

Responsible Executive: Chancellor
Responsible Administrator: Vice Chancellor
Responsible Office: Strategic System Services
Span of Applicability: NMSU System
Effective Date: TBD
Adopted: 10/21/2015
Last Reviewed 05/08/2018; **Last Revised:** 5/08/2018

1.10 - NMSU System Policy Framework

PART 1: AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Authority:** The Board of Regents has delegated to the chancellor the authority to promulgate, amend and repeal Operational Policy (rules and procedures) for the NMSU System. (RPM 1.10; RPM 1.30).
- 1.2 Purpose:** The purpose of this rule is to establish the criteria for NMSU Operational Policy, and to describe how it is developed, vetted, approved, published, administered, and reviewed on a cyclic basis. Additionally, it identifies the Operational Policy Facilitator as the office to maintain NMSU's policy system.

PART 2: SUMMARY

- 2.1 Policy Framework:** This rule describes four types of Policy Action, which corresponds to distinct vetting and approval paths. The Responsible Administrator, in consultation with Stakeholders and Responsible Offices, is authorized to issue corresponding Implementing Guidelines and Standards (IGS) to provide clarification and interpretation consistent with this rule to facilitate implementation. For this rule, the IGS will illustrate policy flow and may provide procedural detail such as timelines, forms and templates. The Implementing Guidelines and Standards will be linked from the Operational Policy and will be binding on the NMSU Community.
- 2.2 Policy Support Services:** The Policy Steering Committee, led by the Operational Policy Facilitator, is assigned an integral role in the administration of this rule, consistent with the principles of Shared Governance. The OPF and the PSC promote best practices, be responsive to Stakeholders and take action consistent with the best interests of NMSU. The PSC collaborates with those involved in the policy sponsoring, vetting and approval processes to determine the nature and type of the proposed Policy Action, and will provide informed recommendations to the chancellor.

PART 3: DEFINITIONS

The following terms will be capitalized to denote they are defined terms for purposes of this rule. In the future, all defined terms may be relocated to a centralized glossary in the NMSU Policy Library, within the ARP, but outside of an individual Operational Policy.

- 3.1 Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU (ARP):** The online compilation of NMSU Operational Policies, accessible through the NMSU Policy Library.
- 3.2 Implementing Guidelines and Standards (IGS):** Supplemental guidance issued by the relevant Responsible Administrator, in consultation with Responsible Offices and Stakeholders, which may include step by step procedural detail to help the user understand the intent, application, or administrative processes required by the policy objective.

- 3.3 Key Process Elements: NMSU Board of Regents (BOR):** The governing board for NMSU and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA).
- 3.4 NMSU Community:** NMSU officials, students and employees, as well as visitors to campus. A visitor includes and is not limited to affiliates, contractors, vendors and the general public.
- 3.5 NMSU Policy Library:** Located on the web at <https://policy.nmsu.edu>, this site contains links to the various tiers of policy directives applicable throughout the NMSU System: 1) Regents policy set by the NMSU Board of Regents (RPM); 2) Operational Policy enacted by the chancellor, and 3) Implementing Guidelines and Standards(IGS) issued by the relevant Responsible Administrator.
- 3.6 NMSU System:** Property and operations under the control of the NMSU Board of Regents throughout the state, including the academic and administrative support units and their respective faculty, staff, students and visitors. The NMSU System includes all NMSU community colleges, educational centers, agricultural experiment stations, cooperative extension offices, and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.
- 3.7 Operational Policy:** Policy statements (rules), or key process elements adopted by the chancellor that apply throughout the NMSU System that meet one or more of the criteria set forth in Part 4.1.
- 3.8 Operational Policy Facilitator:** An NMSU official appointed by the vice-chancellor to assist the Office of the Chancellor with administration of this rule, and to maintain the NMSU Policy Library.
- 3.9 Policy Actions:** One of four types of action sought by a Proposal Sponsor: 1) substantive revisions; minor revisions; 3) non-substantive corrections and updates and 4) interim policy. See Part 4.3 below.
- 3.10 Proposal Sponsor:** The initiator of a proposal for Policy Action. Typically, Proposal Sponsors are the Responsible Office or Responsible Administrator and may be campus constituencies (e.g. Faculty Senate, ASNMSU, Employee Council).
- 3.11 Policy Steering Committee:** A collaborative university board charged to oversee the policy development, vetting and approval processes, comprised of executive leadership appointed by the chancellor and Faculty Senate leadership, with *ex officio* support staff.
- 3.12 Responsible Administrator:** An NMSU administrator assigned by the Operational Policy Facilitator with concurrence of the Vice-Chancellor to oversee development, implementation and administration (including training), and cyclic review and update for Operational Policy under their purview.
- 3.13 Responsible Executive:** The supervisor of the Responsible Administrator.
- 3.14 Responsible Office:** The NMSU unit supervised by the Responsible Administrator designated to carry out the day to day responsibilities involved with Operational Policy development, implementation and administration (including training), cyclic review and update.
- 3.15 Shared Governance:** Shared Governance as it pertains to this rule refers to participation by Faculty Senate leadership on behalf of all faculty in the various phases of policy making, including policy development, vetting, recommendation for approval, implementation and cyclic review. See RPM 1.70.
- 3.16 Stakeholder:** A member of the NMSU Community, including representative constituencies, departments or other units that may be impacted by a proposed Policy Action. Examples include the Faculty Senate, the Associated Students of NMSU (ASNMSU) and the Employee Council.

PART 4: KEY POLICY STATEMENTS

- 4.1 Operational Policy Criteria:** Operational Policy is promulgated by the Office of the Chancellor, designed to foster transparency, consistency and accountability throughout the NMSU System.
- A. Operational Policy must meet one or more of the following criteria:
1. Provides operational direction to advance NMSU's mission, goals and strategic plans;
 2. Aligns unit functions to promote operational efficiency and effectiveness;

3. Requires or prohibits specific actions of NMSU employees, students and external individuals who use NMSU resources or services.
 4. Is necessary to implement Board of Regents policy or directive or to mitigate institutional risk, including support for adherence to applicable legal requirements;
- B. Operational Policy does not include: 1) NMSU unit directives that apply only within the unit; 2) regulations promulgated by the NMSU Board of Regents in its capacity as the governing body for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture pursuant to the State Rules Act, NMSA 1978, § 14-4-1 et seq or 3) Regents Policies approved by the NMSU Board of Regents.

4.2 Fundamental Principles:

- A. Policy Priorities: Through Operational Policy and associated Implementing Guidelines and Standards, NMSU administration protects the health, safety and welfare of the NMSU Community members, and safeguards and preserves NMSU finances, property and resources. Consideration should be given to how a specific policy proposal aligns with the NMSU mission, vision and goals, as well as the potential impact of a proposed policy action on the various Stakeholders, including students, faculty and staff and NMSU property and resources.
- B. Policy Hierarchy: NMSU policies exist within the hierarchy of authorities set forth below. If a conflict or inconsistency arises, the provisions of the higher hierarchical level of policy governs.
- 1) Federal law, statutes, and regulations
 - 2) State law, statutes, and regulations
 - 3) Policy and procedures of the NMSU Board of Regents (Regents Policy Manual)
 - 4) NMSU System Operational Policy
 - 5) Implementing Guidelines and Standards
 - 6) Unit-Level directives and protocols (college, division, department, program, or activity).
- C. Chancellor's Authority: Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the chancellor's authority to issue, revise, waive or rescind an Operational Policy or unit-level policy to respond to a public health emergency or other unforeseen disaster, time sensitive external directive or emerging risk, or other extraordinary circumstance. (See Interim Policy Action)
- D. Engaging Stakeholders: NMSU is committed to Shared Governance and engaging with relevant Stakeholders.
- E. Duty to Abide by NMSU Policy: All members of the NMSU Community are expected to review and abide by Operational Policy and associated Implementing Guidelines and Standards applicable to their duties, responsibilities, or activities.
- F. Approach in Drafting: Policy Sponsors and Responsible Administrators and Offices should maximize practicality and minimize burdens of time, cost or other resource expenditure, training, and complexity in their approach when drafting NMSU Operational Policy and associated Implementing Guidelines and Standards.
- G. Resolution of Conflicts in Policy Documents: NMSU Operational Policy is maintained by the Operational Policy Facilitator and published in the centralized electronic policy library. Should a conflict or inconsistency arise between electronic, hardcopy or other ARP documentation, the ARP documentation signed by the chancellor upon approval will govern.

- H. **Referencing:** NMSU webpages referencing Operational Policy must link directly to the official ARP landing page. Unit handbooks, guidebooks, procedures, and similar resource material should refer or link to the ARP and not duplicate Operational Policy or associated Implementing Guidelines and Standards in their resource material.

4.3 Types of Policy Action: Policy Sponsors and Responsible Administrators may request one of the following types of Policy Actions:

- A. **Substantive Revision (New, Revised or Repealed Policy):** Policy action that repeals current policy, proposes new initiatives or programs, rewrites and significantly updates, with more than a minor impact on operations, including budget impact, as confirmed by the Policy Steering Committee. Examples may include development or revisions to align with accreditation standards, changes consistent with law or regulatory standards, executive orders or regents policy.
- B. **Minor Revision (New, Revised or Repealed Policy):** Policy Action with minor fiscal impact or minor impact to current NMSU operations, as confirmed by the Policy Steering Committee. Examples may include reformatting with clarification and update; repeal of an undisputedly obsolete policy, documentation of established practice not disputed to be current policy.
- C. **Non-Substantive Corrections and Updates:** Policy action which merely corrects errors in the ARP (grammatical or typographical errors, broken hyperlinks), updates job titles or office names, or other similar non-substantive change that has no operational impact.
- D. **Interim Policy (New, Revised or Repealed Policy):** Policy action with either major or minor impact to NMSU operations, approved directly by the chancellor for either six months or a year. See Part 5.4. A. 3) c)

4.4 Authorization of Implementing Guidelines and Standards: This rule authorizes the respective Responsible Administrators, in consultation with Responsible Offices and Stakeholders, to issue Implementing Guidelines and Standards (IGS). IGS must be consistent with regents policy and the ARP. The IGS will be linked from the ARP to help the user understand the intent, application, or administrative processes relevant to the policy objective and may include timelines, flow charts, FAQs, templates, forms, interpretative clarification etc. Responsible Administrators must provide a copy of each official edition of their respective IGS to the Operational Policy Facilitator.

4.5 Roles of the Policy Steering Committee and Operational Policy Facilitator: The Policy Steering Committee (PSC) provides guidance, promotes transparency and awareness, facilitates communication and provides informed recommendations to the chancellor for Policy Action(s). The Operational Policy Facilitator (OPF) is charged with supporting the PSC, serving as a resource for Proposal Sponsors and Responsible Administrators, and for maintaining the NMSU Policy Library. The OPF works with the PSC to prioritize and guide Policy Action proposals through coordination, facilitation and monitoring, including cyclic reviews.

PART 5: KEY PROCESS ELEMENTS

Key Process Elements provide the essential procedural steps required by this rule. The Implementing Guidelines and Standards provide information in distinct formats to facilitate compliance with the rule. The Key Process Elements relating to the creation, approval and maintenance of Operational Policy are set forth below:

- 5.1 Initiation of Policy Action:** Proposal(s) for Policy Action may be initiated by any member or constituency of the NMSU Community. The Proposal Sponsor consults with the relevant Responsible Office(s) and/or Responsible Administrator(s) and jointly complete a [Proposed Policy Action Form](#), which must indicate approval of the Responsible Administrator to move forward.
- 5.2 Review by PSC:** The Operational Policy Facilitator (OPF) supports the Policy Steering Committee (PSC) and serves as a resource for proposal sponsors. Proposals are submitted to the PSC through the OPF. The PSC confirms the type of Policy Action proposed, which in turn determines the applicable vetting groups, and approval process.
- 5.3 Vetting:** Review of proposals is conducted in accordance with principles of shared governance and an inclusive process. Once the PSC determines the vetting groups, the Proposal Sponsor in coordination manages the vetting and finalization process in coordination with the Responsible Administrator.
- A. Routing to Vetting Groups: Vetting groups include Stakeholders, University General Counsel for legal implications and any other unit deemed appropriate by the PSC. Academic proposals will be submitted to Faculty Senate. The Proposal Sponsor coordinates with the OPF to arrange for posting the proposal for university wide review and comment, if indicated by the PSC. Stakeholders who do not respond during the vetting period will be deemed to have abstained.
- B. Finalization Based on Feedback: The Responsible Administrator and Proposal Sponsor will review feedback and make revisions consistent with interests of the institution. Substantially modified proposals may re-posted or re-routed based on guidance from the PSC.
- 5.4 Approvals:**
- A. Expedited Review/Approval: Three of the four types of Policy Actions are subject to abbreviated vetting and approval processes.
1. Non-Substantive Policy Updates: Require approval only from the Operational Policy Facilitator.
 2. Minor Policy Revisions: Require a consensus recommendation from the Policy Steering Committee and approval from the Chancellor to enact.
 3. Interim Policy Actions: Requires approval from the chancellor to address situations where there is a compelling need for an immediate policy change.
 - a) Examples of Interim Policy Action include revisions for compliance with accreditation standards, state or federal law, regulation, executive order; or needed to address time sensitive issues (e.g. for risk management purposes).
 - b) Interim Policy Actions will be announced to campus in similar fashion as other approved Policy Actions and the formal proposal and vetting process will be commenced at an appropriate time, in the chancellor's discretion, in consultation with the Policy Steering Committee.
 - c) Interim Policy Actions will be effective for six months, with the potential for a time extension by the Chancellor. Interim Actions typically will not be effective for more than 12 months. Interim Actions, including extensions of their effective dates, must be formally documented as approved by the chancellor.
- B. Review/Approval for Substantive Policy Revisions: After the proposal has been vetted, the PSC will issue its collective recommendations to the chancellor. In making the final decision to approve or disapprove a proposed Policy Action, the chancellor will balance the needs and interests of the involved units and Stakeholders with the best interest of the institution. Upon either approval from the Chancellor or upon the effective date, the Operational Policy Facilitator will upload the Operational Policy into the NMSU Policy Library at arp.nmsu.edu.

5.5 Publication, Communication and Reporting:

Chancellor approved Policy Actions will be routed to the OPF for inclusion in the NMSU Policy Library. New or substantively revised policy, including interim policy, will be announced via the NMSU mass communication channel(s) and appropriately disseminated. The OPF will submit a summary of approved Policy Actions as an informational item for placement on the agenda for each regular meeting of the Board of Regents.

5.6 Implementation and Administration: Performed by the Responsible Office designated by the Responsible Administrator, policy administration includes training of staff, initial implementation and day to day application and adherence to the policy.

5.7 Cyclic Review and Update: To stay current with the legal, political and environmental changes which affect institutions of higher learning, Responsible Executives are charged with the cyclic review of Operational Policy within their purview. Cyclic review will occur within a range of three to five years from the date of adoption or from the most recent date of modification. If an Operational Policy is reviewed, but not revised, it will be so indicated in the revision history. When cyclic review results in a proposed update, the Responsible Administrator will coordinate with the Operational Policy Facilitator to submit the appropriate proposal for Policy Action for consideration consistent with this rule.

PART 6: CROSS REFERENCES (*Sources of Authority, Related Authority and Appendices*)

[Regents Policy 1.10, NMSU Policies and Rules](#)
[Regents Policy 1.70, Shared Governance](#)
[ARP IGS -1.10](#)

More work to be done re: the ISGs, which will contain the following types of info:

- [Policy Development Process Graphic](#)
- [Proposed Policy Action Form](#)
- [Policy Action Proposal Kit](#)