



MEMORANDUM

To: Brett Fairbairn, President
From: Noah Arney, Policy Specialist
Date: March 14, 2024
Subject: Policy Development and Approval Policy Revision

Background and Purpose of this document:

To provide information on the proposed updating and revision of the Policy Development and Approval policy and the Policy Framework it creates at Thompson Rivers University (TRU).

Background of Policy:

The Policy Development and Approval policy (the policy) in conjunction with the Thompson Rivers University Act and the University Act create the framework for policies that are developed at TRU. The policies created under this framework provide structure, reliability, and consistency to the actions, processes, and standards of TRU.

The policy was approved December 15, 2006. After review by the General Counsel in 2018 and by the Provost in 2020 changes were proposed to the policy in 2021 that were not implemented. In late 2023 the role of Policy Specialist was created to support the policy framework at TRU. One of the first tasks undertaken was to host broad engagement with the University Community to review the policy and policy framework and identify issues or concerns. Sixty-four members of the community participated including 19 Faculty, 36 Staff and Administration, and 9 students, in addition, 10 other members participated through an anonymous survey. This generated six pages of feedback which was summarized under eleven themes. Those themes were used to develop a principles document that was reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee of APPC, the General Counsel, and the Provost and then used to build a new version of the policy, that was reviewed by the same.

Attached is the proposed version of the policy which is also being sent to Senate for approval. Due to the substantial changes from the original it is not being provided in red-line.

Summary of Proposed Amendments:

Purpose

- The purpose of the policy, and TRU policy in general is clarified in the policy statement



Structure

- Policies approved by Senate, Board, and the President (Approval Authorities) now follow the same process for approval and amendment, but have different approvers and reviewers in place
- Clarity is given to PCOLs role in policy as an Approval Authority without specific policies
- Regulations should avoid including specific procedures, leaving those to the primary contact and approval authority to develop and share

Process

- Addition of the Policy Proposal to use a similar process for new policies, amended policies, and repealing policies
- University Secretariat or designate to oversee the policy process and provide support, including assigning responsibility for preparing Policy Proposals unless otherwise directed by the Approval Authority
- Requiring engagement and consultation for all policies
- Clarifying who provides advice on policies immediately before they are brought to the Approval Authority for notice of motion
- Clarifying Notice of Motion and Approval

Supports

- Updating how policy review works
- Making minor amendments to policies easier
- Provided clarity on who is responsible for ensuring policies are communicated and followed

Action Requested:

For the Board of Governors to approve the proposed changes to the Policy Development and Approval Policy.

Effective Date:

This policy must be approved by both Senate and the Board of Governors. Earliest Notice of Motion for Senate is March 25 with approval April 22, 2024. Earliest Notice of Motion for Board is March 28 with approval June 14, 2024.

Attachments:

- Policy Development and Approval policy, December 2006
- Policy Development and Approval policy, March 2024



POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL

POLICY NUMBER	N/A
APPROVAL DATE	DECEMBER 15, 2006
LAST AMENDMENT	JUNE 2006
REVIEW DATE	JUNE, 2011
AUTHORITY	BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND SENATE
PRIMARY CONTACT	PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

POLICY

Policy approval at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is intended to be an inclusive process. Interested parties will be consulted during the approval process. Policy development and approval will be consistent with the powers and duties of the Board of Governors, Senate and Planning Council for Open Learning as prescribed by the *Thompson Rivers University Act* (the "TRU Act").

TRU policies and regulations are published on TRU's website. The TRU community will be informed, on a monthly basis, of new and amended policies. Those units wishing to keep a paper copy of the current policies and regulations can print them from the website.

REGULATIONS

I) TYPES OF POLICIES

1. There are four types of policies at Thompson Rivers University. They are:
 - a. policies adopted by the Board;
 - b. policies adopted by Senate;
 - c. policies adopted by the Planning Council for Open Learning; and
 - d. policies adopted by President's Council.

II) CONTENT OF POLICIES

TRU policies contain the following:

1. Policy Statement

Policy statements guide the behaviour and actions of the administration and the University community. They do not specify the manner in which policies are to be implemented.

