



Board of Trustees

Policy Statement
University Policy Library

Operational Area:	Academic Affairs
Responsible Executive:	Chief Academic Officer
Responsible Office:	Academic Affairs Office
Effective:	July 1, 2020

Academic Policy Enactment

Academic Affairs

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I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Authority:** Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 23-54-102, *et seq.* (2020) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver (“MSU Denver” or “University”) to establish rules and regulations to govern and operate the University and its programs. The MSU Denver Trustees authorize the MSU Denver President, who subsequently grants authority to the Provost, to approve, administer, and interpret policies pertaining to the academic functions of the University as defined in this policy.
- B. **Purpose:** This policy defines how academic policies are developed, revised (as needed), and implemented.
- C. **Scope:** This policy applies to all, University-level, academic policies.



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II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Responsible Executive:** Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
- B. **Responsible Administrator:** Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Policy Development
- C. **Responsible Entity:** Faculty Senate
- D. **Policy Contact:** Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Policy Development and the chairs of the Faculty Senate Academic Policies and Curriculum Committees.
- E. **Board of Trustees:** The Board approves, interprets, and administers policies related to University governance.
- F. **President:** The President approves, interprets, and administers policies related to University operations.
- G. **Provost:** The Provost approves, interprets, and administers policies related to academics, including instruction, curriculum, and research.
- H. **Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Policy Development:** This position supports policy developers by administering the academic policy development and review process and communicating with the University community regarding proposed, approved, and archived academic policies.
- I. **Faculty Senate Academic Policies and Curriculum Committees:** These committees, established under the Faculty Senate bylaws, shall consider and suggest modifications to any proposed changes to academic policies. The committees shall recommend such changes to the Faculty Senate.



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- J. **Associate Director of Curriculum and Catalog:** This position publishes academic policies in the University Catalog.
- K. **President's Cabinet:** The President's Cabinet reviews proposed University policies and revisions and recommends to the President whether a proposed policy should be approved. The President's Cabinet reviews policy impact statements to recommend if a proposed policy should undergo development.
- L. **University Policy Administrator:** The Policy Administrator supports policy developers by facilitating the University policy development and review process; researching best practices on proposed policies; providing policy development tools and templates; communicating with the University community regarding proposed, approved, and archived policies; and maintaining the University's policy library.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

A. Criteria

1. An academic policy (1) advances the University's vision, mission, values, or strategic plan; and/or (2) aligns academic functions with accreditation, legal, or other externally imposed requirements; and/or (3) addresses an operational efficiency or institutional risk.
2. Academic policies and procedures apply to all students and all faculty of the University, or any subset of the student or faculty population, or applicants for student status at the University.

B. Principles

1. MSU Denver's process to establish, amend, or archive University academic policies will be consistent, well documented, and transparent.



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2. As appropriate, impacted individuals, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, department chairs, and other relevant constituents, will have the opportunity to participate in the deliberation process prior to the establishment, amendment, or archiving of a University academic policy.
3. The Faculty Senate represents faculty members in all matters of interest and concern, including making recommendations on current and proposed changes in academic policy. The Faculty Senate shall have the principle role in the development of academic policies, such as policies related to teaching, curriculum, research and other scholarly activities, and academic ethics. All proposed academic policies, amendments to existing policies, or archiving of academic policies must be reviewed and voted upon by the Faculty Senate for recommendation to the responsible executive prior to implementation, revision, or archiving. The Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee and/or the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee shall consider and suggest modifications to any proposed changes to academic policies and shall make recommendations to the Faculty Senate on all matters related to academic policies. All impacted individuals are welcome to attend, speak at, and participate in the deliberation process, including by attending Academic Policies Committee meetings.
4. Approved University academic policies will be documented in a consistent, centralized, and searchable format.
5. Responsible administrators or designees will communicate with the appropriate members of the University community when University academic policies are established, amended, or archived.



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6. Responsible administrators or designees will review existing University academic policies on a regular basis for currency, clarity, and consistency with other internal and external rules, regulations, and requirements.
7. Responsible administrators or designees will assess the effectiveness of policies, including communication of policies, on an ongoing basis.
8. University academic policies that are no longer relevant will be archived in a manner consistent with the State of Colorado's and the University's records retention protocols.

C. Approval

1. The Provost of MSU Denver, in consultation with the Faculty Senate, is responsible for approving, administering, and interpreting policies pertaining to the academic functions of the University.
2. Academic policies that primarily impact the organization and operation of academic programs but, due to their scope, must be considered presidential or board-level policies must also obtain Presidential or Board approval as described in section V.C. of this policy.
3. Disputes regarding proposed academic policies or revisions are encouraged to be resolved through the academic policy process at the lowest level possible. Authority to resolve disputes resides with the final approval authority.

D. Expedited or Interim Policies

1. The Provost may approve an interim, University academic policy when the standard time for review and approval is insufficient to address legal,



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accreditation, state higher education commission requirements, or a significant institutional risk.

2. If approved, interim policies are active for a maximum of one year, during which time the responsible individuals must complete the standard policy review and approval process.
3. Interim policies must be documented and published in a format consistent with standard approved policies.
4. Grammatical and technical changes may be made to policies to reflect current legal, accreditation, and/or state higher education commission requirements.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Academic Policy:** A statement of principles governing the organization and operation of academic programs, including policies pertaining to curriculum, subject matter and method of instruction, scholarly activity, and those aspects of student experience which relate to the educational process. Areas that fall under the category of academic policy include but are not limited to:
1. Admissions criteria,¹ awarding of transfer credit,² and related practices not established by the State of Colorado or the Colorado Commission on Higher Education;
 2. Curriculum,³ including degrees, majors, minors, certificates, general education, and teacher preparation programs;

¹ See Board of Trustees policy 5.7 Admission Requirements of the University.

