

	Policy on the Development and Review of Academic Policies #4.12	
CATEGORY: Senate Policy	APPROVAL DATE: October 28, 2024	
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 28, 2024	REVIEW DATE: Five years from effective date	
APPROVAL: Senate		
RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE(S): Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee		
CONTACT(S): Office of the Vice-President, Academic & Provost		
PREVIOUS VERSIONS: N/A		

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent and transparent approach to the identification, development, review, approval and dissemination of all academic policies governed by the OCAD University Senate.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all academic policies at the University approved by the OCAD University Senate. The Senate determines and regulates the educational policy of the University per section 7.6 of the OCAD University Act. At OCAD University (OCAD U), academic policies establish rules and procedures on academic matters for students and on academic administrative matters for staff, faculty and academic administrative leadership. Academic policies hold institution-wide implications, but in their formal scope do not always extend to all students, faculty or academic units. This policy does not cover procedures on academic matters of more local application internal to a specific unit and which fall under the purview of an academic administrator such as a Vice-President, Dean, Director or University Librarian. Local or unit-specific policies must not contradict academic policies governed by Senate.

POLICY:

Academic policies describe the University’s approach to matters of academic standards and regulation and ensure that the University’s processes and practices align with the OCAD U’s core values and academic plan. Policies may include direction on process or procedures, from which guidance for implementation may be developed to accompany a policy.

1. General Principles and Format

All academic policies should:

- Reflect the University’s academic plan, promote operational efficiency and effectiveness, and/or reduce institutional risk

- Be presented in a consistent, clear and accessible format, ideally following existing templates
- Be created or reviewed with a lens to remove barriers and incorporate equity and inclusion, including use of inclusive language, resources of which can be obtained from the OCAD U Editorial Style Guide
- Be developed and reviewed through a consultative process
- Be formally approved by Senate, recognizing that certain academic policies also require the approval of the Board of Governors
- Be published on the University's policy website
- Be reviewed every five years, if not otherwise indicated

All academic policies normally follow a standard format that at a minimum includes:

- A title;
- An implementation date after which the policy is effective (taken as the date of approval if not otherwise indicated);
- An approval date of previous versions;
- A description, summary, and/or scope; and
- A statement of policy

Academic policies may also include acknowledgements, definitions, procedures or process, and roles/rights and responsibilities. All academic policies will be assigned a number and category by the University Registrar in consultation with Senate Secretariat. Policy templates can be obtained from the Senate Secretariat.

2. **Process for Policy Development**

Any member of the OCAD University community may propose a new academic policy by submitting a rationale to the Senate Secretariat. The policy holder (Vice-President, Academic and Provost; Vice-President, Research or the University Registrar), will determine the appropriateness of the new policy proposal and the governance process for the review and approval of a new policy.

In accordance with the OCAD University Senate By-Laws, new academic policies are normally recommended for Senate approval by the Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee. Academic policies may be drafted by an individual, a working group, or committee and require consultation with other Senate committees and/or stakeholder groups. The Senate Secretariat will advise on an appropriate governance consultation path. An implementation plan must accompany any new academic policy and/or significant change to academic policy.

3. **Process for Policy Revision**

Any member of the OCAD University community may recommend that a policy be revised (including rescinding a policy) by submitting proposed revisions and rationale to the Senate Secretariat. A proposal to revise a policy may trigger a policy review or review of related policies by the appropriate committee. The Senate Secretariat, in consultation with the policy holder (Vice-President, Academic and Provost; Vice-President, Research or the University

Registrar), will determine the appropriateness of the proposed revision and the governance process for the review and approval of the policy revision.

Revisions to academic policies that are student-facing are normally recommended for Senate approval by the Senate Academic Standards Committee. Revisions to academic policies that are academic administrative facing are normally recommended for Senate approval by the Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee.

Revisions to certain academic policies that are specific to the academic administration such as research, undergraduate studies, graduate studies or quality assurance may be recommended for approval directly from their respective standing committees. The Senate Secretariat will advise on an appropriate governance consultation and approval path.

Minor editorial, stylistic or formatting changes that do not impact the substance or interpretation of a policy may be made by the Registrar or Senate Secretariat without Senate approval. These changes may include updating of personnel titles, department names, and links. These changes are reported to the appropriate Senate committee for information.

4. Review of Policies

If not stated otherwise, policies are reviewed every five years for potential gaps, overlaps and for compliance purposes. The schedule of review will be maintained by the Senate Secretariat. Student-facing academic policies may be scheduled for review on a more frequent basis if issues are identified by the University Registrar or other stakeholders.

5. Dissemination of Policies

When new and revised academic policies are approved by Senate, notification of their approval will be listed on the Senate webpage within two weeks of the Senate meeting. The Senate Secretariat will also notify the academic units responsible for implementing the policy. Senate approved academic policies will be published on the University's policy library in accordance with the implementation date. The University Registrar will coordinate student-facing communications and accompanying guidance for new or revised policies, as appropriate. The Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost will coordinate faculty and staff-facing communication and accompanying resources for new or revised policies, as appropriate.