

Board Statement on Policies
Board of Trustees of Southern Oregon University

1.0 Preamble

Consistent with authority of the Board of Trustees ("Board") to manage the affairs of Southern Oregon University ("University" or "SOU") and, in recognition of its fiduciary obligations, the Board identifies the following categories of authority and the principles and processes governing the development of statements of authority, including bylaws, committee charters, board statements, board resolutions, university policies, university procedures, handbooks, and manuals.

2.0 Categories of Authority

2.1 Bylaws. Board Bylaws outline the essential elements necessary for the Board's constitution and operation, including, but not limited to Board officers, meeting agendas, and certain legal obligations.

2.2 Committee Charters. Committee charters identify the duties and scope of authority for the Board's committees, both standing and ad hoc, and must be consistent with the Board's Bylaws, Board Statement on Committees, and other Board actions. These charters may only be adopted, amended, or repealed by a majority vote of the Board. Board committees, from time to time, may suggest changes to the committee charters for Board action.

2.3 Board Statements and Resolutions. Board Statements are broad, strategic statements communicating the Board's expectations. As opposed to University Policies or Procedures, which could communicate delegated, operational or transactional authority or procedures, Board Statements communicate the fundamental strategic, fiduciary, and structural expectations of the Board. While the Board's committees, President, and SOU Policy Council play a role in the development and recommendation of Board Statements, such Statements may only be adopted, amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Board. Pursuant to ORS 352.107, the Board may authorize a Board Statement to have the force of law. Board Resolutions are also reserved for broad, strategic statements, but may be used in specific circumstances, including statements that need to be reaffirmed periodically by the Board or for actions authorizing the sale of bonds. Board Statements and Resolutions must be consistent with the Board's Bylaws and federal and state law.

2.4 University Policies. University Policies describe the exercise of authority delegated to the President by the Board. University Policies typically communicate the broad, strategic expectations of the President regarding the University's affairs. University Policies must be consistent with Board Statements and Resolutions and federal and state law. In any event where a

University Policy is inconsistent with a Board Statement or Resolution, the Board Statement or Resolution shall prevail.

2.5 University Procedures. University Procedures, which likely work in concert with one or more University Policies, communicate the day-to-day steps or processes necessary for the effective and efficient accomplishment of University Policies. University Procedures must be consistent with Board Statements and Resolutions, University Policies, and other actions, as well as federal and state law. Where a University Procedure is inconsistent with a Board Statement, Resolution, University Policy or other Board action the Board Statement, Resolution, Policy, or action prevails.

2.6 Handbooks and Manuals. Handbooks and Manuals exist throughout the University and typically communicate desktop procedures or expectations for a University department, unit, or functional area. Examples may include, but are not limited to a faculty handbook, student handbook, and fiscal policy manual. Handbooks and Manuals must be consistent with Board Statements, Resolutions, and other actions, and University Policies and Procedures. Where a Handbook or Manual is inconsistent with a Board Statement, Resolution, or action, or University Policy or Procedure, the Statement, Resolution, action, Policy, or Procedure will prevail.

3.0 SOU Policy Committee

3.1 To assist in the formulation, drafting, revision, recommendation, and maintenance of the Board's and University's statements of authority, the Board directs the President to establish and maintain a policy council. The SOU Policy Council ("Council") will be convened by the SOU General Counsel. With the approval of the President, the Council will consist of representatives of the major functional units at the University (e.g., human resources, business affairs, contracting and procurement, public safety, student affairs, academic affairs, and risk management), as well as duly-elected or appointed representatives of the Faculty Senate and ASSOU. The Council is a consultative, multi-functional group designed to provide valuable input and advice on the categories of authority described in this Board Statement.

3.2 The responsibility for any statement of authority described at sections 2.4, 2.5, or 2.6 of this Board Statement resides with the cognizant officer or director ("Responsible Officer"), even if employees that report to the Responsible Officer participate in the Council. Responsible Officers include: (1) chief academic officer, (2) chief student affairs officer, (3) chief financial officer, (4) chief legal officer, (5) chief development officer, and (6) athletic director.

