**Development, Review, Approval, and Promulgation of University-Level Policies**

*Public Draft 10.02.12*

**I. Scope**

This policy relates to university-level policies and applies to all RIT faculty, staff, and students.

**II. Definitions**

Definitions for terms and terminology related to this policy not elsewhere defined include:

A. **Authoritative Version.** The authoritative version of a university-level governance policy is the version in the governance policy library on the policy website. The authoritative version of a university-level administrative policy is the version on the website of the primary responsible office.

B. **Policy Authors.** Policy authors are individuals or groups that are 1) authorized by position or by-laws/charters, 2) formally appointed and charged, or 3) self-designated to develop a policy proposal and present it for review and approval by the appropriate governance group or administrative officer.

C. **Responsible Office(s).** Responsible offices are the entities designated to implement and maintain some or all of the provisions of a policy and/or its related procedures.

D. **Primary Responsible Office.** In cases where a policy requires multiple responsible offices, one of these will be designated as the primary responsible office, to 1) assume leadership for procedural actions in the policy development, review, and approval processes, and 2) serve as primary contact for questions related to the policy. In cases where a policy has only one responsible office, that office is also the primary responsible office.

E. **Stakeholders.** Stakeholders are 1) individuals or groups affected by a proposed policy and/or its related procedures, 2) units responsible for implementing the proposed policy, or 3) individuals in similar positions or categories across the university who must abide by the provisions of the proposed policy.

F. **University-Level Policy.** A university-level policy is one that is reviewed and approved through the processes outlined in this policy. The scope of a university-level policy may range from minimally applying to individuals or groups in more than one college or division to maximally applying to all faculty, staff, students, and visitors.
III. Policy Statement

The primary purposes of this policy are to 1) facilitate the understanding of existing university-level policies among members of the RIT community, 2) document the basic development, review, approval, and promulgation processes for new or revised university-level policies, and 3) establish a limited set of exceptions to these processes. To achieve these purposes, the university will make current university-level policies and policy-related resources available to the RIT community through a website maintained by the policy office.

There are two categories of university-level policies, namely, governance and administrative. Governance policies, further defined in section IV.A of this policy, are those reviewed and recommended for the president’s final approval by the applicable governance group. Administrative policies, further defined in section V.A of this policy, are those reviewed and approved by the vice president of the division in which the responsible office resides, subject to final approval by the president and/or board of trustees, when required or warranted.

In addition to university-level policies, RIT recognizes the importance of developing unit-specific policies within divisions, colleges, and departments. For purposes of clarity, consistency, and accuracy these unit-specific policies must 1) be identified as division-level, college-level, or department-level; 2) not conflict with university-level policies; and 3) when referencing a university-level policy, link to the authoritative version.

IV. Governance Policy Development, Review, Approval and Promulgation

A. Governance Policy Development. Any individual or group of individuals may propose revisions to an existing university-level governance policy or may identify the need for a new university-level governance policy that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Mandates requirements of, or provisions for actions by, members of the RIT community.
- Has broad application throughout the university.
- Embraces the university’s mission, reduces institutional risk, or promotes organizational effectiveness.
- Codifies, as part of its scope, the university’s compliance with local, state, and/or federal laws or regulations and includes additional or more specific provisions or requirements.

Individuals or groups developing policy proposals must be faculty, staff or students at the university and are hereafter referred to as policy authors. Policy authors are expected to 1) seek legal and policy-process guidance, 2) request input from stakeholders, and 3) engage in the fact-finding, research, and analysis needed to develop a thorough proposal. The results of all these efforts must be documented separately, and submitted with the first public draft for formal review by the applicable governance group(s).

In drafting policies, policy authors are expected to use the university’s standard format and follow the general and policy-specific editorial guidelines which can be found under Resources for Policy.
Governance Development on the policy website. The policy office is responsible for reviewing and updating the standard format, policy-specific editorial guidelines, and other resources for policy authors; these activities should be undertaken annually and in consultation with designated representatives from the university’s governance groups and other stakeholders.

