



Policy Number: 100.1

Policy Title: Formulation and Issuance of College Policies and Procedures

Subject: Section 100 – Governance and Organization

Date Adopted: May 22, 2006

Date(s) Revised: September 17, 2012; July 24, 2017; Oct. 23, 2020; Dec. 29, 2020

Date(s) Reviewed: November 8, 2018; September 2020

Approved by: 
Sandra Bauman
Dean/CEO
Helena College University of Montana

POLICY STATEMENT:

Helena College University of Montana employs a uniform, consistent approach and format to identify, develop, review/revise, approve, disseminate, and centrally maintain all official college policies. To be considered “official,” a college policy must proceed through the process and procedures that accompany this policy.

All Helena College policies shall adhere to and be consistent with relevant federal and state laws, rules, and regulations and with Board of Regents’ policies and procedures. (This paragraph updated 12/29/2020)

DEFINITIONS:

Policies

Policies establish a framework for what will or will not be done at the college, and reflect the rules governing the implementation of campus processes. Only the policies as listed on the Helena College Policies will be applicable/enforced. Campus departments may have policies specific to their areas, but because of their department-specific focus, these are not considered Helena College Policies. Departmental policies shall not contravene Helena College Policies.

Procedures

Procedures reflect current operational processes for completing tasks. Procedures contain details that include specific steps, process examples, forms to use, and contact information for assistance. Procedures and processes govern daily practice and are more subject to change.

PROCEDURES:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA:

For Helena College's purposes, a policy must adhere to the following criteria:

- It is a governing principle that mandates or constrains actions.
- It has campus-wide application.
- It helps ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, enhances the college's mission, promotes operational efficiencies, and/or reduces institutional risk.
- It changes infrequently and sets a course for the foreseeable future.
- It is broad enough to permit discretionary action in resolution of day-to-day situations yet specific enough to provide clear guidance.

STANDARD POLICY FORMAT:

To ensure consistency, a standard policy format (see pages 5 & 6) shall be used for all official Helena College policies. The use of this standard policy format will ensure the adoption of clear, concise policies and procedures. The first page of each policy will carry the college's logo and the Dean/CEO's signature to indicate its "official" status.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL SEQUENCE:

Step 1: Requests Submitted to Dean's Cabinet for Proposed New or Amended Policies

Requests for a proposed new or amended policy shall be submitted in writing to the Dean's Cabinet with an explanation of (a) why the need exists for the creation of a new policy; and/or (b) why the existing policy is inadequate and needs to be revised, amended, or repealed. If desired, an individual or group requesting a new policy may attach a draft of the proposed new policy and/or any written documentation supporting its creation. Similarly, an individual or group requesting a revision or amendment to an existing policy may attach a draft of the existing policy that incorporates the suggested changes and may also include any written documentation supporting those changes. Reasons for suggesting a proposed new or amended policy may include, but are not limited to, identification of issues by employees, results of a legal review, or compliance with new or amended legislation.

Step 2: Research and Analysis by Dean's Cabinet

Once an issue has been identified for a proposed new or amended policy, and the Dean's Cabinet believes the issue has merit, the Dean's Cabinet shall research the issue to determine the feasibility of proceeding to the policy creation or policy amendment stage. The research should include a review of similar policies at other Montana University System campuses, along with a review of State of Montana, Board of Regents, and The University of Montana policies, rules, and regulations. Based upon the results of the research, the Dean's Cabinet shall develop an analysis and initial recommendation for the proposed new or amended policy that does not contravene any current Helena College Policies.

Step 3: Preparation of First Draft of Proposed New or Amended Policy

Following the results of research and analysis, the Office of the Dean/CEO will place the proposed new or amended policy and applicable procedures into the standard policy format used for all official Helena College policies (see pages 5 & 6).

Step 4: First Draft of Proposed New or Amended Policy Submitted to Dean’s Cabinet and Joint Directors

The first draft of the proposed new or amended policy shall be submitted simultaneously to the Dean’s Cabinet and the Joint Directors for review. Revisions suggested by these two groups will be incorporated into the second draft of the proposed new or amended policy by the Office of the Dean/CEO.

