



Policy On Policies

Policy CP008

Volume 2, College

Responsible Administrator: General Counsel and Secretary of the College

Responsible Office: Office of Policy and Compliance

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Policy Statement

Policies are a body of shared knowledge used to strengthen, support, and protect the Fashion Institute of Technology (“FIT” or “the college”). This policy addresses the process for developing, issuing, and maintaining all FIT Policies and applies to all college departments, employees and students.

Reason for the Policy

This Policy ensures that the FIT community has ready access to well-developed and understandable Policies. Policies that are easy to find, read and understand will:

- Support the college’s mission;
- Achieve accountability by identifying the offices responsible for Policies;
- Provide employees and students with clear, concise guidelines;
- Document how the college conducts business; and
- Allow FIT to remain compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Office of Policy and Compliance
- Policy Advisory Group

Who is Affected by this Policy

- FIT Divisional Vice Presidents, Deans, and Department Heads
- All FIT employees and students

Definitions

- **Administrative Protocol:** A set of principles, protocol, Procedure, or guidance established by an individual division or department to govern its operations. These do not follow the formal Policy development process and are maintained by the respective department.
- **Employee Policies:** Employee Policies directly affect employees of the college unless otherwise specified by the particular Policy. Employees include individuals working for all related FIT entities, including but not limited to, the FIT Foundation and FIT Student Housing Corporation.

- **Impact Statement:** A brief, confidential document that makes the case for a new college-wide Policy. It outlines the issue(s) prompting the proposal, explains the significance of the proposed Policy, and presents the rationale for institutional action. The Impact Statement also identifies key stakeholders, evaluates potential impacts, and may outline preliminary implementation strategies. It is reviewed by the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) and must be approved before any policy drafting begins.
- **Official College Policy (“Policy” or “Policies”):** A formal, college-wide statement of FIT’s management philosophy and direction, designed to guide and support the college community in conducting college business. A college Policy:
 - establishes governing principles that mandate or restrict actions;
 - applies institution-wide;
 - is intended for long-term use, and changes infrequently;
 - helps ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices;
 - reduces institutional risk;
 - must be communicated and effectively implemented to ensure awareness and compliance; and
 - is reviewed by the Policy Advisory Group and approved by senior leadership, including appropriate vice presidents, the general counsel, and the president. (In some cases, approval by the Board of Trustees may also be required.)

Policies provide broad, high-level guidance, while Procedures outline the specific steps, processes, and responsibilities for carrying out Policies. (See Definition of “Procedure”.)

- **Policy Implementation:** The process of putting a Policy into action by ensuring its provisions are communicated, understood, and adhered to across the college. This involves the development of Procedures, applicable training, assigning roles and responsibilities, and ensuring resources are available for effective enforcement.
- **Policy Owner:** Refers to Administrators or Offices responsible for the development, revision, implementation, and enforcement of Official College Policies. This term collectively represents the following roles:
 - **Responsible Administrator:** The Cabinet-level officer responsible for overseeing a Policy within their area of jurisdiction. This individual—typically a divisional or departmental leader—develops, implements, and administers the Policy, and serves as the Policy’s sponsor. Responsible Administrators ensure compliance, enforcement, and ongoing oversight of Policies within their area of jurisdiction. Depending on a Policy’s scope, multiple Responsible Administrators may be assigned.
 - **Responsible Office:** The office(s) designated by the Responsible Administrator(s) to develop and manage Policy. Responsible Offices are tasked with communicating Policy requirements, providing education, ensuring compliance, and facilitating updates and revisions. They also support Policy enforcement. Depending on a Policy’s scope, multiple Responsible Offices may be assigned.
- **Procedure:** A Procedure is a series of specific, interrelated steps taken to help follow/abide by a related Policy. Procedures are operational, detailed, and typically managed within individual departments. College Procedures:

