

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Syracuse University Senate Agenda Committee

FROM: Abby R. Perer, Associate General Counsel & Policy Administrator

DATE: November 2, 2016

RE: Syracuse University Policy Process

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In August 2014, as part of Fast Forward Syracuse, the Operational Excellence Steering Committee appointed a Policy Development and Communication Working Team (the “Working Team”) to: (1) evaluate the existing University policies website, along with the process for developing new or revised policies and communication of those policies; and (2) recommend improvements to the process of policy making to promote clarity, consistency and transparency.

The Working Team finished its review in early 2015 and issued a report to the Operational Excellence Steering Committee in which it set forth its findings and proposals. As detailed in that report, the Working Team found: (1) organizational deficiencies on the University policies website; (2) inconsistent formatting across policies; (3) an unclear approval process for new or revised policies; (4) a lack of standards or guidelines for communicating policies; and (5) no consistent approach to obtaining input on policies from the larger campus community. To remedy these issues, the Working Team proposed that the University create: (1) categories on the policies website; (2) a uniform approval process; (3) a policy template; (4) a Policy Advisory Committee; and (5) a Policy Administrator position. The Operational Excellence Executive Committee approved all of the Working Team’s recommendations.

During the fall of 2015, the Working Team formed the Policy Advisory Committee from its remaining members, appointed a Policy Administrator, created categories of policies on the policies website, and published a policy template and uniform approval process. The approval process<sup>1</sup> is flexible, but includes the following primary steps:

- 1) Member of University community identifies need for new or revised policy;
- 2) Policy sponsor (dean, director, or department head) consults with Policy Administrator;
- 3) Policy sponsor drafts policy using template;
- 4) Policy Administrator reviews and recommends changes;
- 5) Members of the University community review policy and recommend changes;
- 6) Policy Advisory Committee reviews and recommends changes;
- 7) Chancellor’s Executive Team reviews and approves policy;
- 8) Publication and communication.

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<sup>1</sup> The full process is detailed at: <http://supolicies.syr.edu/submit.html>.

Since early 2016, we have been testing the approval process with certain new and revised policies, including the new Student Health Insurance Requirement Policy, the revised Travel Policy, the revised Academic Integrity Policy, and the free speech policies. The approval process is designed to be fluid, and input from the Senate is welcome on how specific policies should flow through the process.