Step 5: Preparation and Posting of Second Draft of Proposed New or Amended Policy

The second draft of the proposed new or amended policy shall be posted on Helena College’s web site for 15 working days to provide advance notice and seek campus-wide input. An email will be sent to all Helena College employees to direct them to this version of the new or amended policy. Campus-wide revisions will be incorporated into the second draft by the Office of the Dean/CEO and routed back through the Dean’s Cabinet and the Joint Directors prior to preparation of the final proposed new or amended policy.

Step 6: Final Posting of New or Amended Policy

An email shall be sent to all Helena College employees to direct them to the proposed final version of the new or amended policy, which will be posted on the college’s web site for five working days for final review. Any revisions suggested at this point shall be made at the discretion of the Dean/CEO with input, if needed, from the Dean’s Cabinet and/or the Joint Directors.

Step 7: Final Approval of New or Amended Policy

The final version of the new or amended policy shall be printed with Helena College’s logo and signed by the Dean/CEO. The Office of the Dean/CEO will make a campus-wide announcement via email of the electronic availability of the policy and accompanying procedures. All policies that reach this stage will be considered “official” and maintained in a central repository as part of the Helena College Policies & Procedures Manual. To provide consistency and to avoid outdated or multiple versions of policies on other web pages, official campus policies shall be posted on Helena College’s web site in one location only by the Office of the Dean/CEO. Links to this centralized location may be used as needed on other pages within the web site.

Step 8: Periodic Policy Evaluation

All campus policies shall be reviewed on a three-year rotation to assess the need for amendment or repeal.

Step 9: Minor or Routine Changes

Minor or routine changes to policy or changes mandated by state or federal law or the Board of Regents may be made by the policy administrator with guidance from the policy author or Dean’s Cabinet. Minor or routine changes include items such as updating a title, reference, law, or organizational name listed in a policy, changes required by law or regulation, or correction of typographical errors.

Step 10: Procedure Changes

Procedural changes shall be sent by the policy administrator for approval to the Dean’s Cabinet. No further steps are necessary as this qualifies as a minor or routine change to ensure the quintessence of the policy as well as enable the efficiency and effectiveness of operational processes.

POLICIES VERSUS PROCEDURES:

For those who merely need to know Helena College’s policy on a given subject, the “Policy Statement” included on the first page of each policy should suffice. However, the official versions of the college’s policies shall also include, as applicable, a set of accompanying operating procedures that support the policy and provide guidelines for its implementation.

INTERIM POLICIES:

The Dean/CEO is empowered to issue interim policies in situations where a college policy must be established within a time frame too brief to permit completion of the process delineated in this policy. Each interim policy shall have “Interim” in the title and include a “Policy Statement” only. The interim policy will automatically be rescinded within 6 months of its adoption unless action is taken to extend its interim status or begin the process to move it through the new policy development procedures outlined in this policy.

REGULATORY POLICIES:

The Dean/CEO is empowered to issue regulatory policies in situations where a college policy must be established to specifically include requirements by the U.S. Department of Education, the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education, or other federal or state entity that governs the institution. The specificity of such regulatory requirements precludes college input as certain items must be constituted for the college to remain in compliance with federal or state mandates or laws.

RESCINDING AN EXISTING POLICY:

Rescission of a Helena College Policy occurs when an active policy becomes obsolete or has been combined with another policy. Such policies shall be brought to the Dean’s Cabinet and the Joint Directors for discussion and recommendations. If rescission is recommended, an email shall be sent to all Helena College employees to inform them of the possible rescission of the policy following a comment period of five working days. At the conclusion of the comment period, determination of rescission shall be made at the discretion of the Dean/CEO with input, if needed, from the Dean’s Cabinet and/or the Joint Directors, and an email shall be sent to all Helena College employees to notify them of the determination.

STANDARD POLICY FORMAT



Policy Number:

Policy Title:

Subject: (choose one)

Section 100 – Governance and Organization

Section 200 – Academic Affairs

Section 300 – Student Affairs

Section 400 – Personnel

Section 500 – Financial Affairs

Section 600 – Physical Plant

Section 700 – Information Technology

Section 800 – Miscellaneous

Date Adopted:

Date(s) Revised:

Approved by:

Sandra J. Bauman
Dean/CEO
Helena College University of Montana

POLICY STATEMENT:

PROCEDURES: