



Title: Policy on Policies
Last Update: August 1, 2025
Issuing Authority: General Counsel
Policy Contact: Associate General Counsel, 478-301-2071

Purpose

This policy governs the development, revision, approval, publication, and management of Mercer University policies.

Scope

This policy applies to faculty, staff, students, and any members of the Mercer University community who develop, revise, review, approve, publish, or manage University policies or who otherwise engage in the University policy process.

Exclusions

None

Policy Statement

A University policy is defined as a guiding or governing principle that is designed to enhance the University's mission, promote operational efficiencies, ensure coordinated compliance with applicable laws and regulations, or reduce institutional risk. This definition encompasses only University-wide policies, which should be distinguished from college, school, or departmental policies that serve similar purposes but are unit-specific.

Responsibility for Development and Approval of University Policy

University policies are developed and approved at various levels within the organizational structure of the institution.

The Board of Trustees is the active policy-making body for the University and has the responsibility for matters of long-term strategic importance to the institution's future (*Article II, Section 3, Bylaws of The Corporation of Mercer University*). Where required in the Bylaws of the University or otherwise determined either by established policy, legitimate past practice, applicable accreditation standards, or decision of the President, certain University policies will be formally approved by the Board of Trustees.

The President of the University has responsibility for the administration and implementation of all policies prescribed by the Board of Trustees (*Article XV, Section 2, Bylaws of The Corporation of Mercer University*). In fulfillment of this responsibility, the President has the authority to

initiate and approve certain University policies that govern the day-to-day management of the institution. The President has also delegated to certain senior officers of the University the authority to initiate University policies in specific areas of responsibility.

The Provost is the chief academic officer of the University, responsible for coordinating the administration of the colleges and schools and all academic support services. In fulfillment of this responsibility, the Provost has the authority to initiate University policies that directly affect the pedagogical and research missions of the University.

The Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance is the chief financial officer and chief administrative officer of the University, responsible for coordinating the financial affairs and administrative operations of the institution. In fulfillment of this responsibility, the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance has the authority to initiate University policies governing the non-academic administrative operations of the University.

The President, in his or her discretion, may refer proposals for new University policies or revisions to existing University policies to the President's Executive Cabinet for consideration and recommendation prior to final approval by the President.

The faculty of the University also has significant responsibility in the development of University policies relating to the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum. Section 1.02.1 of the *University Faculty Handbook* provides that "the authority and responsibility of the faculty of Mercer University are delegated to it by the President under the authority of the Board of Trustees." Specifically, the *Handbook* states that the faculty has the responsibility "to determine academic policies which effectively carry out the mission of the University within the policies of the Board of Trustees, ... to review the effectiveness of programs of instructional support and to make recommendations to the President for the improvement of these programs, ... and to make recommendations to the President concerning revision of the scope of educational programs and of the educational policies of the Board of Trustees." All academic policies determined, adopted, or proposed by the faculty of the University are subject to the final approval of the Provost, the President, and in some cases, the Board of Trustees.

Responsibility for Development and Approval of Unit-specific Policy

Colleges, schools, and other academic or administrative departments within the University may develop additional policies that relate exclusively to the affairs of their respective organizational units. Unit-specific policies do not substitute for University policies but may include additional regulations or provisions. Any academic or administrative unit-specific policy that relates to a subject matter covered by an existing University Policy must be consistent with and include, at a minimum, the provisions of the pertinent University Policy.

Prior to the implementation of any College, School, or other academic department policy that relates to a subject matter covered by an existing University Policy, the Dean of the College or School has the responsibility to refer the unit-specific policy to the Office of General Counsel for legal review and to the Provost and President for approval.

Prior to the implementation of any non-academic administrative department policy that relates to a subject matter covered by an existing University Policy, the cognizant Vice President has the responsibility to refer the unit-specific policy to the Office of General Counsel for legal review and to the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and President for approval.

In the event of a conflict between a University Policy and a policy pertaining to a specific academic or administrative unit, the University policy will supersede the unit-specific policy.

Policy Standards

To ensure consistency, policies:

- Must be written in accordance with the University's Policy Template and instructions.
- Are effective upon approval.
- Are effective until rescinded by the Issuing Authority (i.e., policies do not end or expire).
- Must be posted exclusively on the University Policy Library website; other websites must provide links to the University Policy Library website. Attachments will be posted on the responsible office's website and linked to the University Policy Library website.
- Must be updated as needed to keep content current and compliant with laws, regulations, and other University policies.
- At a minimum must be reviewed every five (5) years, unless a shorter review cycle is directed by the Issuing Authority.

Additional Resources

1. University Faculty Handbook: <https://provost.mercer.edu/resources/handbooks/faculty-handbooks/>
2. University Policy Library: <https://policies.mercer.edu/>
3. University Policy Template: <https://policies.mercer.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/85/2025/08/MU-POLICY-TEMPLATE.docx>