

Responsible Executive: Chancellor  
Responsible Administrator: Vice Chancellor  
Responsible Office: Strategic System Services  
Limitations on Span of Applicability (if any):  
Effective Date: TBD  
Adopted: 10/21/2015  
Last Reviewed 05/08/2018; Last Revised: 5/08/2018

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## 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 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 System 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 official to facilitate and support the work of the Policy Steering Committee, including maintenance of the NMSU Policy Library.

### PART 2: SUMMARY

- 2.1 **Policy Framework:** This rule describes the types of Policy Action which may amend NMSU System Operational Policies maintained in the Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU. The type of Policy Action proposed will determine the vetting and approval route the proposal will follow. The Responsible Administrator, in consultation with Stakeholders and Responsible Offices, is authorized to issue corresponding Standard Operating Procedures to provide clarification and interpretation of the rule, to facilitate implementation. For this rule, the Standard Operating Procedures will illustrate policy flow, and provide instructions (template forms, policy format) regarding initiation of a proposal for Policy Action.
- 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 Policy Steering Committee and Operational Policy Facilitator will promote best practices relating to policy development, review and approval, including being responsive to Stakeholders and taking action consistent with the best interests of NMSU. The Policy Steering Committee confirms the type of Policy Action proposed to determine the appropriate vetting and approval process, as well as collaborates with those involved in the policy sponsoring and vetting and approval processes, and provides the final recommendation 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 from the individual policies to a centralized glossary in the NMSU Policy Library.

- 3.1 **Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU:** The online compilation of NMSU Operational Policies, accessible through the NMSU Policy Library.

- 3.2 NMSU Board of Regents:** The governing board for NMSU and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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; 2) Operational Policy enacted by the chancellor, and 3) Standard Operating Procedures issued by the relevant Responsible Administrator. See also Part 5.5 C. below.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 Operational Policy:** Policy statements (rules), or key process elements (essential procedures) adopted by the chancellor that apply throughout the NMSU System that meet one or more of the criteria set forth in Part 4.1.
- 3.7 Operational Policy Facilitator:** An NMSU official designated by the vice-chancellor to facilitate and support the Policy Steering Committee and the Office of the Chancellor with administration of this policy.
- 3.8 Policy Action:** The type of action sought by a Proposal Sponsor pertaining to Operational Policy: 1) new, amended or repealed policy, 2) interim policy, or 3) non-substantive correction or update. (See *Part 4.3 below.*)
- 3.9 Proposal Sponsor:** The initiator of a proposal for Policy Action. The Proposal Sponsor will often be the Responsible Office or Responsible Administrator, but may also be an individual or campus constituency (e.g. ASNMSU, Faculty Senate, Employee Council).
- 3.10 Policy Steering Committee:** A collaborative university board charged to oversee the policy development, vetting and approval processes. The Policy Steering Committee is comprised of executive leadership and/or other NMSU representatives appointed by the chancellor, and Faculty Senate leadership (chair and vice chair or their designees). The Operational Policy Facilitator and other support staff as designated by the Office of the Chancellor will attend in a non-voting, ex officio capacity.
- 3.11 Responsible Administrator:** The NMSU administrative position designated by the Operational Policy Facilitator with concurrence of the Vice-Chancellor charged with oversight of the development, implementation and administration (including training), and cyclic review and update for Operational Policy under the administrator's purview.
- 3.12 Responsible Executive:** The supervisor of the Responsible Administrator.
- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 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 *Regents Policy Manual 1.70*)
- 3.15 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.
- 3.16 Standard Operating Procedures:** 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.

## 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 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 accreditation standards, regulatory and 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 Standard Operating Procedures, 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; regional and programmatic accreditation standards; and the potential impact of a proposed Policy Action to the various Stakeholders and to 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. Standard Operating Procedures (reflective of regional accreditation standards where appropriate)
6. Unit-Level (college, division, department) directives and protocols (reflective of programmatic accreditation standards where appropriate)

C. Chancellor's Authority: Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the chancellor's authority to issue, amend, suspend or repeal 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 at Part 4.3 B.*)

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 Regents Policy, Operational Policy and associated Standard Operating Procedures 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 Standard Operating Procedures.
- G. Resolution of Conflicts in Policy Documents: Should a conflict or inconsistency arise, the Operational Policy approved and signed by the chancellor will govern.
- H. Cross- Referencing: NMSU webpages referencing NMSU policy must link directly to the appropriate landing page. Unit handbooks, guidebooks, procedures, and similar resource materials should refer to or link to the source policy document, and not duplicate material from the various policy sources (regents policy, operational policy, standard operating procedures).

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

- A. New, Amended or Repealed Policy: Policy action that repeals current policy, proposes new initiatives or programs, or amends with an significant operational impact. Proposals for new policy, amended policy or repeal of policy that will have a significant operational impact will be enacted after vetting with the Stakeholders, as indicated by the Policy Steering Committee.
- B. Interim Policy: Policy action for which there is a compelling reason to expedite, approved directly by the chancellor. Interim policy will be enacted after consultation with the Office of General Counsel. Interim Policy will be effective for a period of either six months or a year, during which time the interim policy will be formally vetted.
- 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. Non-substantive policy action will be enacted by the Operational Policy Facilitator after consultation with the Responsible Administrator.

**4.4 Analysis of Impact of Proposed Policy Action:** When a proposal has the potential for significant operational impact as determined by the Policy Steering Committee ([\*Policy Action Toolkit at "Reasonably Anticipated Operational Impact", page 4\*](#)), it will be assigned for formal vetting by the appropriate Stakeholders.

**4.5 Authorization of Standard Operating Procedures:** This rule authorizes the respective Responsible Administrators, in consultation with Responsible Offices and Stakeholders, to issue Standard Operating Procedures, which must be consistent with Regents Policy and with Operational Policy. The Standard Operating Procedures will be linked from the relevant Operational Policy 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 Standard Operating Procedures to the Operational Policy Facilitator for publication and records maintenance purposes.

- 4.6 Roles of the Policy Steering Committee and Operational Policy Facilitator:** The Policy Steering Committee provides guidance, promotes transparency and awareness, facilitates communication and provides informed recommendations to the chancellor regarding the proposals for Policy Action. The Operational Policy Facilitator is charged with supporting the Policy Steering Committee, serving as a resource for Proposal Sponsors and Responsible Administrators, and for maintaining the electronic NMSU Policy Library. The Operational Policy Facilitator works with the Policy Steering Committee to prioritize and guide Policy Action proposals through coordination, facilitation and monitoring, including cyclic reviews.
- 4.7 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 and update as needed of Operational Policy within their purview. (See Part 5.7 below)

## 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) to complete a [Proposed Policy Action Form](#). The Responsible Administrator signs the form to acknowledge that the Proposal will be submitted to the Policy Steering Committee as the first step in the review process.
- 5.2 Review by Policy Steering Committee:** The Operational Policy Facilitator supports the Policy Steering Committee and serves as a resource for Proposal Sponsors. Proposals are submitted to the Policy Steering Committee through the Operational Policy Facilitator or designee(s). The Policy Steering Committee confirms the type of Policy Action proposed and the corresponding policy impact, 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 Policy Steering Committee determines the vetting groups, the Proposal Sponsor in coordination with the Responsible Administrator manages the vetting and finalization process. The Operational Policy Facilitator will coordinate posting the proposal at the appropriate policy website for university wide review and comment. The Office of General Counsel may provide comment on any proposal at any stage in the policy development and formal vetting and approval process.
- A. Routing to Vetting Groups: Vetting groups include Stakeholders including any unit deemed appropriate by the Policy Steering Committee. Academic proposals will be submitted to Faculty Senate. 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 be re-posted by the Operational Policy Facilitator or re-routed based on guidance from the Policy Steering Committee.

## 5.4 Approvals:

- A. Expedited Review/Approval: Two of the three types of Policy Actions are subject to abbreviated vetting and approval processes.
1. Non-Substantive Policy Updates: Requires action by the Operational Policy Facilitator and notice to the Responsible Administrator.
  2. New, Amended or Repealed Policy with Insignificant Operational Impact: Requires an informative 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 reason justifying an expedited 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, as decided by the chancellor, 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 which should not exceed one year. Interim Actions, including extensions of their effective dates, if any, must be formally documented as approved by the chancellor.
- B. New, Amended or Repealed Policy with Significant Operational Impact: After the proposal has been vetted, the Policy Steering Committee 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.

## 5.5 Publication, Communication and Reporting: Policy Actions approved by the chancellor and non-substantive corrections and updates to Operational Policy will be routed to the Operational Policy Facilitator for publication and maintenance within the NMSU Policy Library.

- A. New, amended or repealed policy, including Interim Policy, will be announced via the NMSU mass communication channel(s) and appropriately disseminated.
- B. The Operational Policy Facilitator will submit a summary of approved Policy Actions, with exception of the non-substantive corrections and updates, as an informational item for inclusion in the record of each regular meeting of the Board of Regents.
- C. The approval and amendment history for each type of policy in the NMSU Policy Library at <https://policy.nmsu.edu> should be included together with effective dates.

## 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: 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 amended to update, it will be so indicated in the revision history. When Cyclic Review results in a proposed update amendment, 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 1.10 – Standard Operating Procedures

- Policy Action Tool Kit: How to Submit a Proposal to Modify NMSU System Operational Policy