

Policies of the University of North Texas System Administration	Chapter 01
01.100 Policy on Policies	Form and Content of System Administration Policies

Policy Statement. UNT System Administration policies shall reflect the System Administration’s mission and vision and comply with federal and state laws, Regents Rules and System Regulations. Procedures developed to implement these policies shall be clear and efficient. Policies and procedures may be revised or deleted at any time, at the sole discretion of the System Administration.

Application of Policy. All UNT System Administration employees.

Definitions.

1. **Non-substantive Change.** “Non-substantive change” means a revision that does not materially alter a policy’s objective, meaning, scope, or intent. (E.g. edits related to document formatting, grammar, punctuation and style, etc.)
2. **Policy.** “Policy” means a governing principle, approved in accordance with Regents Rule 02.200, that communicates and supports the System Administration’s values, standards and expectations; guides the behaviors, decisions and actions of employees and other individuals in their interactions with the System Administration; ensures compliance with applicable laws, Regents Rules, System regulations and System Administration policies; promotes the efficient and effective use of System resources; and manages organizational risks.
3. **Policy Action.** “Policy action” means the development, deletion, review, or substantive revision of a policy.
4. **Policy Contact.** “Policy contact” means an individual designated by the Policy owner as the primary subject matter expert and administrative point of contact between the Policy owner and Policy Manager.
5. **Policy Manager.** “Policy Manager” means the individual responsible for the administration and management of the System Administration’s policy program and the official repository for all System Administration policies.
6. **Policy Manual.** “Policy manual” means the official repository of all System Administration policies adopted in accordance with the applicable Regents Rules and published on the dedicated System Administration policy website. Policies published on the dedicated website are the official policies of the System Administration and supersede any version appearing elsewhere.

7. Policy Owner. “Policy owner” means a System Administration official who reports directly to the Chancellor and who is primarily responsible for the administrative oversight of a policy.
8. Procedures. “Procedures” mean the process that outlines how the System Administration will implement the policy. Procedures may be included in documents such as guidelines and handbooks.
9. Regents Rule. “Regents Rule” means a rule adopted by the UNT System Board of Regents.
10. Substantive Change. “Substantive change” means a revision to a policy that materially alters its objective, meaning, scope, or intent. Substantive changes include, but are not limited to, addition or deletion of a definition, change in a responsible party, change in application of the policy, or revisions made to reflect current operational practices or changes in the law, Regents Rules or System Regulations.
11. System Regulation. “System Regulation” means a policy adopted by the Chancellor of the UNT System that applies to all components and employees of the UNT System.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

- I. General Guidelines. System Administration policies apply only to the System Administration and shall be published and officially maintained in the policy manual.
 - A. Contract Disclaimer. No provision in any System Administration policy shall create a contract, expressed or implied, with any individual or organization in accordance with Regents Rule 02.204.
 - B. Legal Review. All System Administration policies considered for adoption must be reviewed and approved for legal sufficiency by the UNT System Office of General Counsel (OGC) prior to adoption in accordance with Regents Rule 02.206.
 - C. Conflicts. If a System Administration policy conflicts with a Regents Rule or System Regulation, the Rule or Regulation takes precedence. If a provision of a policy conflicts with a Regents Rule, System Regulation or federal or state law, the invalid provision shall be construed in a manner that gives force and effect to all other provisions in the policy, to the extent possible. If any invalid provision cannot be construed to render it valid, that provision shall be construed as narrowly as possible and severed from the policy if necessary to give force and effect to the policy in accordance with Regents Rule 02.207.

- D. Policy Approval. Policies are approved when signed by the Chancellor or when approved by the Board of Regents if applicable.
- E. Policy Effective Date. A policy takes effect the date it is approved by the Chancellor (or Board of Regents if required), unless a different date is stated in the policy.
- F. Policy Review. Policy owners must ensure policies that fall under their jurisdiction are reviewed a minimum of once every six (6) years unless otherwise required by state or federal law, Regents Rule or System Regulation. A non-substantive change made to a policy does not constitute a policy review.
- G. Procedures Required to be in Policies. Only those procedures that are necessary to protect a right protected by law or that are mandated by Regents Rule or System Regulation are required to be included in a policy.
- H. Non-substantive changes. Non-substantive changes do not require routing through the normal approval process or legal sufficiency review, and may be made as needed by the Policy Manager.
- I. Other Procedures. Units may develop written guidelines to manage the specific operations of the unit. These guidelines must be consistent with the official policies and procedures of the System Administration, System Regulations, Regents Rules, and state or federal laws. Internal guidelines do not have to be reviewed by OGC for legal sufficiency or approved by the Chancellor.
- J. Severability. If any provision of a policy or its application to any person or circumstance is interpreted by OGC as invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the policy that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provision of the policy is severable.
- K. Computation of Time. In computing a period of days, the first day is excluded and the last day is included. If the last day of any period is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the period is extended to include the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. Unless otherwise specified in the policy, "day" means business day.