B. Governance Policy Review and Approval. Policy proposals related to academic and faculty governance matters are reviewed and provisionally approved by Academic Senate, subject to final approval by the president and, when appropriate, the board of trustees. Information on faculty governance and academic issues can be found on Academic Senate’s website and in the Charter of Academic Governance. Proposals related to other types of university-level governance policies are introduced to Institute Council, reviewed for formative input by Academic Senate, Staff Council, and/or Student Government as applicable, and returned to Institute Council for final review and approval. The policy review and approval processes for Academic Senate and Institute Council are illustrated by the flowcharts in Appendix A to this policy. Information on the role of Institute Council and university governance can be found in the Institute Council By-Laws. The by-laws and information on the roles of Staff Council and Student Government can be found on their websites. In addition, brief descriptions of the four major governance groups and their compositions are included in Appendix B to this policy.

The executive committees of these governance groups are expected to refer policies that meet the criteria of an administrative policy to the appropriate vice president for review and approval. If a question is raised as to whether a policy proposal should be reviewed through the governance process or administrative process, the president will make the determination.

C. Governance Policy Review Cycle. Existing policies may undergo revisions at any time deemed necessary; however, all university-level governance policies must be systematically affirmed or, if needed, revised on a regular review cycle. Specifically, all policies must be formally reviewed within five years of the date of the 1) initial approval, 2) most recently-approved revisions, or 3) most recent review and affirmation. For example, a policy that was last revised in October 2013 must be reviewed no later than October 2018.

It is the responsibility of the policy office to 1) identify, prior to the beginning of the fall term, those policies that must be reviewed during that academic year, 2) notify the primary responsible offices and the applicable governance groups of the required reviews, and 3) provide procedural assistance to the primary responsible offices and the applicable governance groups.

D. Governance Policy Promulgation. Upon recommendation by Academic Senate or Institute Council and approval from the president, policy authors submit the final approved version of the policy to the policy office. The policy office is responsible for the promulgation process, including:

- Posting approved new or revised policies in the governance policy library.
- Retaining and preparing superseded versions of revised policies for archiving.
- Preparing and sending e-mail announcements of new and revised policies to the RIT community within 30 days of approval.
• Maintaining a section on the policy website that includes information on 1) policies reviewed and approved during the previous academic year and 2) policies being reviewed or considered for approval during the current academic year.

E. Governance Policy Exceptions. Provisions for unusual issues or circumstances related to governance policy matters are covered in this section.

1. Establishing an Interim Policy. On rare occasions, a governance policy may be needed 1) for a finite period of time, or 2) within a time period that does not allow for its complete development and review as outlined in procedures described elsewhere in this policy. In these circumstances, policy authors may submit a draft interim policy and request approval from Institute Council Executive Committee (ICEC) to allow promulgation of that policy on an interim basis. ICEC must give explicit permission to issue a policy as interim.

Interim policies that are established for a finite period of time are effective until the ICEC-approved expiration date. Interim policies that are approved without full development and review are effective for six months from the date of ICEC approval or less if specified by ICEC. Extensions of up to six additional months can be sought from and approved by ICEC; however, no interim policy of this type can be in effect for more than 18 months.

If policy authors seek to remove the interim status of a policy, they must complete the applicable review and approval procedures described elsewhere in this policy within one year of the issuance of the interim policy.

2. Decommissioning a Policy. When a policy outlives its usefulness, is superseded, or is incorporated into another policy or policy library, the policy may be decommissioned through the applicable review and approval procedures described elsewhere in this policy. Proposals must include documentation that demonstrates 1) the rationale for decommissioning and 2) the review and agreements of stakeholders affected by the proposed decommissioning.

V. Administrative Policy Development, Review, Approval and Promulgation

A. Administrative Policy Development. Responsible offices for existing university-level administrative policies serve as the policy authors and may propose revisions or identify the need for a new university-level administrative policy that meets one or more of the following criteria:

• Codifies, as its full scope, the university’s compliance with the requirements of a law or regulation that is promulgated by the city, state, or federal government.
• Governs the university’s standards or principles for a specific business transaction or administrative practice that has broad application throughout the university.
• Outlines the university’s required procedures for a specific business transaction or administrative practice.

