

Policy for the Development and Revision of Policies

Policy Statement:

Georgia College formally approves, issues, and maintains in a consistent format, official university policies in the Policies, Procedures, and Practices Manual. Individuals engaged in developing and maintaining university policies must follow the requirements outlined in this document for drafting, approving, and revising university policies.

Definitions:

ECUS – Executive Committee of the University Senate

Policy Statement – Statement that encapsulates the policy’s purpose, including its core provisions and requirements.

Procedure - A procedure is a set of mandatory steps established to implement the policy and/or to manage the activities specific to the policy.

Keywords:

Policy creation; policy revision; policy writing; policy guidelines; policy development

Reason for the Policy:

In order to promote compliance and accountability, university policies should be thoughtfully developed, regularly reviewed, and made available to the university community.

Proposed Outcome:

This policy aims to promote a consistent approach to the development and revision of university policies.

Applicability of the Policy:

This policy applies to all policies relating to all members of the university community, including faculty, staff, and students.

Related Policies:

Policies, Procedures, and Practices Manual – policies.gcsu.edu

Procedures:

1. Policy Development

The need for a new policy or the revision of an existing policy should be initiated through the submission of a proposal to the Executive Committee of the University Senate (ECUS). In the case of the revision of an existing policy, the individual or department currently responsible for the policy should be notified and brought into the discussion as early as possible.

Consideration must be given to related policies, in particular, those mandated by the USG Board of Regents and any other relevant government agencies. The prevailing authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia should be clearly understood. In case of any divergence from or conflict with the By-laws or Policies of the Board of Regents, the official By-laws and Policies of the Board of Regents shall prevail.

The committee charged with the development or review of the policy is responsible for researching the issues raised in the proposal. The committee minutes must document discussion of the policy.

2. Writing the Policy Document

The standard Policy Template contains sections that need to be completed when creating the policy document. The Policy Template provides description of each section and provides suggestions on the development of the policy document. The template is available on the University Senate website or from the Executive Committee of the University Senate. See Appendix A.

Requests for the Policy Template should be made to senate@gcsu.edu

3. Reviewing and Approving a Policy

The proposed policy document should be reviewed by the appropriate University Senate Committee to ensure compliance with the requirements in the Policy Template. Deliberation about the content of the policy document should be recorded in the minutes from the committee meeting.

Upon approval of the policy by the committee, a motion to approve the policy is forwarded to the Executive Committee of the University Senate to be placed on the agenda for discussion and vote by the full membership of the University Senate.

Upon approval of the policy by the University Senate, the Chair of the Executive Committee signs the motion and submits it to the University President who either approves or vetoes the motion. The President then assigns responsibility for the implementation of the policy to the appropriate person or department.

These steps should be in compliance with the time limits outlined in the University Senate By-laws.

4. Revising a Policy

Revisions and/or updates to existing policies should follow the same development, review, and approval process followed for new policies.

5. Promulgating a Policy

The Policies, Procedures, and Practices Manual should be regularly updated to include new policies and revisions to existing policies.

All those impacted by the policy should be notified as soon as possible after the policy is approved.

Forms:

Policy Writing Guide / Template (See Appendix A)

Sample Policy Document (See Appendix B)

Contacts:

Chair of the Executive Committee of the University Senate (ECUS); senate@gcsu.edu

Approval Date:

Submitted to ECUS

DRAFT

APPENDIX A: Policy Writing Guide

This policy writing guide was developed to assist persons who draft or revise policies at Georgia College & State University. The aim of the format is to encourage concise policy statements with accompanying information to facilitate discussion, revision, and approval by relevant groups.

The University Senate has defined policy as *a statement of record that governs the conduct of the university community and/or embodies a general principle that guides university affairs.*

Policy Title:

The title must identify the key purpose of the policy in as few words as possible.

Policy Statement:

This is the most important section of the policy document. It will provide direction for the intended audience.

When drafting the policy statement, keep the following in mind:

- The statement must be concise with sentences that are clear and understandable for the given audience
- Acronyms may be used if spelled out completely the first time used
- Use strong action words (will, must, are responsible for).

The policy statement typically answers questions such as:

- What is addressed by the policy?
- What does the policy intend to do?
- What behavior(s) does the policy require?

Definitions:

Provide a list of terms within the policy that need further explanation, with their definitions. Include terms that, by being defined, would add to the reader's understanding of the basic policy or procedures.

Keywords:

A list of words that may be contained in, or that are related to, the policy as a whole and that ideally will operate as search terms in a policy database. Use these questions to help create your keywords:

- To which departments, schools, or areas of the institution does the policy apply?
- What issues or topics are related to the content of the policy?

Reason for the Policy:

A detailed statement answering questions such as these:

- Why is the policy needed?
- Which institutional objectives will the policy uphold?
- Are there any internal or external requirements that mandate, inform or support the policy?

