

Policy Framework

Policy Owner	Office of the University Secretary
Approval Authority:	President
Approval Date:	February 2025
Next Review:	April 2029
Review History	April 2012, April 2017, January 2025
Policy Category:	Governance
Related Documents:	<i>An Act to incorporate Laurentian University of Sudbury</i> (Statutes of Ontario 1960, Chapter 151, amended 1961-62, chapter 154):

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this Policy Framework is to establish a clear, transparent, and equitable process for developing, revising, and reviewing Laurentian University’s administrative policies.
- 1.2. This framework aims to:
 - 1.2.1. Ensure a common understanding of policy responsibilities among the Board of Governors, the President, and the Executive Team, as well as support staff who deliver programs and services;
 - 1.2.2. Promote continuous improvement in service delivery, ensuring that administrative policies are efficient, effective, user-friendly, and enhance operational excellence; and
 - 1.2.3. Strive for excellence in the quality of services offered at Laurentian University by implementing policies that represent best practices and support the effective delivery of programs and services to students.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy framework applies to all administrative policies approved by the Board of Governors, President, and/or the Executive Team at Laurentian University.
- 2.2. This policy framework does not apply to standard procedures governing day-to-day unit or departmental operations, which do not require formal approval from the Board of Governors, President, or the Executive Team, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the relevant policies.
- 2.3. The framework does not apply to educational and academic policies under the purview of the

Senate such as curriculum, research, academic planning and regulations, academic units and faculties, student appeals and conduct, examinations, and scholarships.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **“Academic Policies”** means the policies governing academic matters under the purview of the Senate, such as curriculum, student conduct, examinations, designed to maintain academic standards and support the educational mission of the University.
- 3.2. **“Administrative Policies”** means the policies that govern the operational, financial and administrative and governance aspects of the University.
- 3.3. **“Approval Authority”** means the designated body, department, team or individual responsible for reviewing and granting final approval for a proposed policy to ensure that it aligns with institutional objectives and governance standards.
- 3.4. **“The Board”** means the Board of Governors, the governing body responsible for the overall direction and oversight of the University.
- 3.5. **“Executive Team”** includes the President, the Provost, the University Secretary, the General Counsel, the Vice-Presidents and the Associate Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives.
- 3.6. **“Policy Category”** means the classification assigned to a policy based on its subject matter and relevance, which aids in the organization and retrieval of University policies.
- 3.7. **“Policy Owner”** means the individual or office responsible for the development, implementation, review and ongoing management of a policy.
- 3.8. **“Policy Repository”** means the centralized collection of University policies that fall under the scope of this policy framework, maintained by the University Secretary.
- 3.9. **“University”** means Laurentian University.

4. Principles

- 4.1. Policies at Laurentian University are designed to promote smooth operations while ensuring compliance with legal and statutory requirements, supporting the occupational health and safety of all employees, and fostering uniform practices and equity across the institution.
- 4.2. **Criteria for effective policies:**
 - 4.2.1. Policies should strive to simplify complex topics, especially in areas involving intricate legal or regulatory requirements, and present information in a clear, accessible, and user-friendly manner ensuring clarity and accessibility for a broad audience.
 - 4.2.2. Policies must prioritize the needs and experiences of policy users while aligning with statutory and accreditation requirements.

- 4.2.3. Policies should be clearly communicated to all relevant parties to maintain transparency in processes and criteria.
- 4.2.4. Policies will be developed based on a review of external standards and practices within the university sector and in consultation with affected students, faculty, and staff to ensure that they reflect best practices.
- 4.2.5. Policies should be available in both English and French in accordance with the Laurentian University's Bilingualism Policy.
- 4.2.6. In the spirit of advancing Indigenous reconciliation, the University is committed to meaningful Indigenous consultation in the development and review of policies that may impact Indigenous communities, students, faculty, and staff.
- 4.2.7. The office responsible for administering a policy is accountable for ensuring compliance with its implementation, initiating the policy's cyclical review as needed, and monitoring efficacy and service quality on an ongoing basis.
- 4.2.8. Departmental and unit operations will be effectively aligned with all central and local policies, while respecting the authority of managers and senior administrators.
- 4.2.9. All revised or new policies shall contain an introductory table that includes the following information: Policy Owner, Approval Authority, Approval Date, Next Review, Review History, Policy Category, and Related Documents.
- 4.2.10. All revised or new policies shall include the following sections:
- **Purpose:** Clearly states the reason for the policy and the intended outcomes.
 - **Scope:** Defines the range of activities, individuals, and departments to which the policy applies.
 - **Definitions:** Provides explanations for specific terms, abbreviations and concepts used within the policy for clarity.
 - **Principles:** Outlines the foundational values and standards guiding the policy's creation and implementation.
 - **Roles and Responsibilities:** Details the duties of individuals and groups involved in developing, approving, and implementing the policy.
 - **Policy:** Outlines the main policy content, including detailed sub-sections, to describe the key elements, rules, guidelines, and processes required to implement the policy effectively. Policies should also clearly outline whether any associated procedures require formal approval from the Board of Governors, the President or the Executive Team.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. **Policy Owner:** Accountable for the development, implementation and interpretation of specific policies and monitors policy effectiveness and compliance.
- 5.2. **Board of Governors:** Responsible for reviewing and granting final approval of policies that fall within their purview, unless approval authority has been delegated to a Board committee or to the President.
- 5.3. **President:** Responsible for ensuring that the University's policies align with its strategic priorities and operational needs. The President also oversees the review and approval of policies that fall within their purview, except in cases where they have delegated the approval authority to another office or member of the Executive Team.
- 5.4. **Executive Team:** Provides insight and guidance to support the development, implementation, and review policies, ensuring that they support the University's goals and priorities.
- 5.5. **University Secretariat:** Provides administrative and governance for the policy development and periodic review process, ensuring ongoing alignment with best practices and sector standards.
- 5.6. **Office of the General Counsel:** Provides legal advice and guidance on policy development and implementation to ensure that all policies comply with relevant laws and regulations.

6. Policy Framework

6.1. Initiation

- 6.1.1. The initiation stage involves identifying the need for a new policy or an amendment to an existing policy. This need may arise due to changes in legal or regulatory requirements, strategic priorities, operational improvements, identified gaps in current policy, or when a policy is scheduled for a regular review.
- 6.1.2. Requests for policy initiation or amendments can be submitted by a member of the University community to the Policy Owner, who will review and validate the request and determine whether to proceed. It is recommended that the University Secretariat and the Office of the General Counsel be engaged early in the policy development process to ensure adherence to governance standards and approval processes, and support alignment with institutional priorities and legislative requirements.
- 6.1.3. The Policy Owner will determine the appropriate policy category from among the following: Academic; Administration; Advancement; Financial; Governance; Human Resources/Equity & Diversity; Information Technology; and Legal.
- 6.1.4. The Policy Owner, with support from the University Secretariat, and the Office of the General Counsel if necessary, will confirm the appropriate Approval Authority for the policy.

- 6.1.5. The Policy Owner will develop a preliminary policy draft that includes the necessary elements and engage the University Secretary and Office of the General Counsel as needed to provide guidance and ensure alignment with the policy framework's standards for clarity, transparency, and consistency.

6.2. Consultation

- 6.2.1. The Policy Owner will conduct a thorough assessment to identify key stakeholders such as faculty, staff, and other impacted groups, as relevant to the policy's scope, to ensure the policy is practical, equitable, and considers diverse perspectives.
- 6.2.2. The Executive Team will be consulted throughout the policy initiation and development process to provide input and guidance on identifying key stakeholder groups, ensuring all relevant parties are included in the consultation process.
- 6.2.3. The Office of the General Counsel shall also be consulted throughout the policy development process to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and legal requirements.
- 6.2.4. Policies that have human resource implications shall require consultation with the Human Resources team to ensure compliance with labor laws and organizational policies, where applicable.
- 6.2.5. Policies that affect the terms and conditions of work of faculty members or unionized staff may require special consultation with union groups and associations. The Provost's Office (for faculty members) and Human Resources (for staff) can advise whether this may be necessary and can facilitate the process, where required.
- 6.2.6. Policies that have financial implications shall require consultation with the Financial Services team to assess the fiscal impact of the proposed policy and provide guidance on best financial practices, where applicable.
- 6.2.7. The Policy Owner will lead the consultation process, to gather input from key stakeholders on the new or revised policy draft. The consultation process may be supported and/or facilitated by other offices, departments, or units as appropriate to enhance outreach, engagement, and the overall inclusiveness of the consultation efforts.
- 6.2.8. Consultation may also involve external benchmarking and review of sector best practices.
- 6.2.9. The Executive Team will be kept informed throughout the consultation process to ensure strategic alignment and institutional priorities are considered. The Policy Owner will regularly report on progress, including updates on stakeholder engagement and consultation outcomes.
- 6.2.10. The Policy Owner may revise draft policy documents, as appropriate, to reflect outcomes from the consultation processes prior to proceeding for endorsement and approval.