- should be written in a format that is easy to follow, using numbers or bullets to delineate steps to be followed;
 - should be reviewed and updated regularly, and applied consistently; and
 - generally do not require formal approval by the Board of Trustees.
- **Stakeholder:** A member of the FIT community identified in the Impact Statement for a proposed Policy, whose role, expertise, or responsibilities are directly related to, or affected by, the Policy. Stakeholders are consulted for feedback on draft Policies and revisions to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
 - **Student Policies:** Student Policies are Policies that directly affect students at the college.
 - **Substantial Revisions:** Changes that significantly impact the scope, Procedures, or principles of a Policy. These revisions often involve fundamental alterations that affect the overall direction or application of the Policy.
 - **Unsubstantial Revisions:** Minor changes that do not significantly affect the scope, Procedures, or principles of a Policy. These revisions may involve updates for clarity, grammar, or administrative details without altering the Policy’s core content or intent.

Principles

- **Policies**

Official College Policies shape the ethical, social, professional, and legal culture of FIT. They are foundational documents that establish college-wide expectations and support consistent, enforceable standards.

Policies are clearly distinguished from related Procedures or Administrative Protocol according to the definitions section above. As identified in the particular Policy, the Responsible Office will monitor compliance and facilitate remedies for noncompliance as directed by the Policy.

To qualify as an Official College Policy, a document must meet the following criteria:

- **Common Format & Central Access**
Policies follow a standardized format, and are centrally maintained and accessible to all members of the FIT community through the College Policy Library.
- **Formally Approved**
Policies undergo a structured development and approval process that includes Stakeholder engagement, legal review, evaluation by the Policy Advisory Group, and formal approval by college leadership, including the president. Each Policy also undergoes a formalized implementation process. This process applies to all new Policies and any Substantial Revisions.
- **Static & Foundational**
Policies are designed to offer long-term stability. While reviewed regularly, they are not meant to change frequently. Revisions should occur only when necessary, such as due to legal, regulatory, or significant procedural changes.
- **Enforceable**
Policies outline clear, actionable, and measurable requirements, including consequences for noncompliance. If a rule or expectation cannot be reasonably enforced, or a

violation not concretely detected, it may be better suited to guidance documentation rather than formal Policy.

- **Broad in Scope**

Policies apply college-wide or across multiple departments. Issues that are highly specific, change frequently, or only impact a single area are more appropriately addressed through Administrative Protocols, or other internal documents.

- **Administrative Protocols**

Departments may create Administrative Protocols to support their operations and may publish this information on their departmental web pages. Administrative Protocols:

- May be more restrictive than college-wide Policies;
- Do not undergo the formal Policy process;
- **Must not** conflict with existing Official College Policies or the Collective Bargaining Agreement; and
- **Must not** be labeled or presented as Official College Policy (“Policy”).

To prevent confusion and support consistency, departments are encouraged to use alternative terms for Administrative Protocols such as “guidelines,” “standards,” “principles,” or “protocols.” FIT follows a structured and transparent Policy governance process to promote clarity, accountability, and college-wide awareness. Only documents that have been formally reviewed, approved, and implemented in accordance with this process are designated as Official College Policies. This ensures that Policies are consistent, implemented, enforceable, and accessible to the entire FIT community.

- **College Policy Library**

To ensure ready access to Policies, FIT maintains an Official [College Policy Library](#) with the most current, approved version of all Policies and with links to related Policies and documents.

The Policy documents housed in the College Policy Library constitute the official, electronic repository for college-wide Policies for FIT. The College Policy Library follows the structure described below (see Structure and Organization of College Policies).

To ensure an organized system of change control and to maintain consistency across the college, departmental web pages should *not* host separate copies or versions of Official College Policies. Instead, departments must link to the Official College Policy Library for any Policies or Procedures they reference.

Administrative Protocols are typically not included in the College Policy Library. However, exceptions are made by the Office of Policy and Compliance for protocols that have broad application or significant impact. For example, FIT’s protocols for probation and dismissal or scholastic standing are included due to their wide relevance across the institution.