Policy authors are expected to 1) seek legal and policy-process guidance, 2) request input from stakeholders, and 3) engage in the fact-finding, research, and analysis needed to develop a thorough proposal. In drafting university-level administrative policies, policy authors are expected to use the
B. Administrative Policy Review and Approval. Policy proposals related to administrative matters are reviewed and approved by the vice president of the division in which the responsible office resides, subject to final approval by the president and/or board of trustees, when required or warranted. Additional steps in the policy review processes for administrative policies, if applicable, are determined and communicated by the division vice presidents in consultation with their leadership teams. The policy review and approval processes for administrative policies are illustrated by the flowcharts in the Appendix to this policy.

Vice presidents are expected to refer policies that meet the criteria of a governance policy to the applicable governance group for review and approval. If a question is raised as to whether a policy proposal should be reviewed through the administrative process or governance process, the president will make the determination.

C. Administrative Policy Review Cycle. Vice presidents are expected to establish and maintain a regular review cycle for university-level administrative policies under their purview to ensure they are systematically revised or affirmed.

D. Administrative Policy Promulgation. Upon approval, the responsible office publishes the final approved version of the policy on its website. The responsible office promulgates the revised or new policy to its key stakeholders and provides the policy office with the active link to the new or revised policy. The policy office is responsible for assisting the promulgation process by posting links to new or revised university-level administrative policies on the policy website.

E. Administrative Policy Exceptions. Vice presidents are expected to establish provisions for exceptions to administrative policies and related processes under their purview, such as approving interim policies and decommissioning policies, as needed.
Appendix A
Review and Approval Process
Flowcharts

---

**Chart A**  
Editorial Changes to Institute Council Policies

**Chart B**  
Revisions to Existing Institute Council Policies and New Policy Proposals

**Chart C**  
Editorial Changes to Academic Senate Policies

**Chart D**  
Revisions to Existing Academic Senate Policies and New Policy Proposals

**Chart E**  
Revisions to Existing Administrative Policies and New Policy Proposals
# Abbreviations Used In Flowcharts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Academic Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEC</td>
<td>Academic Senate Executive Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Institute Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICEC</td>
<td>Institute Council Executive Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Policy Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Staff Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Student Government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Flowchart A:
Review and Approval of Editorial Changes to IC Policies

Authors

Submit proposed editorial changes to IC policy to...

ICEC

Determines proposed change is a revision, not an edit; sends author to...

OR

Approves proposed change as an edit, sends author to...

IC Revision Process

See Flowchart B

IC

Revision Process

PO

Publishes approved edits to policy.
Flowchart B
Development, Review, and Approval of New/Revised IC Policies

Authors
Do research and analysis; write preliminary drafts; seek policy-process guidance; get stakeholder input; develop policy proposal; submit first public draft of policy to...

ICEC
Reviews draft; schedules on IC agenda; determines scope of review; provides direction to...

Authors
Submit and introduce first public draft to...

IC
then...

AS and/or
SC and/or
SG
Reviews and provides feedback to...

Authors
Update draft based on feedback; submit final draft to...

Flow Chart B Continues on to next page
Flowchart B (Continued):

Development, Review, and Approval of New/Revised IC Policies

ICEC

- Determines draft is ready for final review, schedules on IC agenda and notifies.
- Determines draft is not ready for final review; provides specific feedback and guidance on next steps.

Authors

- Present final draft to...

IC

- Approves final version and notifies...

Authors

- Submit final version of policy to...

PO

- Publishes and promulgates approved policy.
Flowchart C
Review and Approval of Editorial Changes to AS Policies

Authors
Submit proposed editorial changes to AS policy to...

ASEC
 Determines proposed change is a revision, not an edit; sends author to...

OR

AS
Revision Process
See Flowchart D

PO
 Publishes approved edits to policy.

Approves proposed change as an edit, sends author to...
Flowchart D
Development, Review, and Approval of New/Revised AS policies

Authors

Do research and analysis; write preliminary drafts; seek policy-process guidance; get stakeholder input; develop policy proposal; submit first public draft of policy to...

ASEC

Reviews draft; assigns to AS committee for in-depth review if needed; Schedules on AS meeting agenda; distributes to AS; and notifies...

