University policy development

While the Board of Trustees of Henderson State University is ultimately responsible for the control and function of the university, the President is empowered with the authority to manage the operation of the university. The President manages the university, in part, through his or her oversight of the creation and implementation of university policies. University policies are developed with the goal of a transparent system of shared governance in mind. Shared governance that involves all university constituents including faculty, staff, administration, and students allows the campus community to work together to resolve issues facing the university.

A university policy is a written directive, approved by the President of the university, that specifies appropriate actions and behavior, and that generally has university-wide applicability. Departmental or divisional guidelines, practices, and procedures, although useful and important, do not have university-wide applicability and are therefore not considered university Policies.

A university policy can be "academic" or "administrative" as defined:

- Academic policy directs the education functions of the university including but not limited to admission and degree requirements, the curriculum and methods of teaching, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities.
- Administrative policy directs the non-academic operational functions of the university.

Any university constituent may identify a need for a university policy.

If the issue that has been raised calls for an administrative policy, then the issue is referred to the appropriate vice president to determine if a university policy is needed. If the vice president agrees that there is a need for a university policy, he or she will assign the issue to the appropriate individual or ad hoc/standing committee for study and development of a draft policy. In the rare instance where consensus cannot be reached on the need for a university policy, the President will be consulted to decide the issue. The assigned individual or committee will consult with various university constituents including the Staff Senate, Human Resources, and the General Counsel, as appropriate. At the end of the study and drafting process, the assigned individual or committee will present the draft proposal to the appropriate vice president. The vice president will review and revise the policy and make a recommendation to the President for approval.

If the issue that has been raised calls for an academic policy, then the issue if referred to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to determine if a university policy is needed. The Provost will refer the issue and any proposed policy to the University Academic Council (for undergraduate academic issues), the Graduate Council (for graduate academic issues), the Faculty Senate (for faculty personnel issues or other university issues not specifically under the purview of the University Academic Council or Graduate Council) or to an ad hoc or standing committee. In the rare instance where consensus cannot be reached on the need for a university policy, the President will be consulted to decide the issue. The University Academic Council, Graduate Council, or the Faculty Senate may assign the study of

the issue and development of a draft policy to the appropriate ad hoc committee or standing committee. The assigned committee will consult with various university constituents including the Faculty Senate (if it has not been charged with developing the policy), Human Resources and General Counsel, as appropriate. At the end of the study and drafting process, the Faculty Senate, or the assigned committee will present the draft proposal to the body that assigned it with the development of the draft policy or to the Provost for review and comment. Once the Provost and the appropriate body (University Academic Council, Graduate Council, or Faculty Senate) have agreed upon a draft of the policy, the Provost will make a recommendation to the President for approval. In the event that a significant policy change is proposed, the President may determine that the issue should be considered by the Board of Trustees. If he or she so determines, the President will present his recommendation to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

Upon receiving a proposed policy from the Provost or other vice president, the President may conduct his or her own independent review and study of the issue.

The President may consult the President's Cabinet, an advisory body which provides a mechanism for the President to discuss possible outcomes and to consider the overall effects of the proposed policy for the university as a whole. Cabinet members represent their areas and are responsible for disseminating and implementing all university policies. Cabinet members include: Provost and VPAA, VPFA, VPSS, VPEP, General Counsel, Deans, Director of Computer Services, Director of Public Relations, Director of Athletics and Director of Institutional Advancement. When the President is considering a university policy, cabinet members are responsible for studying the proposed policy, consulting with the appropriate individuals in their areas and to advising the President as to the feasibility and potential impact of the proposed policy on their areas.

In order to achieve the goal of shared governance and collaborative decision-making, the President may conduct open campus forums on the issue and the proposed policy. The President may also call upon any of the university's advisory entities for input and guidance as he or she considers a policy. These advisory entities include:

- The Faculty Senate (for all matters pertinent to the university)
- The Staff Senate (which provides a forum for non-faculty personnel)
- The Student Government Association (which provides a representative voice for the student body)
- Any of the university committees set out in the Committee Handbook that were established to provide shared governance of the university and whose membership includes representation from the administration, faculty, staff and students
- The Strategic Planning Council, which is charged with developing and revising the strategic plan for the university, as well as budget development processes

In the event of an emergency or a change of federal or state law or policy affecting the university, the President may institute a university policy after following some or none of the steps described herein.