



## ***HOW TO WRITE A UC BERKELEY CAMPUSWIDE POLICY***

This guide is intended to help you:

- Gather information to write a campuswide policy
- Write the policy using the campus's standard template
- Get the policy approved, and
- Issue the policy to the campus

### **Step One: Gather Information**

Before you begin writing a new policy, check whether the campus already has a policy on the subject. If so, make sure you thoroughly understand it. How would your new policy differ? That's what the campus will want to know. If you think there might have been a policy on your subject years ago but can't find it, the Controller's Office can help you search for it. Contact Andy Goldblatt at 643-9317 or [ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu).

If the Office of the President (OP) has a policy on your subject, keep in mind that a campuswide policy may be more restrictive than OP's, but not more permissive. Policies from OP and all the UC campuses can be found at

<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/ucpolicies>

Review the policies OP and the other UC campuses have issued on your subject for ideas or language you may want to use. If OP and the other UC campuses don't have policies on your subject, check the policy pages at other universities. It always helps to know how other people have handled similar issues.

Talk to campus constituencies affected by your policy. You will probably need to speak with several campus offices, groups, and committees. It may get frustrating at times, but it is vital because the campus has a tradition of moving forward by consensus, and other constituencies may alert you to problems you hadn't considered.

At this stage you do not need to contact every group that may be affected by your policy. However, you *will* need to make a presentation to the Policy Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG is chaired by the campus controller and consists of one representative from each control unit plus selected campus positions with extensive involvement in policy. Fill out the *Proposal to Add or Change Policy* form:

<http://campuspol.chance.berkeley.edu/ProposalToAddOrChangePolicy.pdf>.

This one-page form provides the PAG with an executive summary of what you intend to do. Send it to Andy Goldblatt via email at [ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu) and he will put it on the agenda for the next PAG meeting. Let Andy know whether you would like to attend the meeting as a guest. The PAG will make suggestions about the policy and will recommend other campus committees, groups, and organizations for you to consult.

## Step Two: Write the Policy

With everybody's feedback fresh in your mind, draft your policy.

**Approach.** Policies should be easy for novices to understand, which means they should provide comprehensive direction in plain language. Your emphasis should be on fundamentals (grammar and sentence construction) rather than flourishes. Avoid pomposity, jargon, and trendy phrases. For answers to usage questions (Do I capitalize the term *vice chancellor* or not? Is it *email* or *e-mail*?) consult the campus's *Editorial Style Guide*:

[http://identity.berkeley.edu/downloads/ucb\\_editorial\\_style.pdf](http://identity.berkeley.edu/downloads/ucb_editorial_style.pdf).

If the *Editorial Style Guide* does not answer your questions, consult the 14<sup>th</sup> or later edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

The campus has very specific definitions for three words regularly used in the context of policy writing:

- *Policies* are principles (or sets of principles) intended to govern actions.
- *Procedures* are the actions necessary to implement policies.
- *Guidelines* are abridged, user-friendly versions of procedures, usually published in informal venues like newsletters, pamphlets, or Web sites.

These words are often considered interchangeable, but shouldn't be. Be sure to use them accurately.

***The Template.*** To ensure clarity and consistency, the campus has introduced a standard template for campuswide policies. Find the template at:

<http://campuspol-dev.chance.berkeley.edu/PolicyTemplate.doc>

The template has some flexibility. You may not change the order in which information appears, as the design puts the most frequently requested information first, but you may present the information in the manner that best suits your department's needs.

Let's go through the fields one by one.

***Policy Issued.*** The date the policy is announced to the campus. Obviously, you won't have this information until late in the process.

***Effective Date.*** The date on which the campus needs to abide by the policy. It is often the same as the issue date, but can be retroactive or sometime in the future. If a policy is going to be phased in, use the date of the first phase.

***Supersedes.*** If there are previous policies on this subject, list them here by name and date of issuance. That way people will know which versions of the policy are outdated.

***UCB Seal Here.*** The Controller's Office will add the official seal when putting the policy on this Web site.

***Title.*** Should be no longer than a line or two and very precise. Do not include the word *policy* or the phrase *policy on*. Example: a policy about where people can smoke or advertise tobacco products would not be called "Smoking" or "Smoke-Free Policy," but "Smoking and Advertising Tobacco."

***Responsible Executive.*** The name and title of the senior official sponsoring the policy. The Responsible Executive can be the Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, a vice chancellor, or the Chief Information Officer.