2. Regulations

Policy Regulations define the manner in which policies are to be implemented.

III) DEVELOPMENT OF NEW POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. New policies and regulations are developed by the Board, Senate, and the Planning Council for Open Learning in accordance with the respective powers and duties of the Board, Senate, and Planning Council for Open Learning set out in the *TRU Act* and *University Act*. President's Council develops operational policies.

The President may request any of those bodies to develop a policy or regulation, or revise a policy, with respect to subject matter within its powers.

IV) POLICY APPROVAL PROCESS**1. Board of Governors Policies**

The Board of Governors has the authority to establish policies and regulations in respect of matters within its power under the *TRU Act* and the *University Act*.

- a. Upon direction of the Board, the President will assign responsibility for the development of draft policies and regulations.
- b. Draft policies and regulations will be reviewed by President's Council prior to Board consideration.
- c. The Board must seek advice from Senate, and Senate must advise the Board, on the development of educational policies in respect of matters described in section 10 of the *TRU Act*.
- d. Prior to approving a policy, the Board will serve Notice of Motion as set out below.

- e. Policies approved by the Board will be forwarded to Senate and the Planning Council for Open Learning for information

2. Senate Policies

Senate has the authority to establish policies and regulations in respect of matters within its power under the *TRU Act*.

- a. In developing a new policy or regulation, Senate will determine in each case who will be responsible to prepare a draft, and which Committee of Senate, if any, will review the draft.
- b. Prior to approving a policy, Senate will serve Notice of Motion as set out below.
- c. Policies approved by Senate will be forwarded to the Board and Planning Council for Open Learning for information.

3. Planning Council for Open Learning Policies

The Planning Council for Open Learning has the authority to establish policies and regulations in respect of matters within its power under the *TRU Act*.

- a. In developing a new policy or regulation, the Planning Council will determine in each case who will be responsible to prepare a draft, and which Committee of Planning Council, if any, will review the draft.
- b. Prior to approving a policy, the Planning Council will serve Notice of Motion as set out below.
- c. Policies approved by Planning Council will be forwarded to the Board and Senate for information.

4. President's Council Policies

Operational policies are those which prescribe administrative processes. These policies are intended to provide for the efficient operation of the University and may be developed in order to provide clear direction to employees of the University.

- a. Normally draft policies are developed by the administrative unit responsible for implementing the policy.
- b. Prior to approving a policy, the President's Council will serve two weeks Notice of Motion.

5. Notice of Motion

- a. Prior to approving a new policy and regulations, or revisions to an existing policy, Notice of Motion will be given by the Board, Senate, or Planning Council for Open Learning at its regularly-scheduled meeting prior to approval.
- b. Notices of Motion, including a link to the draft policy, will be posted electronically to all departments for posting in areas frequented by employees and students.
- c. A draft policy may be approved notwithstanding that it is amended after Notice of Motion is posted, provided the governing body approving the policy considers that the nature of the amendments do not warrant delaying approval of the policy by issuing a further Notice of Motion with respect to the amended policy.

V) POLICY REVIEW

1. All policies will include a 'Review by' date for review of the policy and regulations no later than 5 years after their approval, or their last review, as the case may be.
2. The Board of Governors, Senate, Planning Council for Open Learning or President's Council may, at any time, initiate a review of any of its policies.
3. The Office of the President will refer policies that are due for review to the responsible governing body.
4. Policies without a 'Review By' date will be reviewed by the responsible governing body five years from the date of approval.
5. Once a review has taken place, the Policy Approval Process set out above in Article IV, will be followed.

VI) AMENDING REGULATIONS

1. Regulations can be, and should be, amended as required to meet the changing needs of the University.
 - a. The President may amend regulations based on consultation with appropriate members of the University community, provided the amended regulations conform to the approved policy.
 - b. Normally, the Board, Senate, Planning Council for Open Learning or President's Council will be informed of amended regulations.
 - c. The Board, Senate, or Planning Council for Open Learning may, with respect to regulations under their respective policies, determine to review and alter any amended regulations approved by the President.

VII) **LEGAL ADVICE**

The Associate Vice-President Legal will provide legal advice on, and assistance in drafting, new and revised policies and regulations.

VIII) **RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. It is the responsibility of the Executive Assistant to the Board and Office of the President to maintain the Policy Manual on TRU's Website and to inform the TRU community of any new policies and amendments.
2. Administrative heads are responsible for the dissemination of policy information and making the information accessible to staff in their units. They are also responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are appropriately communicated and applied in their units.
3. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff to familiarize themselves with the contents of the Policy Manual and conduct themselves accordingly.

IX) **REPOSITORY**

In order to maintain comprehensive and easily retrievable documentation, correspondence, and records on policy development will be filed with the Executive Assistant to the Board of Governors.

X) **COMMUNICATION OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

Approved policies and regulations are posted in the Policy Manual on TRU's website <http://www.tru.ca/policy/allpolicy.html> . The TRU community will be informed monthly of any new or amended policies and regulations.

XI) **EXCEPTIONS**

Under exceptional circumstances, the President may approve new policies and regulations or revisions to existing policies and regulations on an interim basis until such time that the policy may proceed through the regular policy approval process.

(In this Policy the term Senate refers to the University Council established under section 8(1) of the Thompson Rivers University Act.)

Policy Development and Approval

Policy Name	Policy Development and Approval
First Approved	(Leave blank; will be completed once approved)
Last Amendment	(Leave blank; will be completed once approved)
Last Reviewed	(Leave blank; will be completed once approved)
Approval Authority	Board of Governors, Senate
Category	Joint: Governance
Primary Contact	University Secretariat
Administrative Contact(s)	Policy Specialist

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to guide the development, approval, review, and communication of policies at Thompson Rivers University (TRU). The purpose of university policy is to provide structure and consistency to the actions, processes, and standards of TRU and the university community.

Policy development and approval will be consistent with the powers and duties of the Board of Governors, Senate, Planning Council for Open Learning (PCOL), and President as prescribed by the *Thompson Rivers University Act* and the *University Act*. Policy approval at TRU is intended to be an inclusive process, upholding the principles of shared governance and ensuring engagement and consultation with the university community.

Policies will be easily available to the university community. Approval Authorities, as well as academic and non-academic units will develop procedures, guidelines, forms, and documents as required to support policy.

REGULATIONS

1 POLICY APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

Policies are approved by Approval Authorities which are the tri-cameral governance bodies of the Board of Governors, Senate, and PCOL as well as the President of TRU. They cover matters that the Approval Authority has jurisdiction over according to the *TRU Act* and *University Act* or has been delegated to oversee. They include:

- Board policies as adopted by the Board of Governors;
- Educational policies as adopted by Senate or as adopted by Senate on the advice or recommendation of PCOL;
- Administrative policies as adopted by the President.

Policies may be jointly adopted.

Board policies are intended to provide guidance and structure to the management, administration and control of the property, revenue, business and affairs of TRU. For Board policies addressing

educational matters described in Section 10 of the *TRU Act* the Board of Governors must seek advice from Senate, and Senate must advise the Board of Governors.

Educational policies are intended to provide guidance and structure to the educational mission of TRU. Senate must seek advice from PCOL on policies addressing matters described in Section 12 (1) of the *TRU Act* and PCOL may amend educational policy statements and regulations limited to what is set out in Section 12 (1) of the *TRU Act*.

Administrative policies are intended to provide for the efficient operation of TRU and may be developed to provide clear direction to employees of TRU.

2 CONTENT OF POLICIES

TRU policies contain the following:

2.1 POLICY STATEMENT

Policy statements, titled “Policy”, guide the behaviour and actions of the University community by outlining the goals and/or values as they relate to the policy in question. They provide context, scope, and core concepts.

2.2 REGULATIONS

Policy regulations, titled “Regulations” define the rules that are to be followed to achieve the policy statement including implementation and oversight. Specific procedures and guidelines should be excluded.

3 POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AMENDMENT, AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The policy development, amendment, and approval process is overseen by the University Secretariat or designate.

