

Policy on Educational Policy Creation

I. PURPOSE

Our institution should have a clear pathway to the creation of new educational policies, one that assures stakeholder input, discussion, and review, so that such policies are well-crafted and based on group consensus, consistent with applicable legal and regulatory guidance, and ultimately help the school fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to anyone creating educational policy at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSOM).

III. POLICY

Any individual, group, office, committee, or department can propose new educational policies. In designing a policy, authors should follow a standard format:

- Purpose (what the policy addresses—needs/problems/opportunities)
- Scope (who the policy applies to)
- Policy Specifics
- Author(s)
- Related Policies/Procedures (if any)
- References (if any)
- Dates of Approval/Revision

Once a policy is developed, authors submit the draft to the Educational Policy Council (EPC), chaired by the Associate Dean for Medical Education. This submission begins the process of approval. EPC consists of these other members:

- Vice Dean for Education
- Associate Deans for Student Affairs, Admissions, Faculty Affairs, Learning Environment, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- Assistant Deans for Medical Education and Student Affairs
- Curriculum Committee Chair and Vice Chair
- Curriculum Committee Executive Subcommittee At-Large Faculty Members

The EPC chair will make recommendations on development and review in consultation with the Vice Dean for Education. The first level of review will be conducted by the most directly relevant vetting body (e.g., Curriculum Committee for curriculum-related policies, Admissions

Committee for admissions-related policies, etc.). Some policies may require approval from more than one body; other policies may not have a direct vetting body at all. The EPC chair will make that decision in consultation with the Vice Dean for Education.

After this initial vetting, the policy will be reviewed by the full EPC. The EPC will work to ensure that any policy is consistent with legal, regulatory, and university standards. A simple majority is required for approval.

Once approved by EPC, the policy will be sent to UPSOM's Executive Committee for review and approval.

Once approved by the Executive Committee, the policy will be sent to the Dean for final approval.

At any point in this process, suggestions may be made to improve the policy; authors will be responsible for making requested changes and resubmitting for consideration at that level.

Once a policy achieves final approval, it will be posted on the website of the Office of Medical Education, which houses the central repository of policies. New policies take effect immediately after final approval unless otherwise stated. UPSOM administrators are responsible for communicating the policy to the community as appropriate.

Any subsequent policy revisions must go through the same process.

Existing policies must be reviewed at least every two years by the EPC to assure continued appropriateness; any needed changes can trigger a revision, which should involve the policy's original author(s).

Procedures, initial or revised, can be made independently by offices, committees, or departments. Procedures do not require EPC approval, as long as they are crafted to fulfill policies that have been adopted institutionally.

IV. POLICY AUTHOR(S)

- Educational Policy Council

V. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

None.

VI. REFERENCES

- LCME Standard 1.5 (Bylaws): A medical school promulgates bylaws or similar policy documents that describe the responsibilities and privileges of its administrative officers, faculty, and committees.

VII. APPROVALS

Educational Policy Council, approved 11/30/21.

Executive Committee, approved 6/24/22.

Dean, School of Medicine, approved 8/5/22.

VII. PROCEDURES

Before writing a policy, authors are encouraged to consult with the appropriate Associate Dean for guidance. <https://www.medschool.pitt.edu/about/administration-offices> If an author is uncertain as to who would be most appropriate, they should consult with the chair of the Educational Policy Council (EPC), which is led by the Associate Dean for Medical Education.

Authors should solicit stakeholder input routinely as part of the policy design effort. Students, staff, administrators, or faculty who may be affected by a policy should be given opportunity to make suggestions before a policy is enacted. This input can occur at any phase of development prior to final approval.

Authors may also be asked by EPC to seek guidance on regulatory and legal aspects of policies (e.g., LCME standards, federal or state laws), and ensure that proposed policies are consistent with, or at least not in conflict with, those of the University of Pittsburgh as a whole. Although they may help, concordance and appropriateness is ultimately the responsibility of institutional review committees.