***Responsible Office.*** The office(s) charged with administering the policy and accountable for the policy's accuracy, interpretation, and updating.

***Contact.*** The individual, phone number, and/or email address that members of the campus community can go to for direct answers to questions about the policy. If different sections of the policy are best answered by different contacts, list the various contacts and what type of questions they should be called about.

***Policy Statement.*** A brief, general statement of what the policy is.

*Who is Affected by This Policy.* A list of campus constituencies expected to abide by the policy, e.g. Faculty, Staff, Students, or subsections thereof (lecturers, casual employees, graduate students, etc.). List as many constituencies as necessary without getting overly detailed. If the policy affects everyone, say “Everyone at UC Berkeley.”

*Who Administers This Policy:* A list of campus staff classifications expected to enforce the policy or process transactions related to it, e.g. Departmental Business Officers, Departmental Budget Officers, General Accounting, the Police Department, etc. List as many classifications as necessary without getting overly detailed.

*Why We Have This Policy.* A one page or less explanation of why the policy is necessary. Reasons for the policy can be ethical, philosophical, legal, regulatory, historical, financial, pragmatic, or any combination thereof. Include a short statement about the policy’s expected impact on the campus. If serious consequences would result from failure to follow the policy, describe them. Add background information only if it will increase the campus community’s understanding.

*Responsibilities.* A bulleted list of what every administrative unit involved in the policy must do, e.g. Deans and Directors must do A, B, and C; Central Administration must do D, E, and F; Departmental Officers must do G, H, and I.

*Procedures.* Usually the longest and most detailed part of the policy. This section contains the series of steps, described in logical order and plain language, for carrying out the policy. Complex procedures should be presented in outline form. If there is a procedure for requesting exceptions to the policy, be sure to include it.

*Web Site Address for This Policy.* Where a reader can find an electronic version of the policy on the World Wide Web (will be supplied by the Controller’s Office after the policy is approved).

*Glossary.* An alphabetical list defining in plain language terms in the policy that have a specialized meaning. The Controller’s Office is developing a list of frequently-used terms and their definitions so you don’t have to re-invent the wheel.

*Keyword Index.* A list of words a non-expert might use to find the policy through the search engine at this Web site. This field will not be displayed in the final version of the policy.

*Related Documents.* Other policies or documents (such as federal and state laws or regulations) referred to in the policy or of interest to a reader who may want to investigate further. Provide Web links if they exist.

*Appendix.* Supplementary material that makes it easier for a reader to understand or comply with the policy. Forms referred to in the Procedures section of the policy may be attached as appendices if they are short; longer forms should be listed under Related Documents, with Web links provided if possible. If the policy has more than one

appendix, refer to each by letter in the text (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.) and order them appropriately at the end of the policy.

**Help.** You do not have to write a policy alone. In fact, we *strongly recommend* that at least one neutral reader without much background in the policy's subject matter review your work for clarity. For assistance — even extensive assistance — with writing or editing a policy, contact Andy Goldblatt at 643-9317 or [ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu).

### **Step Three: Getting the Policy Approved**

Once your draft is in good shape, take it to the Policy Advisory Group with an updated *Proposal to Add or Change Policy* form (the most crucial revision being Question 8, “List the names of any individuals or offices you have already consulted about this policy”).

The PAG will probably have a few additional suggestions for you. Once you've addressed those suggestions, you may finalize the policy.

In the unusual event that the PAG is sharply divided about the merits of your policy, you may have to involve your Responsible Executive in negotiations. Responsible Executives are limited to the following position holders:

- The Chancellor
- The Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
- The vice chancellors
- The Chief Information Officer

Your Responsible Executive has been delegated the authority to issue policies applying to the entire campus. However, the ultimate authority for policy on campus belongs to the Chancellor. Any controversial policy should have the Chancellor's support before it is issued.

### **Step Four: Issuing the Policy**

The policy should be announced by the Responsible Executive or the Chancellor in a memo that reaches the appropriate campus audience (always err on the side of communicating to too many people). Coordinate with the Controller's Office so it can post the policy on this Web site the day before the memo goes out. If you need help writing the memo, contact Andy Goldblatt at 643-9317 or [ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbpolicy@berkeley.edu). You may also publicize the policy through any listservs your department may have developed and through articles in the *Berkeleyan* or other campus media.

Policies should be reviewed every five years to make sure they haven't become outdated, either in whole or in part.