- **The Office of Policy and Compliance**

The Office of Policy and Compliance is the central office responsible for Policy management and for maintenance of FIT’s College Policy Library. The primary purpose of a central office is to uphold best practices, to ensure consistency and professionalism in Policy documents, and to maintain compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

- **Policy Advisory Group**

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) guides the development of new Policies, as well as the revision or deletion of existing Policies. Their engagement unifies the Policy process so that Policy impact on all areas is considered prior to approval and implementation. PAG is not responsible for drafting Policy or disciplining individuals who violate Policy. PAG does not write or enforce Policy; their role is to review proposed Policies to identify potential impacts within their own areas and across the college, helping to prevent siloed decision-making

PAG has designated the Office of Policy and Compliance to coordinate the editing, review, issuance, and archiving of all Official College Policies in all 13 volumes of the College Policy Library. The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) is chaired by the Manager of Policy and Training and consists of cross-divisional representatives appointed by the President.

- **Structure and Organization of College Policies**

The College Policy Library houses all Policies which are assigned to one or more of the following volumes:

- **Volume 1 Academic Affairs and Faculty** – Policies that relate to faculty and the pedagogical mission of the college.
- **Volume 2 College** – Policies that are of a general administrative nature or concern appropriate conduct and/or compliance with the law.
- **Volume 3 Communications and External Relations** – Policies that relate to media, public relations, marketing communication, and government and community relations.
- **Volume 4 Development** - Policies that relate to fundraising and donor records management.
- **Volume 5 Enrollment Management and Student Success** – Policies applicable to status as a student.
- **Volume 6 Facilities** - Policies concerning use and care of college property.
- **Volume 7 Finance and Fiscal Management** – Policies related to accounting, budgeting, procurement, travel, and other financial functions.
- **Volume 8 Governance** – Umbrella Policies that provide the framework for administration to implement and comply with the intent of the Board of Trustees.
- **Volume 9 Human Resources** – Policies, rules, and related Procedures and information impacting working relationships with the college for all employee categories.
- **Volume 10 Information Technology** – Policies that cover systems, access, data, and related technological issues.
- **Volume 11 Museum** - Policies that relate to the Museum at FIT.
- **Volume 12 Research and Creative Activity** – Policies that relate to research and the Innovation Center.
- **Volume 13 Safety and Security** – Policies concerning security and safety of employees, students, and others on campus.

The College Policy Library also contains a Policy A to Z web page which lists all Policies alphabetically, by name (See Related Documents).

- **Policy Approvals**

Policies that undergo Substantial Revisions must follow the formal approval process, while Policies with Unsubstantial Revisions follow a different process. For more details, refer to the Procedures section.

- **Board of Trustees Approval**

The Board of Trustees does not involve itself in the details of administrative or academic decision-making, including decisions on most Policies. The FIT Board of Trustees ensures the college's property and resources are used solely to support FIT's mission. They are responsible for safeguarding both financial and physical assets of the college, while ensuring the college operates ethically, professionally, and in compliance with the law.

Four factors are considered in determining when a proposed Policy, or Policy revision, or Policy deletion requires Board approval:

- fiduciary responsibility;
- requirements of federal, state, or local law or SUNY mandates;
- Substantial Revisions to Board-approved Policy; and
- Impacts on the college, as a whole, including matters of the college's discretion.

- **Policy Implementation**

Policies must be formally implemented by their respective Policy Owners to ensure the intended outcomes are met. Effective Policy Implementation:

- ensures the Policy's goals are achieved;
- promotes consistent practices across the college;
- fosters compliance with legal and regulatory requirements and/or best practices;
- reduces risk; and
- helps maintain the integrity and mission of FIT.

- **Policy Questions and Reporting**

For questions about a Policy or to report a potential violation, please refer to the Contact section at the end of the specific Official College Policy. It lists the appropriate office or individual to reach out to for assistance.