3.1 POLICY PROPOSAL

A Policy Proposal means a proposal new policy, amended policy, or a recommendation to repeal a current policy. It should include information about the issues and context informing a policy and a draft policy or recommendation for repealing of a policy.

Unless otherwise directed by the Approval Authority, the person responsible for preparing a Policy Proposal is assigned by the University Secretariat or designate. The University Secretariat or designate will provide advice on, and assistance in, drafting Policy Proposals.

A recommendation for a Policy Proposal can be made by anyone in the university community to the relevant Primary Contact for existing policies, or the University Secretariat or designate.

3.2 ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

All policies will be developed after engaging broadly with the university community to seek feedback and input.

This engagement should include those implementing or administering the policy and those impacted by the implementation of the policy normally including students, Indigenous university community members, members of equity deserving groups, and those engaged in collegial governance within TRU.

Policy Proposals should be reviewed by the University Secretariat or designate who may recommend additional review by specific groups, academic or administrative units, or legal counsel. Information on the engagement and consultation process done as part of a Policy Proposal should be provided to the Approval Authority prior to its approval.

Before approval, Policy Proposals will be reviewed by an appropriate body:

- Board policies are reviewed by President's Leadership Group, or another committee chosen by the President;
- Educational policies are reviewed by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee, or another committee chosen by the Senate;
- Administrative policies are reviewed by President's Leadership Group, or another committee chosen by the President.

These bodies may provide advice and/or a recommendation about the Policy Proposal in question or may recommend additional work be done on the Policy Proposal.

3.3 NOTICE OF MOTION

Prior to the approval of a new policy, a repeal of a policy, or a major amendment of policies (other than changes under section 5), Notice of Motion will be given by the Approval Authority at its regularly-scheduled meeting prior to approval. For Administrative policies this will be 10 working days before approval.

The Approval Authority will be provided with detailed information about the Policy Proposal before Notice of Motion is issued. Notice of Motion is a means by which the Approval Authority is notified that a motion will be brought forward at its next meeting and is not a motion that requires voting.

Notices of Motion, including a link to the Policy Proposal, will be posted by the University Secretariat on the TRU website.

3.4 POLICY APPROVAL

Policy Proposals that have had their Notice of Motion issued will be decided on by Approval Authorities in the manner they choose. If approved it will be forwarded to the other Approval Authorities for information and notice will be provided to the people responsible for writing the Policy Proposal and the Primary Contact.

4 POLICY REVIEW

All policies will include a 'Last Reviewed' date and 'Last Amendment Date' which will be updated by the University Secretariat after the policy has been reviewed and/or amended. All policies should be reviewed periodically, typically 5 years from its approval or last review to determine whether they need to be amended or repealed.

Approval Authorities may, at any time, initiate a review of any of their policies.

5 AMENDING POLICIES

Policies can and should be amended as required to meet the changing needs of TRU.

5.1 MINOR AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the text of policy statements and regulations, that do not change the meaning or intent of the policy including but not limited to updating terms, titles, formatting, or to fix spelling and grammatical errors, may be done with the approval of the Primary Contact and sent for information to the Approval Authority.

Amendments to regulations that an Approval Authority deems minor may be approved by that Authority without requiring a Policy Proposal or Notice of Motion.

5.2 OTHER AMENDMENTS

The President may amend regulations based on consultation with appropriate members of the University community, provided the amended regulations conform to the approved policy statement. These changes are subject to amendment by the Approval Authority at a subsequent meeting of the Approval Authority.

Other amendments may be done through a Policy Proposal.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the University Secretariat to maintain the policy manual of approved policies on TRU's website and to inform the TRU community of any new or amended policies.

All modified or repealed policies will be archived with the University Secretariat.

Executive and Administrative employees are responsible for the dissemination of policy information and making the information accessible to faculty and staff in their units. They are also responsible for ensuring that the policies are appropriately communicated and applied in their units.

It is the responsibility of all employees to familiarize themselves with the contents of the policy manual and conduct themselves accordingly.



7 EXCEPTIONS

Under exceptional circumstances, the President may approve new policies and regulations or amendments to existing policies and regulations on an interim basis until such time that the policy may proceed through the regular policy approval process.

DRAFT - for consultation purposes