Policy Writing Guide

Welcome to the CU Denver | CU Anschutz Policy Writing Guide. This document will help you draft a new policy or update a current policy.

Contact Information:

DenverPolicy@ucdenver.edu – for any Denver campus specific needs and questions regarding policy as well as about the Policy Equity Review (PER) guide.

Policy@ucdenver.edu – for dual campus and Anschutz campus specific needs and questions regarding policy.

Drafting A New Policy

Format
- A template can be downloaded from the Policy Office resources webpage or provided by the campus policy coordinator. Please follow this template to ensure a consistent format across policies.

Introduction
- A one-paragraph summary clearly stating the policy purpose and content.
- The introduction should also express exactly who the policy applies to and the consequences for non-compliance, if applicable.

Table of Contents
- If the policy is longer than 5 pages, include a table of contents.
- While most policies only include major section headings within the table of contents, be as specific as you feel is appropriate.

Definitions
- List definitions of terms used in the policy statement.
- Only include if necessary.

Policy Statement
- The policy statement should be a clear and concise statement that articulates requirements or expectations. Official campus policies guide decision making or set parameters or choices. (Campus Administrative Policy 3000).
- Use easy to understand language. Do not include procedures or guidelines in the policy statement.
- Policies vs Procedures and Guidelines
  - Policies reflect the "rules" governing the implementation of the campus processes. Procedures, on the other hand, represent an implementation of policy and may evolve over time as new tools emerge, new processes are designed, and the risks

associated with an any changes in response to internal or external environmental changes.

- o Campus policies may include procedural statements, but in most cases, detailed procedures should live in a separate document maintained by the unit responsible for developing and enforcing operational protocols.
- o Guidelines are defined in Campus Policy 3000 as "a piece of advice on how to act in a given situation." Examples of guidelines include best practices and editorial guidelines. Guidelines are typically not included in policy statements.
- o A more in-depth comparison of policies and procedures is listed in Campus Policy 3000 linked above.

Notes
- List all of related policies or materials, including appendices to the policy.
- The history and responsible office will be completed by the campus policy coordinator.

Updating an Existing Policy

Contact the university policy email for dual campus policies and Anschutz specific policies at (policy@ucdenver.edu) to get the latest Microsoft Word version of the policy. Contact the Denver campus policy email (DenverPolicy@ucdenver.edu) to get the latest Microsoft Word version of Denver campus specific policies. Any changes to the policy must be submitted via a tracked-change version of the provided Microsoft Word document.

When updating an existing policy, begin by reviewing the style and mechanics section of this guide to ensure compliance with campus policy format. If needed, download the policy template from the policy office website.

The following questions are meant to help guide the policy owner in the review and revision process.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is working well with the policy?
2. Is the policy statement clearly written? Is it complete or can it be simplified?
3. What common questions have been asked since the last review? Do questions pertain to particular clauses or sections of the policy?
4. Does this policy have known points of failure, and if so, what improvements would reduce these failure points?
5. If compliance with this policy is part of measuring its effectiveness, how do you assess compliance, and what office will be ensuring compliance?
6. Are there audit findings to consider?
7. How have other institutions addressed this issue in policy?

8. Does the policy owner or senior leader wish to propose a significant change?
9. When considering policy language through the stated equity lenses, are there any potential barriers to compliance with the policy or disparate impacts created by a policy and/or related documents (FAQ, procedures, appendices)? How might they be mitigated?
    - Equity lenses includes but are not limited to: ethnicity, race, religious expression, veteran status, people of color, people who identify as women, age, socio-economic status, people with both apparent and non-apparent disabilities, gender identity and gender expressions, and American Indians and other indigenous populations
10. Who are the key individuals or units that should review this policy?
11. What is your plan for involving relevant staff in the revision and consultation process?
12. Does this policy still align with other campus, CU System and Board of Regents articles/policies?
13. Are the impacted audiences still the same?
14. Are any new supplemental documents needed?
15. Are the procedures still correct?

Style and Mechanics

University Branding
- Naming Conventions
    - Naming conventions are an important part of reinforcing University Branding. The correct full and condensed names for the three relevant universities are listed below. These are the only terms that should be used to refer to the campuses.
        – University of Colorado Denver or CU Denver
        – University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus or CU Anschutz
        – If referring to both the CU Denver and CU Anschutz campuses, CU Denver|Anschutz
- Logos:
    - Logos are equally important parts of reinforcing University Branding and identifying CU Denver|Anschutz policies. The template for new policies includes the appropriate CU Denver, CU Anschutz, or CU Denver|Anschutz logo.

Editorial Style Guide
- For information on correct usage of titles, abbreviations, acronyms, etc. please refer to campus editorial style guides:
    - [CU Denver Editorial Style Guide](#)
    - [CU Anschutz Editorial Style Guide](#)

Digital Accessibility
- To accommodate screen readers, do not include in-text links within the body of the text. Instead, use a hyperlink.
- Only use black font in policies to increase digital accessibility.
- Refrain from using tables and instead use an outline format to accommodate screen readers. If a table must be used, name all headers for columns and rows to clearly outline the data.
- Refrain from using Roman numerals as they do not translate well for screen readers.
- Include text descriptions for images.
- As a rule, accessible content should be well organized, properly labeled, and easily found in web searches.
- For further information, please refer to the [Office of Information Technology accessibility website](#).

Gender Inclusion
- Use gender-neutral language as detailed below.
  - The majority of the world's major English-language dictionaries and style guides have moved to recognize the singular non-binary "they" – although some more cautiously than others.
    - Associated Press Stylebook – arguably, the foremost arbiter of grammar and word choice in journalism has added an entry for "they" as a singular, gender-neutral pronoun in its latest edition.
- "They, them, their"
  - In most cases, a plural pronoun should agree in number with the antecedent: The children love the books their uncle gave them. They/them/their is acceptable in limited cases as a singular and/or gender-neutral pronoun when alternative wording is overly awkward or clumsy. However, rewording usually is possible and always is preferable.