FIT also provides multiple ways to share information about suspicious activity or policy violations either confidentially or anonymously as described in the Reporting Misconduct Guides for [employees](#) and [students](#).

Responsibilities

- **The Office of Policy and Compliance** is responsible for:

- sending regular announcements to the FIT community on new or revised Policies posted in FIT's College Policy Library;
- maintaining FIT's College Policy Library;
- retaining copies of approved Policies in accordance with NYS Archives, schedule LGS-1;
- guiding, and collaborating with, Policy Owners during any phase of the Policy development process, including implementation.

- **Members of the Policy Advisory Group** are responsible for:

- Reviewing Policy drafts through the lens of their respective division in order to comprehensively assess a Policy's impact on the entire institution and to ensure any concerns have been addressed prior to granting approval; and

- Offering feedback to facilitate the development of a Policy before advancing it for executive level review and approval;
- **Policy Owners** are responsible for:
 - Regularly reviewing Policies that fall under their scope;
 - Coordinating with the Office of Policy and Compliance to facilitate updates or propose/draft new Policies when needed; and
 - Implementing Policy principles in their affected areas; and
 - Ensuring supporting Procedures are regularly reviewed, assessed, and updated accordingly.
- **Responsible Administrators** are responsible for:
 - Approving the creation of a new Policy pertinent to their area;
 - Approving new, revised, or withdrawn Policies prior to their presentation to PAG;
 - Formally signing off on Policies related to their area;
 - Ensuring the successful implementation of Policy principles in the Responsible Office(s); and
 - Overseeing Policy enforcement in Responsible Office(s).

Procedures

- **Policy Format**

A standard Policy template and format promotes clarity, accessibility, and consistency. While not all Policies will include every element of the format, all Policies are written and maintained according to the guidelines outlined in the Guide to Preparing Policies (see Related Documents). This format does not apply to Policies created before these guidelines, however, where feasible, revised Policies are updated to conform to the standard Policy template.
- **Policy Management**

The Office of Policy and Compliance (compliance@fitnyc.edu) can provide detailed procedures for any of the below processes.

 - **Developing a New Policy**

Employees who identify college-level policy issues should first raise them with their supervisor or respective vice president. No policy drafting should occur at this stage.

If the vice president supports moving forward, they will designate a representative to develop an Impact Statement. At this point, the designated representative may contact OPC for guidance on preparing an Impact Statement, with their vice president in copy. The Office of Policy and Compliance will then advise the area as they develop their Impact Statement.

The Impact Statement must be approved by its respective vice president(s) prior to presentation to PAG. It must then be reviewed and approved by the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) before any policy drafting begins. Full policy drafts should not be written or submitted until PAG has approved the Impact Statement and authorized policy development to proceed.

- **Policy Revisions**

Policy Owners are expected to regularly review Policies to ensure alignment with current business practices. They must contact OPC when considering a policy revision or deletion; OPC will then assist with determining the appropriate path forward and will assist with the process.

Significant changes, such as new laws, SUNY system-wide mandates, redundancies, or wide-reaching procedural updates, may require a Substantial Revision, which must follow the formal approval process outlined in this Policy. Routine reviews may result in Unsubstantial Revisions, which follow a streamlined approval process.

- **Policy Deletions:**

If a Policy is no longer relevant or has been consolidated with another, the Responsible Administrator may determine that it should be deleted. Policy deletions are also subject to the formal approval processes described in the Policy Approvals section below.