Proposed Outcome:

A list of desired outcomes of implementing the policy, including answers to questions such as these:

- What will this policy aim to change?
- What are the long-term goals to which this policy will aim?
- What are the outcomes that will indicate the policy is working?

Applicability of the Policy:

A succinct statement answering questions such as these:

- To which departments, schools, or areas of the institution does the policy apply?
- To whom does the policy apply (students, faculty, staff, visitors)?

Related Policies:

A list of policies, their citation and web links that relate to the proposed policy.

Procedures:

A procedure is a set of mandatory steps established to implement the policy and/or to manage the activities specific to the policy. It describes a process that must be followed to achieve the desired outcomes. These statements should be specific to the policy and answer questions such as these:

- How will the policy be carried out?
- Who is responsible for carrying out the policy?
- If the policy requires individual action: what are the steps one must take?
- If the policy requires an institutional response: what are the steps the institution/department will take in its response?

Guidelines:

Guidelines contain information about how to accomplish some task or reach a specific goal. They are provided as suggestions; in other words, they are not mandatory. They may be presented as “best practice”.

Forms:

Attach any suggested forms that are necessary to fill out, read, and/or sign that would be applicable to the stated policy.

Contacts:

Provide contact information for

- the individual or committee that created or revised the policy, and
- the individual or department that will administer or implement the policy.

Approval Date:

List dates of approval by the various levels of governance.

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy Title: Service Recognition Policy

Policy Statement:

Georgia College & State University shall have a Service Recognition Program that recognizes employees for their length of service to the University. Recognitions will be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document and the USG Board of Regents *Policy on Employee Recognition Programs*.

Definitions:

- **Employee:** Includes faculty and classified employees.
- **Faculty:** The faculty shall consist of the corps of instruction and the administrative officers as defined in Section 300 of the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.
- **Classified Employees:** Classified employees shall consist of the professional and administrative employees and staff defined as follows:
 - **Professional and Administrative Employees:** All employees who are exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities, and who are not identified as faculty or graduate assistants, shall be designated as Professional and Administrative Employees.
 - **Staff:** All employees who are not exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) shall be designated as staff.
- **Regular Employment:** Employees who are employed for a continuous period that is expected to exceed six (6) calendar months shall be known as “regular” employees. Regular positions with a work commitment of half-time or greater are benefits eligible.

Keywords:

Service recognition; length of service

Reason for the Policy:

A Service Recognition Program supports the University's strategic initiative to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty and staff who are invested in the university's mission, its students, and its commitment to reason, respect, and responsibility. It is an institutional priority to expand opportunities to celebrate faculty and staff achievements and to build community.

Employee service recognition acknowledges that the contributions of Georgia College employees are critical to fulfilling the University's mission. Each employee makes a difference and as such, the University should endeavor to identify means by which meaningful recognition occurs.

Proposed Outcomes:

- Service awards are presented to employees in recognition of length of service.
- An employee receives his or her first service award for ten (10) years of eligible service. Thereafter, the employee receives service awards in five-year intervals as eligible service accrues.
- One or more Service Recognition Ceremonies will be held annually to acknowledge employees who meet the specified length of service milestones.

Applicability of the Policy:

This policy applies to all Georgia College faculty and classified employees who are employed at least half-time. Student workers and graduate assistants are not eligible for length of service recognition.

Related Policies:

This policy shall replace the "Service Awards" entry in the current Georgia College & State University Policies, Procedures, and Practices Manual.

USG Policy on Employee Recognition Programs:

http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/employee_recognition_programs

Procedures:

1. The Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations shall be responsible for identifying employees to be recognized based on the eligible service criteria.
 - Employees shall be recognized at the Service Recognition Ceremony that next occurs after they reach the specified years of eligible service.
 - A list of all employees, including their length of service, shall be distributed to supervisors by August 1st each year. Supervisors shall be responsible for confirming with the employee that the length of service is accurate. Discrepancies shall be reported immediately to the Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations.
 - To assist in the identification process, employees with discrepancies or unusual service records (e.g. non-continuous service, leave of absence, part-time to full-time) are encouraged to complete the Employee Service Update Form and submit it to the Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations.
2. An employee receives his or her first service award for ten (10) years of eligible service. Thereafter, the employee receives service awards in five-year intervals as eligible service accrues.
3. The following criteria shall be used to determine eligible service:
 - Eligible service commences on the initial date of employment at Georgia College.
 - Eligible service is based on an employee's total service with the University and includes all periods of regular employment; this does not mean the service must be consecutive years.
 - For faculty, an academic year appointment for 9, 10, or 11 months is considered the equivalent of a 12-month appointment for calculation of eligible service.
 - An approved leave of absence of one year or less is not deducted from the length of service.
 - Leave without pay status is not included in eligible service.
 - Military leave with pay status is included in eligible service.

Forms:

Employee Service Update Form – *to be created*

Contacts:

Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations; hr@gcsu.edu, 478-445-5596

Approval Dates:

ECUS – 3/22/13; University Senate – 4/19/13