II. Policy Development, Revision, Deletion, Review, and Approval.

- A. Policy Development, Revision and Review. Policy owners, in coordination with the Policy Manager, are responsible for developing, revising, and reviewing policies as required by System Regulation, Regents Rule, or federal or state law,

or as necessitated by System Administration initiatives or operational changes. For these actions, Policy owners must ensure the policy:

1. is not contradictory with, duplicative of, or cannot be incorporated into existing System Administration policies;
 2. is consistent with Regents Rules and System Regulations;
 3. satisfies accrediting bodies and external industry/professional association requirements, as applicable;
 4. is sufficiently clear so that substantive questions concerning execution of or compliance with the policy can be answered;
 5. provides the guidance necessary to achieve the policy objective(s); and
 6. clearly explains any decision-making processes required by the policy.
- B. Policy Deletion. When considering a policy for deletion, Policy owners must ensure the policy is not required by Regents Rule, System Regulation, or federal or state law. When the policy matter is required, Policy owners must ensure that the content is adequately addressed in an existing policy or procedure prior to deletion.

Responsible Party: Policy owners

- C. Office of General Counsel.
1. The Office of General Counsel (OGC) is responsible for reviewing all new policies and substantive changes to existing policies to determine consistency with applicable law, identify and address legal risks and legal defensibility. This legal sufficiency review consists of:
 - a. analyzing the policy (and any procedures contained therein) to determine compliance with federal and state constitutional and statutory laws, regulations, attorney general opinions, executive orders, Regents Rules, and System Regulations;
 - b. identifying potential legal risks that might arise from the use of a particular word, term, or phrase, from the way the policy is structured, or from any procedures contained in or missing from the policy; and
 - c. recommending changes that address noted legal deficiencies.
 2. OGC will inform the Policy Manager if a policy or a provision of a policy is determined to be legally insufficient and recommend language that brings

the policy into compliance with laws, Regents Rules or System Regulations. OGC is responsible for informing the Policy Manager which policies must be approved by the Board of Regents.

3. Only policies approved by OGC are eligible for approval by the Chancellor.

Responsible Party: OGC

- D. Chancellor Approval. All policies must be approved by the Chancellor. Policies approved by the Chancellor become effective on the date of approval unless otherwise stated in the policy or when Board of Regents approval is required.
- E. Board of Regents Approval. Policies requiring Board of Regents approval become effective on the date of approval unless otherwise stated in the Board order or in the language of the policy.

- III. Policy Administration and Management Program. The Policy Manager shall route proposed policy actions for approval in accordance with this policy. In addition, the Policy Manager is responsible for:

1. coordinating and managing the policy process;
2. facilitating the development, review, and approval of proposed policy actions;
3. maintaining the official copy of all adopted policies;
4. maintaining the policy program website;
5. publishing approved policies in the policy manual; and
6. archiving superseded policies, routing and approval forms, and other policy development related documents in accordance with record retention requirements.

Responsible Party: Policy Manager

- IV. Guidelines for Interpreting Policies and Procedures. The following guidelines shall be used when interpreting System Administration policies and procedures. These guidelines are not binding on the OGC when providing official legal opinions.

- A. Headings. The heading of a title, subtitle, chapter, subchapter, or section does not limit or expand the meaning of a policy.

- B. Meanings of Words. Words shall be given their ordinary meaning. Words and phrases shall be read in context and construed according to the rules of grammar and common usage. Words in the present tense include the future tense.
- C. Grammar and Punctuation. A grammatical error does not impair the efficacy of a policy. If the sentence or clause is meaningless because of the grammatical error, words and clauses may be transposed to give the policy meaning.
- D. May, Must, Shall, etc. The following meanings apply unless the context in which the word or phrase appears necessarily requires a different interpretation/meaning or unless a different meaning is expressly provided:
1. "May" creates discretionary authority or grants permission or a power.
 2. "Shall" imposes an obligation.
 3. "Is entitled to" creates or recognizes an expectation.
 4. "May not" imposes a prohibition and is synonymous with "shall not."
 5. "Is not entitled to" negates an expectation.
 6. "Is not required to" negates an obligation.
 7. "Includes" and "including" are terms of enlargement and use of the terms do not create a presumption that items, examples, or components that are not listed are excluded.

References and Cross-references.

[Regents Rule 02.200, System, System Administration, and Institution Policy Development](#)

Forms and Tools.

[UNT System Office of General Counsel Legal Sufficiency Review Guide](#)

[UNT System Policy Style Manual](#)

[Policy Template](#)

Approved: November 16, 2007

Effective: November 16, 2007

Revised: June 10, 2019