- **Policy Approvals:**

Before a new or revised Policy is posted and announced, or a Policy is deleted, it must go through an approval process to ensure consistency, compliance, and proper oversight. This process differs depending on the extent of revisions made to a Policy:

- Policies that undergo *Substantial Revisions—or are proposed for deletion*—adhere to a formal approval process as follows:
 - The Policy Owner(s) present the Policy to PAG for review and informal approval¹;
 - Upon PAG approval the Policy is shared with senior representatives of FIT’s Collective Bargaining Unit for a brief period of review for informational purposes only²;
 - Next, the Office of Policy and Compliance obtains four levels of signatory approval:
 - Responsible Administrator(s)
 - Chair of PAG
 - General Counsel of the college
 - President
 - Once all approvals are received, the Policy is officially posted to the College Policy Library and announced.
- Policies that undergo *Unsubstantial Revisions* adhere to the following process:
 - Upon receiving approval of the revisions from the Responsible Administrator(s), the Office of Policy and Compliance shares the Policy electronically with PAG for a brief comment period.
 - After the comment period, and incorporating any additional changes requested, the Office of Policy and Compliance posts the Policy to the College Policy Library and the Policy is announced.

¹The Office of Policy and Compliance will assist the Policy Owner(s) with coordinating any additional edits that may be suggested by PAG.

² The Office of Policy and Compliance will liaise between the Policy Owner(s), the Vice President for Human Resources, and the Bargaining Unit to address concerns related to the Collective Bargaining Agreement should any arise.

- The approval is formally noted at the next PAG meeting and is documented in the official minutes.

- **Exceptions**

The college may expedite the Policy review and approval process to protect the college's operations or meet compliance requirements in situations that require time-sensitive or urgent Policy revisions resulting from SUNY or legal guidance.

- **Policy Posting and Announcement**

- The Office of Policy and Compliance regularly announces all approved, new, revised, and withdrawn Policies³.

- **Policy Implementation**

Policy Implementation is directly facilitated by the Policy Owner(s), and is ongoing. The Office of Policy and Compliance periodically assesses implementation progress and can assist Policy Owner(s) in identifying any additional items required for successful implementation and enforcement.

Policy Implementation plans should include:

- **Communication**

In addition to the announcement made by the Office of Policy and Compliance, the Policy Owner(s) should identify, develop, and distribute any other communication methods needed to effectively communicate the Policy and its supporting Procedures.

- **Training**

Policy Owners should provide education and training to impacted areas to ensure their understanding and compliance with the Policy. This may include helping teams learn specifics about internal Procedures that align with, or support, the Policy. Internal training should be regularly assessed and remain ongoing to ensure consistent application of each Policy.

When required specifically for legal compliance with a Policy, the Office of Policy and Compliance, with input from the Policy Owner(s), will develop and deliver to individuals required to complete it, as specified in the Policy. (For example, annual Sexual Harassment training.)

- **Enforcement**

Policy Owners are ultimately responsible for enforcing their Policies. Those identified in each Policy under "Who is Responsible for This Policy" must ensure compliance within their respective areas.

The Office of Policy and Compliance may monitor ongoing compliance aspects of the Policy (e.g., reporting/training), while Internal Audit may periodically review Policies and supportive Procedures for compliance.

³ If the Policy impacts students, Enrollment Management and Student Success communicates the Policy to that population.

- **Periodic Review**
Policy Owners must regularly review their Policies to ensure alignment with FIT’s compliance program, as well as federal, state, and local laws, and SUNY guidance. If revisions are needed, the Policy Owner—with approval from their Responsible Administrator—or the Responsible Administrator themselves should contact the Office of Policy and Compliance to initiate the update process.

Violations

Violations of Official College Policy will be handled in accordance with the Procedures articulated in the applicable subject-specific Policy.

Related Policies

- [Records Retention and Disposition](#)

Related Documents

- [College Policy Library](#)
- [Policies A-Z](#)
- *Contact the Manager of Policy and Compliance for access to these documents:*
 - Guide to Preparing Policies
 - Impact Statement
 - Procedures for Policy Development/Revisions/Deletion

Contacts

- **Manager of Policy and Compliance**
Office of Policy and Compliance
212-217-3361
compliance@fitnyc.edu