

Policy Development Steps for Divisional Policy Contacts (DPC)

Subject matter experts with the approval of their Responsible Official (typically the executive sponsor for the policy) develop policies due to operational needs, best practices, risk avoidance or mitigation, or external requirements based on regulations, laws, or UC Policy. Policies are typically owned and written by the subject matter expert, as they understand the function and are well-suited to determine the necessary rules and explain them to the audience. The Divisional Policy Contact (DPC) and the Policy Office provide guidance and coordination through the development process.

Preparation & Research for New Policy

When a Policy Owner/Writer notifies you of their plan to develop a policy:

1. Encourage the Policy Owner/Writer to review the [Guide to Writing Policy](#).
2. Review the [Policy Initiation Form](#) and discuss its questions with the Policy Owner/Writer to establish a mutual understanding of the policy's scope, intent, and development plan.
3. Inform the Responsible Official of the plan to develop the policy and request their approval for the Policy Owner/Writer to proceed with policy development.
4. Submit the [Policy Initiation Form](#) after you have approval from the Responsible Official.

Revisions to Existing Policy

When a Policy Owner/Writer notifies you of their plan to revise a policy:

1. Review the [Guide to Writing Policy](#) section on Reviewing and Updating the Policy (pg. 17), and encourage the Policy Owner/Writer to do the same.
2. Inform the Responsible Official of the Policy Owner/Writer's intent to update the policy. Approval at this step is not required, but their approval will be required prior to issuance.
3. Inform the Policy Office of the intent to revise a policy. Submission of the initiation form is not necessary.

Drafting New Policy or Revising Existing Policy

1. Ensure Policy Owner/Writer is using the current Policy Template.
2. Advise Policy Owner/Writer about potential key stakeholders who may be appropriate to consult during early drafting of the policy. At this stage, they may simply be sharing a basic outline or description of the policy, or revisions, to ensure general support.

3. Once completed, the Policy Owner/Writer sends the draft to you for initial review. Check the draft for adherence to the template (information is in appropriate sections), formatting, readability, clarity, consistency, and other best practices. Recommend appropriate edits to improve the document. You are the first line in ensuring an efficient and easy-to-understand policy. Most other reviewers in the consultation process will be looking for impacts on their role or department.
4. After the Policy Owner/Writer updates the draft based on your feedback, ensure they send a clean draft to the Policy Office for initial review. Once these recommendations have been incorporated, the policy can move to the Review and Consultation stage.

Review and Consultation for New or Substantively Revised Policy

Once the policy has undergone initial review by the DPC and the Policy Office and has been updated appropriately, the Consultation process can begin. Work closely with the Policy Owner/Writer to ensure the tasks below are performed with diligence, attention to detail, and careful consideration. : Note: Technical Revisions to existing policy will not typically require a full Consultation period but may require Stakeholder Review.

Most tasks involved in the Consultation process are the responsibility of the Policy Owner/Writer but may be handled by the DPC in certain situations. Therefore, the steps are outlined below.

1. Stakeholder Review

In collaboration with the DPC and the Policy Office, the Policy Owner/Writer shall:

- a. Identify professionals who have related expertise and/or substantive interest in the policy or its implementation (e.g., impacted units). This typically includes individuals, offices, or committees listed in the Responsibilities section of the policy.
- b. Invite the stakeholder review. A sample message is available in the [Guide to Writing Policy \(pg. 14\)](#). Provide the stakeholders 2-4 weeks depending on the complexity of the policy and consideration of other factors, such as busy seasons for some offices.
- c. Ensure feedback is understood, considered, and appropriately incorporated into the policy. Refer to the “[Managing Feedback](#)” section below for more information.
- d. Provide a clean draft to the Policy Office for the next step of consultation.

2. Standard Reviewers

The Policy Office will coordinate consultation with the Standard Reviewers and provide feedback to you and the Policy Owner/Writer. Ensure feedback is understood, considered, and appropriately incorporated into the policy. See the “[Managing Feedback](#)” section below for more information.

3. Campus Comment Period and Academic Senate Review

The Policy Office will coordinate the campus comment period and Academic Senate review and provide feedback to you and the Policy Owner/Writer. Ensure feedback is understood, considered, and appropriately incorporated into the policy. See the “[Managing Feedback](#)” section below for more information.