² See Board of Trustees policy 5.8 Transfer of Earned Credits.

³ Curriculum policies and procedures are governed by the Board of Trustees and Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. See Board of Trustees policy 5.3 Academic Program Approval and the Faculty Senate Bylaws.



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3. Course credit and contact hours;
4. Grading practices;
5. Research and other scholarly activities;
6. Academic ethics; and
7. Graduation requirements.

Areas that do not fall under the category of academic policy include but are not limited to:

1. Campus security;
2. Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities;
3. Human resources;
4. Parking;
5. Student services; and
6. Technology acquisition.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Procedures for Establishing, Amending, or Archiving Academic Policies Pertaining to Student Academics (Programs, Degree Calculations, *etc.*)

1. The Faculty Senate shall establish procedures for establishing new academic policies and suggesting modifications to any proposed changes to existing academic policies that include communication with impacted individuals and relevant constituent groups during the policy development process.
2. The Faculty Senate votes on the recommendation of the proposed policy or revision, if necessary. (A vote is not necessary if the proposed policy or revision is made solely to bring the university in line with legal, accreditation,



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or state higher education commission requirements. Determination on if a vote is necessary or not will be made by Faculty Senate leadership in consultation with relevant committees.)

3. The Provost or designee approves the proposed policy or revision. If the Provost or designee does not approve (either by rejecting, tabling, or holding) the proposed policy or revision, the Provost or designee communicates the decision or action and rationale to Faculty Senate leadership in a timely manner.
4. The Provost or designee informs the President's Cabinet of new policy or policy revision.
5. The Provost's Office publishes the policy or revision in the University Catalog and notifies the University Community.

B. Procedures for Establishing, Amending, or Archiving Academic Policies Pertaining to Faculty Professional Activity (Research, etc.)

1. The Faculty Senate shall establish procedures establishing new academic policies and suggesting modifications to any proposed changes to existing academic policies that include communication with impacted individuals and relevant constituent groups during the policy development process.
2. The Faculty Senate votes on the recommendation of the proposed policy or revision, if necessary. (A vote is not necessary if the proposed policy or revision is made solely to bring the university in line with legal, accreditation, or state higher education commission requirements. Determination on if a vote is necessary or not will be made by Faculty Senate leadership in consultation with relevant committees.)



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3. The Provost or designee approves the proposed policy or revision. If the Provost or designee does not approve (either by rejecting, tabling, or holding) the proposed policy or revision, the Provost or designee communicates the decision or action and rationale to Faculty Senate leadership in a timely manner.
4. The Provost or designee informs the President's Cabinet of new policy or policy revisions.
5. The Policy Administrator formats and formalizes the policy statement for signature and publication in the Policy library.

C. Procedures for Establishing, Amending, or Archiving President-level and Board of Trustee-level Academic Policies

1. The Faculty Senate shall establish procedures for establishing new academic policies and suggesting modifications to any proposed changes to existing President-level and Board of Trustee-level academic policies that include communication with impacted individuals, offices, and relevant constituent groups during the policy development process.
2. The Faculty Senate votes on the recommendation of the proposed policy or revision, if necessary. (A vote is not necessary if the proposed policy or revision is made solely to bring the university in line with legal, accreditation, or state higher education commission requirements. Determination on if a vote is necessary or not will be made by Faculty Senate leadership in consultation with relevant committees.).
3. The Provost informs the President of policy developments.
4. A Faculty Senate designee will present the policy to the University Policy Advisory Council as an information item.



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5. The Faculty Senate President or other designated Faculty Senate representative, in consultation with the University Policy Advisory Council leadership, will present the proposed policy or revision to the President's Cabinet, which will provide recommendations to the President regarding the approval of the proposal.
6. The President approves the proposed policy or revision or recommends other action, including but not limited to moving trustee-level policy to the Board of Trustees for final approval. If the President and/or the Board of Trustees does not approve the proposed policy or revision (either by rejecting, tabling, or holding), the President or designee communicates the decision or action and rationale to Faculty Senate leadership in a timely manner.
7. Once approved, the Policy Administrator formats and formalizes the policy statement for signature and publication in the University Policy library.

VI. RELATED INFORMATION

- A. MSU Denver Faculty Senate Bylaws
- B. MSU Denver Curriculum Policies and Procedures
- C. MSU Denver Faculty Employment Handbook Committee Policy
- D. MSU Denver Policy and Procedure Enactment Policy
- E. American Association of University Professors Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities
- F. Colorado State Constitution
- G. Colorado Revised Statutes
- H. Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Policies
- I. CCHE Academic programs Policy, Section I.V
- J. CCHE Admissions Standards Policy, Section I.F
- K. CCHE Statewide Transfer and gtPathways Policy, Section I.L



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- L. CCHE Student Fulltime Equivalency Reporting Guidelines and Procedures, Section V.B
- M. Higher Learning Commission Policies
- N. Higher Learning Commission Assumed Practices
- O. United States (US) Constitution
- P. US Code of Federal Regulations
- Q. US Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended
- R. US Student Financial Aid Handbook

VII. POLICY HISTORY

- A. **Effective:** July 1, 2020
- B. **Enacted:** January 1, 2019
- C. **Review:** This policy will be reviewed every five years or as deemed necessary by University leadership.

VIII. APPROVAL

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.

President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Barbara Barnes Grogan

Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver