy. An interim policy will expire six months from the date of issuance unless an earlier expiration date is established by the issuer (President, Provost, or Vice President) or the policy is approved as final in accordance with the processes set forth in sections III or IV above.

VIII. POSTING OF POLICIES

All college-wide policies will be posted on the official College [Policies website](#) with links to applicable Procedures. The Responsible Official, working with the Office of Communications, will coordinate this process and ensure that the policy is formatted in a consistent manner. All departments that include a college policy on their web page must link their web pages to the official college policy website instead of posting their own versions of the approved policy. Disseminating printed versions of policies is disfavored because policies are often updated, leading to potential inconsistency between print versions and the most current approved version published on the college policy website. In the event a policy must be printed, it must include a disclaimer that the official college policy website should be consulted for the latest version.

The Goucher Office of Communications will maintain the college policy website in a standard electronic format. This does not preclude departments from maintaining internal departmental policies and procedures on their websites, provided the internal departmental policies and procedures are not identified as official college policies and procedures, and do not conflict with official college policies. Examples of internal departmental policies and procedures include the following:

- Residential Life policies, including safety regulations for the residence halls, guest visitation rules and key replacement policies.
- Standard operating procedures promulgated by the department of public safety to govern the work of public safety officers.
- Study abroad application procedures.
- Procedures to request a transcript from the registrar's office.
- Bicycle registration rules.
- Student mail pickup procedures.
- Procedures in a safety manual for student events.

The College [Policies website](#) will list all policies by name and category and will provide links to related procedures. Policies will be assigned to one or more of the following categories:

- Academics - Policies that relate to teaching, research, and other academic affairs of the College.
- Administrative - Policies relating to accounting, budget, procurement, facilities, information technology and public safety of the college.
- Governance - Policies that provide the framework for administration and governance of the College.
- Employees - Policies, rules, and related procedures and information impacting employment with the College.
- Students - Policies applicable to status and experience as a student.

IX. ARCHIVING OF POLICIES

Special Collections and Archives, on behalf of the Committee, will keep an electronic archive of college policies.

X. CONTACT

For more information or if you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Policy Committee at policies@goucher.edu.

XI. HISTORY

Adopted: September 2019

Updated: January 12, 2021; Updated: October 11, 2022; January 2024.