Policy Development and Management Guidelines

Formulation and Issuance of College Policies

2/1/2011

These guidelines on policy development and management are intended to promote (a) a consistent process and format for policies; (b) an appropriate level, scope and frequency of attention to administrative policies; and (c) clarity, transparency and shared understanding of administrative policy protocols.

I.   **Overview**

With the approval of the executive leadership of the College of Coastal Georgia, a department or office may use policy-making as a tool for establishing requirements for the College community that relate to matters under the purview of that unit. In this way, College policies connect the College's mission to individual conduct, clarify institutional expectations, support compliance with laws and regulations, mitigate institutional risk, and enhance productivity and efficiency in the College's operations.

Accordingly, the College has established a standard policy document and review process in order to achieve consistency and improve access to, and understanding of, College policies. In furtherance of these goals, the College will formally approve, issue, and maintain in a consistent format all official College policies. Further, these policies will be kept in a central policy location. Any individual or unit of the College engaged in developing and/or maintaining College policies must follow the requirements outlined in this document for drafting, approving, revising, and cancelling College policies.

II.   **Key Definitions**

For purposes of these guidelines, the following definitions are provided to assist in understanding the process for policy formulation and implementation at the College:

- **College Policy**: A "College policy" is a statement of commitment to an institutional principle, or a mandate that responds to legal or regulatory statutes, addresses issues of behavior and interaction, or governs use of College resources. A policy typically has broad institutional application; enhances the College's mission; provides operational efficiencies; mandates action or constraints; establishes boundaries for conduct; helps ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations; reduces institutional risk; changes infrequently; sets a course for the foreseeable future; and requires approval at the highest administrative levels of the College.

- **Entities Affected by the Policy**: All departments and offices at the College are governed by College policies. However, some units may be more affected by certain policies than others. When this is the case, these more affected units are referred to as "entities affected by the policy."

- **Interim Policy**: An "interim policy" is a provisional policy document issued when a College policy is needed within a time period too short to complete the process described herein. It is generally in effect for not longer than six (6) months, although a single six-month extension is permitted.

- **Policy Statement**: A "policy statement" is a statement on the front page of a policy document that encapsulates the policy's purpose, namely, its core provisions or requirements.

- **Reason for the Policy:** The "reason for the policy" is a statement that encapsulates why the policy exists. It should state the legitimate interests of all parties, describe the problem or conflict the policy addresses, and cite any legal and/or regulatory reasons for the policy.

- **Responsible Cabinet Officer**: The "responsible Cabinet officer" is the unit head that creates, implements, and gains compliance for, or "sponsors," a College policy that falls under his or her jurisdiction. Depending upon the scope of its subject matter, a policy may have, in rare circumstances, more than one responsible Cabinet officer.

- **Responsible Office**: The "responsible office" is the office designated by the responsible Cabinet officer to develop and administer a policy, communicate with and train the College community in its requirements, and execute its timely updating and revisions.

- **Stakeholders**: A "stakeholder" is an individual, function, or organization identified in the impact statement for a proposed policy, whose College roles or professional expertise relates to the subject of the policy, and who, therefore, is consulted for comment on its draft.

III.   Approval Authority for Policies

The final approval authority for College policies, whether new or revised, depends on the scope and area the policy is intended to address. Specifically:

- College-wide policies with broad institutional application and/or legal implications must be approved by the President's full Cabinet.

- Policies applicable only to faculty or that relate to academic rules and regulations must be routed through the President of the Faculty Senate (for faculty consideration and comment) and the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the President for final approval.

- Policies applicable only to students and issues related solely to student life must be routed through the President of the Student Affairs Council (for student consideration and comment) and the Vice President for Student Affairs to the President for final approval.

IV.   Proposing a New Policy

Policies are employed by "responsible Cabinet officers" to support the missions of their units. Thus, while any individual or unit may identify the need for a new policy, at least one responsible Cabinet officer must agree to sponsor its development and be accountable for the content of its principles and procedures. Additionally, key stakeholders will be consulted during the policy drafting process to ensure all potential impacts of the new policy have been

considered. Ultimately, responsible Cabinet officers will approve the final draft of the proposed policy before it is distributed to the appropriate approval authority, be it the President of the College or the President's full Cabinet.