3.3 The Responsible Officer, or designee, shall present University Policies, whether new or existing, to the Council for advice. After discussion of the draft University Policy, the Responsible Officer may submit the draft University Policy to the President for authorization to seek comment from the University community. Although a vote is not required in order for the Responsible Officer to submit a University Policy to the President, the Responsible Officer shall communicate to the President any major issues or concerns, if any, identified by the Council. With the President's authorization, a Responsible Officer may submit a draft University Policy to the University community for comment for at least seven calendar days. The draft shall also be posted on the University's policy website during the comment period. After seven days, the Responsible Officer, with any comments, may return to the Council for advice or request approval from the President. A University Policy is only valid after an official copy is (i) approved by the President and (ii) included on the University's policy website.

3.4 The Responsible Officer, or designee, shall present University Procedures, whether new or existing, to the Council for advice. After discussion of the draft University Procedure, the Responsible Officer may seek the President's approval. Although a vote is not required in order for the Responsible Officer to submit a University Procedure to the President for approval, the Responsible Officer shall communicate to the President any major issues or concerns, if any, identified by the Council. A University Procedure is only valid after an official copy is approved by the President and a copy is made available to the University community either (a) on the University website or (b) a physical copy is created and made available to the University community in the department responsible for the procedure.

3.5 The Responsible Officer is authorized to maintain Handbooks and Manuals described at Section 2.6 for any unit or department that reports to him or her. The Responsible Officer may seek the advice and guidance of the Council for Handbooks and Manuals, but is not required to do so. Notwithstanding this authority, a Handbook or Manual is not valid unless it contains statements that (i) it does not create a contractual obligation unless expressly stated, (ii) that the official copy may be found on the University's website or the location where a physical copy may be inspected, and (iii) any inconsistency with a category of authority described at Section 2.3, 2.4, or 2.5 of this Statement will be resolved in favor of the applicable Board Statement, Resolution, or action, University Policy or Procedure, or, as applicable, collective bargaining agreement.

3.6 Inspection of policies, procedures, handbooks and manuals may be restricted to the extent allowed by the Oregon Public Records Law to prevent the misuse of sensitive security information, financial and business procedures, and similar information.

3.7 Board Statements or Resolutions may come to the Council for advice and consideration through a variety of channels, including the Board or its chair, its

committees, whether standing or *ad hoc*, the President, or a Responsible Officer. The relevant Responsible Officer, at the direction of the Board Chair, Board committee chair, or the President, may present a Board Statement or Resolution, whether new or existing, to the Council for advice and consideration. After any advice and consideration by the Council, and with the Board Chair's authorization, the President or Responsible Officer may submit a draft Board Statement or Resolution to the University community for comment for at least seven calendar days. The draft may also be posted on the University's policy website during the comment period. After seven days, the President or Responsible Officer may compile any comments and seek the advice of the Board Chair on whether to return the draft to the Council for further refinement or include the draft Board Statement or Resolution in the Board's docket for action at a regular, special or emergency meeting. Notwithstanding the Council's existence as a consultative, advisory group assembled for the benefit of the University, nothing in this Section shall be construed to require the Board or its committees to submit its Board Statements or Resolutions to the Council.

4.0 Format

4.1 All categories of authority will be presented substantially in the same format. The official copy of the authority will be found on the Board's website and the University's policy website, with an official paper in the Board's office files.

4.2 The Council will devise an operational system to organize the categories of authority under discernible functional areas.

4.3 Responsible Officers will, from time to time, review categories of authority within their functional areas to determine if repeal or amendment is advisable.

4.4 Technical changes to the organizational system, titles of authorities, indexing of authorities, or any other administrative change necessary to maintain an accessible and efficient policy function that does not conflict with this Board Statement may be accomplished after notice to the Board Chair.

Approved on March 22, 2019



Chair of the Board



Secretary of the University

Revision	Change	Date
	Initial Version	June 26, 2015
1	Responsible officers expanded to chief student affairs officer; validation of official university procedures expanded; applicability of Oregon Public Records Law included; basic edits and corrections.	March 22, 2019