



POLICY ON POLICIES

Baseline

The Board. The Bylaws provide that, “The primary function of the Trustees shall be policy-making The Trustees shall further determine the general, educational and financial policies” of the University. Specifically, the Board is called on to approve the following items:

- The purpose and mission of the University
- Appointment of officers of the Board
- Appointment of the President
- Approval of the appointment and removal of other officers of the University
- Policies on the appointment, promotion, tenure, salaries and dismissal of faculty members
- Changes in educational programs
- All earned and honorary degrees
- Policies for the endowments and major fund raising efforts
- Appointment of officers or agents of the University to accept gifts and bequests
- Budgets
- Changes in tuition and fees
- The purchase, management and sale of all land, buildings and major equipment
- The construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings
- The incurring of debts

Committees. The Bylaws establish 11 different standing committees and also authorize the Board to create and terminate other standing or *ad hoc* committees.

The Executive Committee. Chief among the committees is the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has “all the powers and duties of the Trustees, except that the Executive Committee shall not have the power to remove or elect a Trustee or the President of the University and cannot make, alter or repeal any bylaw.”

Other Committees. Other committees, on the other hand, do not have the same kind of authority. They are, for the most part, charged with studying issues and making recommendations to the Board, and are not empowered to make decisions binding on the University. Of course, there are exceptions. The Finance Committee, for example, is charged with “the investment of all funds,” and the Facilities Committee is charged with the “supervision of the maintenance of University buildings, grounds and equipment.”

It is also customary that most issues will be presented to the relevant committee or committees for review before consideration by the whole Board.

The President. The Bylaws then provide that:

The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the University and . . . shall, as educational and administrative head of the University, exercise a general superintendence over all affairs of the University . . . and bring such matters to the attention of the Trustees as are appropriate to keep the Trustees fully informed in meeting its policy-making responsibilities. Furthermore, the President shall have power, on behalf of the Trustees, to perform all acts and execute all documents to make effective the actions of the Trustees or its Executive Committee.

University Officers. The Bylaws also provide that, “Each Vice President and other University officers designated by the Trustees shall have such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the President.” The current officers of the University are the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer.

The Faculty. The Bylaws do not assign any powers to the Faculty, but the Board has adopted the Faculty Constitution, which by its terms, is subordinate to the Bylaws. Under the Constitution, the Faculty’s assigned responsibilities include:

- Recommending requirements for admission, courses of study, and conditions of graduation
- Recommending persons for degrees
- Conducting continuous review and revision of the curriculum and the academic policies of the University
- Assisting in those areas of student life related to the educational process
- Recommending rules and methods for maintaining the overall academic integrity of all educational programs at the University
- Assisting in the appointment, promotion, tenure, and dismissal of full-time teaching faculty

Rule-of-Thumb

The structure of the Bylaws reserves strategic decisions to the Board and delegates operational matters to the President and, through the President, to other officers of the University. The Board itself has assigned certain responsibilities to the Faculty. Policies therefore fall into four different categories:

1. Those covered by any of the specific powers of the Board enumerated above. These include the Gift Acceptance Policy, the Investment Management Policy and the Post-Issuance Compliance Policy dealing with debt. These require Board approval.
2. Those covered by both the specific powers of the Board and the assigned responsibilities of the Faculty. This would include policies regarding academic integrity. These require first, the review by the Faculty, and then the approval of the Board.
3. Those dealing with operational issues. These include such policies as the Vehicle Usage Policy, the Communications Policy, the Dress Code and the Travel & Expense Policy. These require approval of the President, or such other person or body, *e.g.*, Executive Staff acting as a group, as she decides.

4. Those dealing with strategic issues not already covered by the first category. These require Board approval. This policy belongs in this category.

The difficult calls will be deciding which policies fall on which side of the strategic/operational line. There is unfortunately no bright line, and many times such decisions will be judgment calls. The best guideline is that operational policies are those that are administrative in nature or that serve to clarify existing decisions.

Administration

Ownership. Each policy, however approved, must have an office or position responsible for such policy. Such responsibility includes (1) ensuring that such policy is in compliance with applicable federal and state requirements, (2) proposing updates to such policy when appropriate and (3) proposing the expiration of such policy when needed.

In certain cases, *e.g.*, Admissions policies or Athletics policies, such ownership will be readily apparent. Others, *e.g.*, the Information Security Policy, have been developed collaboratively by multiple offices. In such cases, the responsibility for keeping such policy current must be clearly assigned.

Process. Each proposed new policy, each proposed revision of an existing policy and each proposed expiration of an existing policy, are normally submitted to Executive Staff for comment. In such cases, the Executive Staff will review the proposal for compliance with the requirements hereof and will recommend to the President (1) whether or not such proposal should be approved, which recommendation may include suggested changes; and (2) the appropriate means of approval. In all other cases, the President will determine the process.

Access. All policies must be available to the entire University community on my.Centenary. Many policies will most logically be found on web pages related to their subject, *e.g.*, the Student Handbook should be available on the Student Life page. Links to all policies, however, must be available on a single resource page, maintained by the Office of Compliance. All offices and positions responsible for specific policies must ensure that the Office of Compliance is informed of all policies, updates thereto and expirations thereof.

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