:WSU
Walter Sisulu University

Policy on Policy Development

Sponsor division	Registrar
Responsible Department	Governance and Records Management

Related WSU policies	
Policy name	**Policy Name**

Change History	
Approval authority	Council
Approval Date	26 March 2010
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Effective date	Immediately

Chairperson of Council

Contents

1. PREAMBLE

Policies guide and regulate operations and working relations as well as the expected behaviors, practices and standards within the University. It is, therefore, essential that Walter Sisulu University should have a clear framework and guidelines for policy development and review. As policy reflects the values of the University it is important that a new and an existing policy be developed or revised using an effective and consistent approach.

This framework defines the responsibilities, processes and protocols to be followed in the formulation, development and review of the institution's policies. Following a similar process and protocol will ensure not only consistency but also compliance with the vision, mission and values of WSU.

The framework also defines the sponsors or originators of policy which is important because the development and periodic review of policies should originate in the responsible line function, faculty, or "owner" departments, or division as they are the most knowledgeable about their related requirements, needs and processes.

The framework will make the policy sponsors or originators as well as all staff within the University aware that an appropriate amount of planning and effort should go into the development and review of a policy before it is presented for approval. The final drive is not only to provide guidelines for the policy development processes but also to embed a culture of planning within the institution.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The objective of this document is to provide guidelines and recommendations for the formulation, development and review of the institutional policies of WSU. It seeks to define the responsibility, processes and protocol of policy development and review

3. SCOPE

This policy development framework applies to all structures and units as well all the members of the University community. All structures and units that develop or review policies must comply with the stipulations of the guidelines presented in this framework.

4. DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed below apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use

"Policy" - A statement outlining an expectation of behavior pertaining to certain activities or matters set out in relevant legislation (e.g. Higher Education Act of 1997, Education White Paper 3, National Plan for Higher Education) and approved at the University's senior levels of governance: Council and Council Committees, Senate and Senate Committees, Faculty Boards and other statutory bodies that have the delegated authority to approve certain policies; and the Vice Chancellor and Principal, and the **Institutional** Management Committee (IMC).

"Procedures"- Procedures are written documents providing specific "how to" information and will normally be developed by the office responsible for the administration of a policy. In cases where procedures establish rights, requirements and responsibilities, they will normally be developed through a process similar to the institutional policy approval process. Procedures are approved by the IMC/Senate.

"Policy Development Originator"- A policy development originator is a member of the University's senior management or governance unit who assumes responsibility for the development or revision of a specific policy. The policy development originator is responsible for following the institution's policy development or review strategy and process, ensuring stakeholder participation, mitigation of issues as required, the appropriate and effective utilization of any allocated resources, financial or otherwise, and the timely completion of activity.

"Policy Development Facilitator"- Acting as the originator's agent, the facilitator plays a planning, co-ordination and facilitation role. While stakeholders have ownership for the policy deliverable, the facilitator supports the originator and the stakeholders in achieving that outcome. A key activity is working with the stakeholders and originator to create a policy development plan, then monitoring and facilitating the execution of that plan.

5. POLICY CONTENT AND GUIDELINES

5.1 Policy Initiation

The senior management and academic leaders, namely the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Registrar, Chief Operations officer, Chief Financial officer, Campus Rectors, Deans, Executive Directors, and Heads of Departments, will initiate the development of a new policy and revisions to an existing policy. This is not to preclude such initiatives by others. They will participate in the process through the structures and offices named above.

5.2 Policy Development Guidelines

Developing new or revising existing policy should be a planned activity that follows the following important guiding principles:

5.2.1 Any policy should be structured, drafted and presented in a way that makes the policy easy to read and interpret.

5.2.2 The content of a policy should be concise and to the point and should have a logical and coherent structure. The structure of a policy can be tested by asking whether it is simple to locate topics or subjects in the text and move from one topic to another. Organisation within a policy can be achieved by putting related material together, by putting the most important ideas first and the less important ideas, for example, unusual cases and procedural detail, later.

5.2.3 As much a possible simple language must be used to make it for the reader to understand the contents of the policy. A policy that is easy to understand is less likely to result in dispute and also assists those involved in administering the policy. However, the policy should not be simplified to the point that it becomes legally uncertain. Thus the objective should be to produce a policy that is both easily read and understood and legally and practically effective in achieving the desired policy objectives. There are many ways in which a policy can simply, accurately and unambiguously expose its intent, namely by means of purpose clauses, clauses stating key or basic concepts and definitions, explanatory provisions and examples.

5.2.4 Not only should the language of the policy be simple, it should also be concise, clear be coherent, and unambiguous. The policy writers should, as far as possible, use the active instead of the passive voice.

5.2.5 In drafting the policy it must be made clear whether any matter or action prescribed in the policy is mandatory or discretionary by using the words *"must"* or *"may"*.

5.2.6 Gender-neutral language should be used, for example: *"chairperson"* rather than *"chairman"*.

5.2.7 In a policy a neat layout should be used to promote effective communication. Presentation techniques include the use of headings, tables of provisions, page headers, white space and typefaces that help readability.

5.2.8 The format of policies of the WSU should be the same and drafted in the same style, font and font size.

5.2.9 Headings and sub-headings in a policy should be numbered numerically.

5.2.10 A newly developed or revised policy should:

5.2.10.1 not overlap with or contradict other policies ;
5.2.10.2 be sufficiently researched and legislation compliant;
5.2.10.3 integrate and consider the needs of its users and stakeholders; and

5.2.10.4 as applicable, follow a specified approval protocol (i.e. from Faculty Boards, Campus Senate, to Senate Executive Committee (Senex), to Senate and then to Council for academic matters. And follow the route **Institutional Management Committee (IMC), Institutional Forum (IF)** and to Council for non-academic matters.
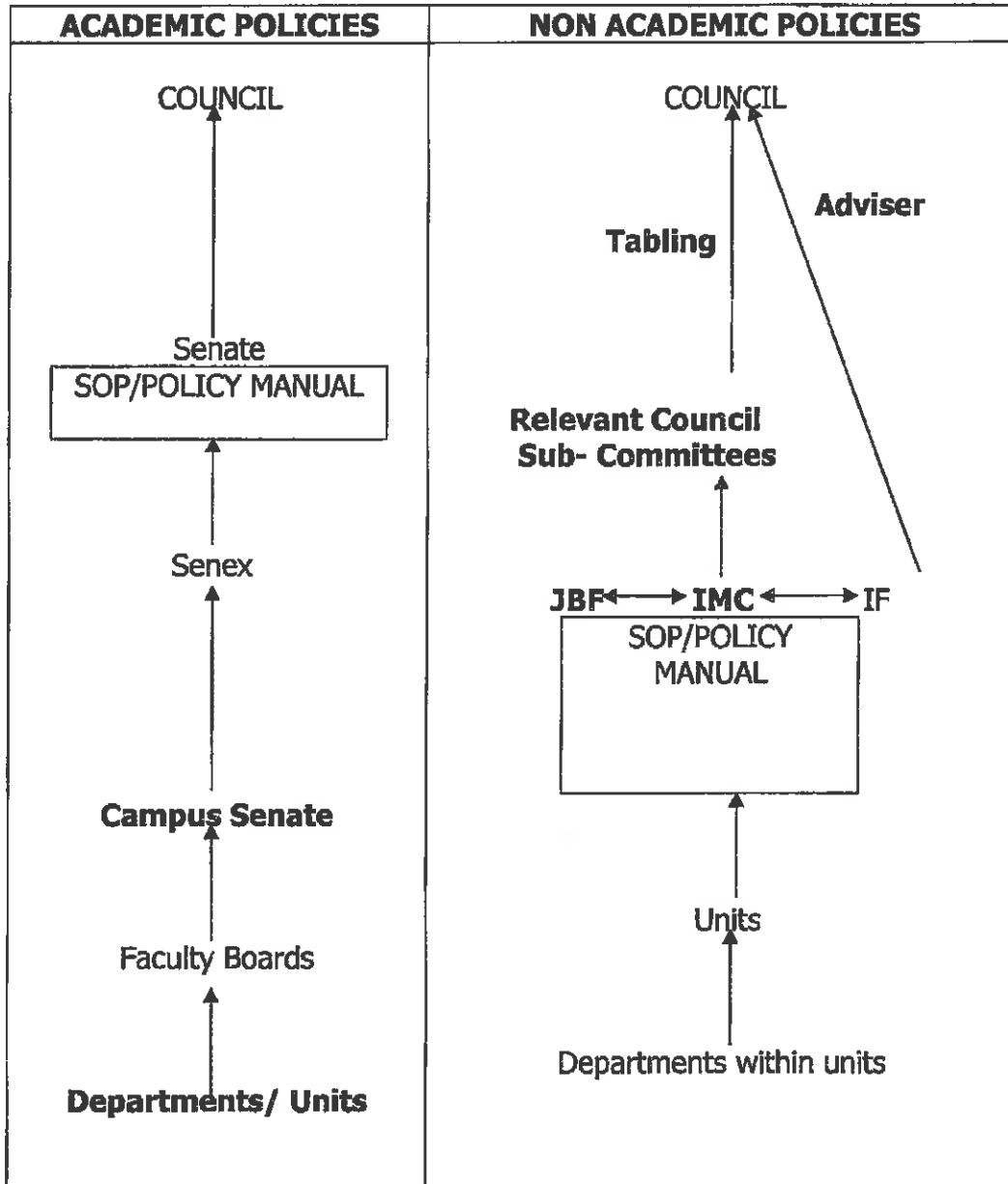
5.3 WSU POLICY DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATION PROTOCOL

5.3.1 Academic Policies

a) Consultation must begin at the initiation phase of the policy. There must be sufficient consultation within the unit or department where the policy or revision is pioneered.
b) The policy draft must serve at Campus Senate for further input.
c) The policy draft must serve at Senate Executive Committee with a Standard Operating Procedure/ Policy Manual for recommendation to Senate for approval.
d) The policy must serve at Council with a Standard Operating Procedure/ Policy Manual for ratification.
e) A well written management report that clearly shows the consultation process must always accompany the policy draft in every step of the way.

5.3.2 Non-Academic Policies

a) Consultation must begin at the initiation phase of the policy. There must be sufficient consultation within the unit or department where the policy or revision is pioneered.
b) The draft policy must then be tabled at the Institutional Management Committee (IMC) through the relevant institutional manager with the Standard Operating Procedure/ Policy Manual for further input.
c) The IMC will decide whether the draft policy should first serve at the Joint Bargaining Forum (JBF) and/ or Institutional Forum (IF) for further comments.
d) The policy draft will then serve at IMC again for the final feedback before IMC recommends that it be tabled at the relevant sub-committee of Council through the relevant institutional manager.
e) The relevant sub-committee of council will recommend the policy to Council for approval.
f) A well written management report that clearly shows the consultation process must always accompany the policy draft in every step of the way.

5.4 ILLUSTRATION OF THE POLICY CONSULTAION PROCESS

ACADEMIC POLICIES	NON ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMIC POLICIES

COUNCIL

↑

Senate

SOP/POLICY MANUAL

↑

Senex

↑

Campus Senate

↑

Faculty Boards

↑

Departments/ Units

NON ACADEMIC POLICIES

COUNCIL

Tabling   **Adviser**

Relevant Council Sub- Committees

↑

JBF ←→ IMC ←→ IF

SOP/POLICY MANUAL

↑

Units

↑

Departments within units

6. DESIGNATED STRUCTURE TO APPROVE POLICY AND AMEMNDMENTS

The University's Council, as the supreme governing body approves policies in terms of the powers entrusted to it by the higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997 and the Institutional Statute.

7. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

The Office of the Vice Chancellor and Principal bears accountability for the development and review of policies within the University.

8. CUSTODIANSHIP OF POLICIES

The Office of the Registrar is the custodian of the University's policies. It is responsible for ensuring that the proper procedures and protocols are followed in developing and reviewing policies.

9. EFFECTIVE DATE

Each policy should state the date by which it will be effective.

10. PROCEDURE

The requirement is that each policy should be accompanied by a procedure manual [Standard Operating Procedure] that will be approved by senate [Academic Policies] and/or IMC [Non Academic policies]

11. REFERENCES

References (if any) can be included at the end of the policy.