All proposals for new policies at the College will be initiated through the submission of a "Proposed New Policy Review Form." This document is available on the College's "Policies and Procedures" website. To provide the appropriate approval authority with the necessary information on which to base a decision, the form will include not only the justification for this proposed new policy, but also a list of those members of the College community who will be most directly impacted by its approval. Finally, the proposal must include a draft copy of the recommended policy, utilizing the sample template provided in this document. The following specific guidelines apply to new policy proposals:

• If the proposal is from a College employee, the form shall be submitted through the supervisory chain to the employee's responsible Cabinet officer. If the proposed policy falls within the functional area of another College unit, the Cabinet officer receiving the proposal shall forward it, with all available information, to the responsible Cabinet officer from that functional area for follow-on action.

• If the proposal is from a student, it must be routed through the Student Affairs Council to the Vice President for Student Affairs. As appropriate, the Vice President for Student Affairs will forward the proposal, along with all available information, to the responsible Cabinet officer who has functional responsibilities for the matter the policy is intended to address.

Upon receipt of a proposed policy that is administrative in nature and has College-wide application, the responsible Cabinet officer shall consult with other members of the Cabinet to solicit input on whether establishment of a new policy has merit or whether the identified issue can be addressed in a another way (e.g., through revision of an existing policy). If it is determined that development of a new policy is unwarranted or that the issue can be addressed in a different manner, the responsible Cabinet officer shall notify the individual who submitted the document of this determination and the grounds for it. Revised proposals may then be submitted in order to address, if possible, the concerns expressed by the responsible Cabinet officer in his or her denial response.

Upon receipt of a proposed policy that is applicable only to faculty or that relates solely to academic rules and regulations, the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall consult with the President of the Faculty Senate to determine whether to recommend establishment of a new policy to the President. Similarly, for a proposed policy that is applicable only to students and issues related solely to student life, the Vice President for Student Affairs shall consult with the President of the Student Affairs Council to determine whether to recommend establishment of a new policy to President. Where there is disagreement on the merits of establishing a new policy, the Vice President of either Academic Affairs or Student Affairs, as appropriate, will be the final arbiter on the recommendation to the President. He or she will ensure, however, that

dissenting views regarding the necessity of the policy are presented for the President's consideration. If the President determines a new policy is unwarranted or that the issue may be addressed in a different manner, the responsible Cabinet officer will notify the submitter of the decision and the grounds for it.

If, following appropriate consultation, it is determined that the proposed policy has merit, the responsible Cabinet officer, or his or her designee, will oversee the crafting of the final policy document, utilizing the draft provided with the proposal as the starting point. Once a final draft policy has been approved by the responsible Cabinet officer, as indicated through his or her concurrence signature on the new policy proposal form, the document will be shared with all identified stakeholders prior to submission to the final approving authority.   The process through which the responsible Cabinet officer will make the draft policy available, as well as the process through which input will be collected, organized, and considered, shall be left to the discretion of that Cabinet officer.   All feedback received from these stakeholders will be considered by the responsible Cabinet officer, who will determine whether and how this feedback will be incorporated into the final document.

Prior to forwarding any proposal for a new policy to the either the President or the Cabinet for review and approval, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure the College's existing policies are researched to determine whether there are current policies that apply or could be adapted to address the identified issue. Additionally, if the proposed policy has ramifications for other College departments or offices, or is more appropriately determined to be the responsibility of another College unit, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure coordination occurs with the affected units and that concurrence is obtained prior to submitting the proposal. Finally, prior to submission to either the President or the Cabinet for approval, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure the draft policy meets the format requirements outlined in these guidelines.

V.   **Revising an Existing Policy**

All proposals for revisions to existing policies at the College will be initiated through the submission of a "Revised Policy Review Form." This document is available on the College's "Policies and Procedures" website. As with proposals for new policies, changes to a policy's substance, or principles, must be approved by the appropriate approval authority, depending upon the area intended to be addressed by the policy. The date of all approved revisions will be noted on the face of the policy.

VI.   **Publication of New or Revised Policies**

College policies must be kept current and made available to affected members of the College community in a timely manner. Accordingly, upon the approval of a new or revised policy, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure that notification is provided to appropriate members of the College community (e.g., faculty, staff and/or students). In the case of revised policies, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure the revisions are prominently identified in the notification. Additionally, the responsible Cabinet officer shall contact the College's Webmaster

to ensure the new or revised policy is electronically posted on the College's "Policies and Procedures" webpage. Finally, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure that any additional communication or training on the new or revised policy is delivered, and that any support systems necessary to achieve ongoing compliance are established.