6.3. Approval

- 6.3.1.** The Policy Owner will present the policy draft to the relevant approval authority, supported by the University Secretariat, to ensure the appropriate governance channels are followed. Once approved, the policy is deemed ready for implementation.
- 6.3.2.** In some cases, the approval process for policies under this Framework may require multiple levels of approval to ensure thorough review and alignment with institutional governance standards.
- 6.3.3.** The specific approval requirements, including the roles, responsibilities, and any delegated authority of each approving body, must be clearly articulated within the policy document to ensure transparency and adherence to the appropriate governance processes.

6.4. Communication

- 6.4.1.** Following approval, the Policy Owner will communicate the policy to all relevant stakeholders. This involves publishing the policy on the University's official website, notifying faculty, staff, and students, and conducting any required informational sessions to promote awareness and understanding.

6.5. Implementation

- 6.5.1.** The Policy Owner is accountable for implementing the approved policy and ensuring compliance at all levels of the University. This includes integrating the policy into relevant unit or departmental operations and procedures, monitoring adherence, and providing training as needed.
- 6.5.2.** Compliance checks will be conducted periodically, and feedback from policy users will inform future revisions to maintain the policy's effectiveness and relevance.

6.6. Review

- 6.6.1.** All policies are subject to a systematic review process by the approval authority at least every five (5) years to ensure continuous improvement and service quality, unless otherwise specified by the policy in question, or where an earlier review is deemed necessary. Some policies may have specific legislative timelines to adhere to, which should be explicitly stated in the policy.
- 6.6.2.** Policy reviews can be initiated by the Policy Owner or triggered by the University Secretariat as part of a scheduled review cycle.
- 6.6.3.** The University Secretariat will provide an annual list of policies due for review to the President, Executive Team and/or Board.

6.7. Non-Substantive Revisions

- 6.7.1.** Non-substantive revisions include minor changes that do not alter the intent, scope, or application of the policy. These changes may involve correcting typographical or grammatical errors, updating titles, departmental names, or other administrative details, revising formatting or terminology for clarity and readability, and adopting gender-neutral language (e.g., they/them/their pronouns) to align with inclusive drafting standards.
- 6.7.2.** Non-substantive revisions do not require formal approval by the policy's Approval Authority. Instead, the Policy Owner, in collaboration with the University Secretariat, may implement these changes directly. A record of non-substantive revisions will be maintained, and the updated policy will be disseminated to ensure consistency across official documents.

6.8. Rescission of a Policy

- 6.8.1.** A formal request for rescission can be submitted by a member of the University community to the Policy Owner, along with justification for why the policy should be rescinded.
- 6.8.2.** The Responsible Office must review the proposed rescission and consult with relevant stakeholders to assess the implications of removing the policy. The consultation process should follow the guidelines outlined in [Section 6.2](#) to assess the potential implications of rescission, including identifying any operational, legal, or strategic impacts.
- 6.8.3.** It is recommended that the University Secretariat and the Office of the General Counsel be engaged early in the rescission process to ensure adherence to governance standards, proper approval processes, and alignment with institutional priorities and legislative requirements.
- 6.8.4.** If applicable, a review of related policies and procedures should be conducted to ensure alignment and identify any necessary updates.
- 6.8.5.** Rescission of a policy requires the same level of approval as its initial adoption. This may include approval by the Board of Governors, the President and/or the Executive Team, depending on the policy's scope and potential impacts.
- 6.8.6.** Rescinded policies must remain archived in the Policy Repository for historical reference, with a clear indication of their rescinded status and the date of rescission.

6.9. Policy Repository

- 6.9.1.** The University Secretary is responsible for maintaining the repository of University policies that fall within the scope of this framework.