4. Addressing Feedback

We are committed to making a good faith effort to enable constituents to provide feedback and, where appropriate, incorporate revisions to address relevant concerns. A few notes on managing feedback:

- Apply changes and clarifications consistently throughout the document.
- Comments may mention one iteration of an issue; scan the rest of the policy for similar issues.
- Comments may ask who performs a specific task; ensure roles are clear and that Active Voice is being used.
- Reviewers may request that a rule be changed or clarified; consider these requests carefully and, if possible, adjust the stated requirements appropriately without altering the fundamental intent of the policy.
- Requests for clarification should always be accommodated.
- Not all feedback will be relevant or actionable.

Work closely with the Policy Owner/Writer to ensure feedback is carefully considered and appropriately incorporated. Reach out to the Policy Office if you are interested in additional guidance on incorporating or addressing feedback. Most tasks involved in the Addressing Comments process are the responsibility of the Policy Owner/Writer, but in some situations, the DPC may be more involved in the dispositioning of comments. Therefore, the steps are outlined below.

- a. Following each consultation period, the Policy Owner/Writer considers all feedback received. They review each comment and determine if any revisions to the policy need to be made. One preferred method for dispositioning comments is to use a table with the following headings:
 - i. Theme (optional, helpful for larger sets of comments)
 - ii. Comments (or groups of similar comments)
 - iii. Initial Thoughts (how the policy could be updated or why it shouldn't be updated)
 - iv. Further Discussion (thoughts after talking each comment through with partners e.g., Stakeholders, DPC, Committees, Policy Office, SME, or their Supervisor)
 - v. Outcome (how the policy was updated based on each comment)
- b. When all comments have been carefully considered and documented, the Policy Owner/Writer makes any necessary revisions to the proposed policy and supplemental documents. Track Changes should be used and saved, and a clean version of the policy should be provided for the next step of development.
- c. Once Consultation is complete, summarize the types of feedback received and the types of revisions made. It may be helpful to briefly explain why the policy will not be revised due to certain feedback. This step will advise the Summary of Feedback provided to the Responsible Official during Finalization and Approval, as well as responses that may be provided to major campus stakeholders, such as the Academic Senate or Labor Relations.

Finalization and Approval for New or Substantively Revised Policy

1. The Policy Owner/Writer prepares the Draft Issuance Letter and a Summary of Feedback and shares them and the most recent version of the policy with the DPC for a final review. Ideally, by this stage, the language has already been refined, and you will review it for formatting and other best practices listed in the [Guide to Writing Policy](#) - Policy Checklist (pg. 12).
2. Once you are comfortable with the draft, send it to the Policy Office for final review.
3. Once the document has undergone both reviews and final updates, send the clean final draft with the draft Issuance Letter and Summary of Feedback to the Responsible Official and request approval to issue the policy.
4. Forward the approval and anticipated effective date to the Policy Office, who will update the dates and post the policy on the policies website in advance of issuance.

Issuance and Implementation of New or Substantively Revised Policy

1. On or before the effective date, ensure the Responsible Official sends the Issuance Letter to Cabinet and copies you, the Policy Owner/Writer, and the Policy Office (policy@ucmerced.edu).
2. Work with the Policy Owner/Writer to implement their communication and/or training plan. A few examples include:
 - a. Forwarding the issuance to interested parties, such as the stakeholders consulted earlier.
 - b. Working with Communications to announce the issuance in Monday Memo or another platform.
 - c. Offering workshops or training sessions to explain and answer questions about the policy.

Finalization and Approval for Technical Revisions to Policy

1. The Policy Owner/Writer provides the most recent version of the policy to the DPC for a final review. Ideally, at this stage, the language has already been refined, and you will be reviewing for formatting and other best practices listed in the [Guide to Writing Policy](#) Policy Checklist (pg. 12). Ideally, the Policy Owner/Writer also reviewed the policy against the checklist and the policy should not need extensive work, but if not, be sure to bring the draft to current standards.
2. Once you are comfortable with the draft, send it to the Policy Office for final review.
3. Once the policy has undergone both reviews and final updates, send the clean final draft to the Responsible Official and request approval to post the policy. Issuance is not required.
4. Forward the approval and preferred effective date to the Policy Office, who will update the dates and post the policy on the policies website.

Questions or comments may be sent to the Policy Office policy@ucmerced.edu.