VII.   **Periodic Reviews of Policies**

The responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure that all policies for which his or her unit is designated the "responsible officer" are reviewed and updated on an "as needed" basis. In any event, all College policies are to be reviewed for ongoing relevance at least every five (5) years from the date of policy establishment or revision. The responsible Cabinet officer is responsible for ensuring policies are updated if there is a change in law or regulation.

VIII.   **Cancellation of Policies**

On occasion, a responsible Cabinet officer may deem the cancellation of an existing policy to be appropriate. In such instances, he or she may seek permission to cancel the policy from the appropriate approval authority. If approved, the responsible Cabinet officer shall ensure notification is provided to appropriate members of the College community (faculty, staff and/or students). Additionally, the responsible Cabinet officer shall contact the College's Webmaster to ensure the cancelled policy is removed from the College's "Policies and Procedures" webpage.

IX.   **Establishment of Interim Policies**

When circumstances arise that require a policy to be implemented within a time period that does not allow for complete drafting and review of the policy document as outlined in these guidelines, the responsible Cabinet officer may request permission from the appropriate approval authority to promulgate a policy on an interim basis. If approved by the appropriate approval authority, the interim policy document must contain, at a minimum, the following sections of a standard policy document:

- The policy statement;

- The reason for the policy;

- The entities affected by the policy;

- Identification of those members of the College community who should be familiar with the policy;

- The responsible office for the policy; and

- Contact information for the primary contact person for the policy.

Interim policies will be effective for not longer than six (6) months from the date of issuance. This date may be extended for one (1) six-month increment only, and any request for such an extension must be approved by the appropriate approval authority. To derive the benefits of a standard policy document and the full review cycle, the interim policy must complete the process outlined in this document, preferably, within six (6) months of the issuance of the interim policy. If a fully developed policy is not created within the approved time limit, the interim policy will expire and its provisions will become null and void.

X.   **Compliance**

To assist in compliance with any approved policy, the responsible Cabinet officer shall develop and establish normal business practices, some of which will be outlined in the policy's procedures, which support implementation of the policy. In addition, appropriate communications with, and training of, members of the College community is expected to facilitate compliance with approved policies.

Sample Policy Template

COLLEGE *of*
COASTAL
GEORGIA
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Policy: Provide Policy Name

CITATION REFERENCE
Official Title:
Abbreviated Title:
Volume: CCGA Policies
Responsible Office:
Originally issued:
Effective Date:
Revised:

Policy Statement

This statement should encapsulate the policy's purpose, namely, its core provisions or requirements.

Reason for Policy

This statement should encapsulate why the policy exists. It should identify the institutional risk, College mission or values, or any legal or regulatory requirements the policy addresses.

Entities Affected By This Policy

Identify all parties who will be affected if this policy is approved and made effective.

Who Should Read This Policy

Identify all community members (e.g., faculty, staff, students, and/or visitors) who should be familiar with this policy.

Contacts

Contact	Phone	E-Mail
Identify the primary contact person for this policy.		

Website Address for This Policy

Provide the URL for this policy.

Related Documents/Resources

Identify any additional documents or resources that are relevant to the matter under consideration, such as any Board of Regents policies impacting on the issue.

Definitions

Use this section to identify and define any terms that will assist the reader's understanding of the policy and what is being proposed. For example:

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy:

•   ***Mandatory Fees****: Those fees charged by a University System of Georgia institution to every student enrolled at the institution, regardless of their program of study.*

Overview

Provide an overview of the policy and the issues it is intended to address. You will provide further clarity in the body of the policy under this heading.

I.   **Bold Paragraph Headings**

a.   <u>Underline headings within each paragraph</u>.

   •   Where necessary, use bullets to provide further clarity on matters of significance.

        ▫   Where additional bullets are necessary, ensure consistency with the requirements of this manual.

Responsibilities

In this section, the responsibilities each Department of Office at the College has in implementing this policy are addressed. Great detail is not necessary. For example:

The responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy on tuition and fees are:

Party	Responsibility
Business Office	Ensure compliance with this policy.
Registrar	Ensure compliance with this policy.

Forms

Provide the names and, if possible, electronic copies of the any forms or documents necessary to implement the policy.

Appendices

If any appendices are necessary, list those here.