Authors

Present first public draft to...

Flowchart D continues on to next page
Flowchart D (Continued):

AS

Reviews, provides feedback, provisionally approves and recommends final approval to.

If needed consults with...

President

Approves and notifies...

ASEC

Submits final approved version to...

Board Of Trustees

Determines draft is not ready for final review, provides specific feedback to authors and guidance on next steps.

PO

Publishes and promulgates approved policy.
Flowchart E

Development, Review and Approval of New/Revised Administrative Policies

Authors in Responsible Offices

Do research and analysis; write preliminary drafts; seek policy process guidance; get stakeholder input; develop policy proposal; submit to...

Heads of Responsible Offices

Review and provide feedback to...

Authors in Responsible Offices

Update draft based on feedback; submit revised draft to...

Heads of Responsible Offices

Determine draft is not ready for formal review; provide feedback and advise authors to...

Determine draft is ready for formal review; follow established process within division; submit final draft to...
Flowchart E (Continued):

Division Vice President

Reviews, finalizes and approves new/revised policy and notifies.

Head of Primary Responsible Office

Publishes and promotes new/revised policy.
Appendix B
Governance Group Descriptions and Composition

A. Institute Council Executive Committee (ICEC). ICEC is comprised of the president, the provost, the current chair of Academic Senate, the current chair of Staff Council, the current president of Student Government, and a representative of the deans appointed annually by the provost. The responsibilities of the ICEC are to develop Institute Council’s annual plan-of-work and to set its monthly agendas.

B. Institute Council (Full). Institute Council serves as the deliberative body in the development and review of university policies in areas not under the purview of Academic Senate. Its meetings provide a forum for members to discuss issues of higher education and create a contextual framework within which university policy recommendations may be reviewed and approved. Because Institute Council is comprised of representatives of the faculty (appointed by Academic Senate), staff (appointed by Staff Council), students (appointed by Student Government), and administrators (appointed by, and including, the president) it also serves the important purpose of facilitating multi-directional communication among members and the constituent groups of the university. The Institute Council By-Laws provide additional information on its structure and procedures.

C. Academic Senate Executive Committee (ASEC). ASEC is comprised of the annually-elected officers of Academic Senate. The officers include the chair, vice-chair, communications officer, operations officer, and treasurer. The executive committee is responsible for preparing the agenda of the Senate, establishing new academic-related university committees, task forces, and ad hoc committees and forwarding issues and requests to the appropriate Senate committees.

D. Academic Senate (Full). Academic Senate is the legislative and representative agency of the faculty and develops academic policy affecting more than one college of the university. The Senate offers advice and recommendations on other matters of university welfare and acts on other resolutions or proposals submitted to them that pertain to academic governance or general welfare of the university. Additional information can be found on Academic Senate's website or in its charter of academic governance.

E. Staff Council Executive Committee (SCEC). Staff Council Executive Committee consists of the chair, vice chair, events officer, communications officer, and four at-large members. Each member is elected from among the Staff Council membership. Fifty percent of SCEC members are exempt staff and fifty percent are non-exempt staff. Members of the executive committee are responsible for serving as liaisons to SC standing committees and setting agendas for SC meetings.

F. Staff Council (Full). Staff Council is an advisory body to the president or his/her representative, on issues and decisions that affect the university. Members communicate to staff about university events and initiatives and act as a conduit providing staff feedback and insights on university issues. Additionally, Staff Council initiates policy proposals and revisions, and raises issues for university consideration. Additional information can be found on Staff Council's website or in its by-laws.
G. Student Government Cabinet. The cabinet serves as the executive committee of Student Government and is comprised of the president, vice president (chair of the SG Senate), director of clubs and organizations, director of student relations, director of finance, director of services, director of programming, and director of public relations.

H. Student Government (Full). Student Government is a recognized organization that delivers the voice of the student body to faculty, staff, administrators, and the board of trustees. Student Government senators include representatives from all RIT colleges and other major student constituency groups. Senators address issues that are most important to their constituency, with the goal of expanding opportunities and improving the RIT experience. Additional information can be found on Student Government's website or in its by-laws.