The university’s Policy on the Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies defines a coordinated and consistent process for identification, development, approval and administration of all university policies. In 2019-20 the committee met twice, and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the previously scheduled meetings for March and June were cancelled and policy revisions were instead considered electronically.

In summary, in 2019/20 the following was considered by the committee:

Deleted policies:
- Crown Foundations Policy

Amended policies:
- Academic Courses Policy
- Animals on Campus Policy
- Donor and Gift Anonymity Policy
- Investment Policy

Policies reviewed:
- Conflict of Interest-related Policies, including:
  - Conflict of Interest Policy
  - Responsible Conduct of Research Policy
  - Gift Acceptance Policy
Policies undergoing revisions:
- Centres Policy
- Responsible Conduct of Research Policy
- Alumni Affinity Policy

Policies in development:
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Living our Values
- Intellectual Property

**ATTACHMENTS:** Annual Report of the Policy Oversight Committee 2019/20
University of Saskatchewan Policy Oversight Committee
Annual Report
September 8, 2020

The university’s Policy on the Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies defines a coordinated and consistent process for identification, development, approval and administration of all university policies, both administrative and academic. Responsibility for implementation of the Policy is assigned to a Policy Oversight Committee (POC). Membership includes the vice-provosts, associate vice-presidents, two representatives from University Council, and one representative from Deans’ Council. Terms of Reference for the Committee establish that it is as an advisory committee to the University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer, with a mandate to coordinate university-level policies.

The committee considers cases made for new policies, reviews and oversees the revision of draft policies, oversees activities relating to approval, implementation and communication of new policies, and undertakes periodic reviews of existing policies for possible changes or deletion.

The Policy Oversight Committee generally meets four times a year. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the March 2020 and June 2020 meetings were cancelled, and feedback on policy revisions was considered electronically.

This report presents new policies approved, and existing policies amended or deleted between October 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Links to the policies are provided where applicable.

Deleted Policies

Crown Foundation Policy
Deleted by the Board of Governors July 7, 2020.

The Crown Foundations Act was created in 1994 to facilitate fundraising activity for both the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina. The Act allowed for different tax benefits. The USask Crown Foundation was dissolved because it was determined the Foundation was not considered an effective fundraising initiative for donors. Any donations that were given to the Foundation were transferred to the University at the time it was dissolved. All philanthropic support is now coordinated through University Relations and is strategically aligned with priority needs of the institution, colleges and units.
Approved New and Amended Policies

**Academic Courses Policy**

Approved by the Coordinating Committee of Council (chairs of Council Committees) on March 13, 2020, June 18, 2020, and pending further revisions for approval by Council on September 17, 2020.

The Academic Courses Policy governs the delivery of academic courses and examinations at USask. Importantly, this policy outlines the requirements for the content of course syllabi, which outlines the mode of course delivery as well as the format and weighting of final examinations. University Council: “prescribes methods and rules for evaluating student performance, including prescribing examination timetables and the conduct of examinations” (delegated through the academic courses policy); and “prescribes dates for beginning and ending lectures” c.U-6.1 61(1)(g); (k).

University Council, as approved by the Coordinating Committee: “Granted authority to instructors to alter syllabi for their classes for the duration (timeframe as determined by the President) of the COVID-19 pandemic to allow for alternate modes of course delivery and examinations.” The spirit and intent of (and the principles underlying) this motion were that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, syllabi would necessarily have to change and faculty should undertake in good faith the changes necessary to implement the completion of their courses in ways that: (1) will fulfill the learning objectives of the course, (2) are initiated with the best interests of students in mind, and (3) are within the realm of feasibility given the circumstances. The term “course delivery” in the motion thus refers to implementation overall.

The policy will be updated in September 2020 to restrict the types of amendments that can be made to syllabi for the start of the new academic year. In the meantime, all alterations to syllabi continue to require final approval by deans, executive directors, or department heads.

**Animals on Campus Policy**

Approved by the Board of Governors on March 23, 2020.

In alignment with the University of Saskatchewan’s principle of diversity, equity, and human dignity, reasonable accommodations must be provided to students, staff, and faculty with disabilities. Accommodations will be provided up to the point of undue hardship to the University.

As part of the university's commitment to providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all members of the campus community; this policy is designed to
control disruptions, nuisances, potential health hazards, and reduce the risk of personal injury and/or anxiety created by animals at the University of Saskatchewan.

Currently there is no provincial oversight or legislation for the certification of service and support animals in the Province of Saskatchewan. We have seen an increase in aggressive and disruptive behaviours from animals on campus due to this lack of oversight.

The policy provides a framework for the identification, evaluation, registration, monitoring and accommodation of service and support animals while on university grounds and in university buildings that mirrors the government legislated processes for service animal registration in the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia. This policy (and the companion procedures) will mitigate the risk to the university community through: (1) the requirement of detailed medical letters advocating for the need of the accommodation, (2) detailed veterinarian health clearance forms and (3) an on-campus behavioural assessment by a certified behaviorist for all service animals, that come from organizations that are not certified by Assistance Dogs International and any support animals that are requested as an on campus accommodation.

Conflict of Interest-Related Policies
Review and recommendations endorsed by Senate on April 18, 2020.

At the recommendation of Senate, in 2018 a joint committee of Senate, Council and Board was established to conduct a review of the university’s Responsible Conduct of Research Policy, Gift Acceptance Policy, and the Conflict of Interest Policy.

The following table summarizes the conclusions and recommendations of the committee:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>CONCLUSION</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)</em> Policy</td>
<td>The RCR policy is sufficiently robust to protect against perceived or actual conflicts of interest. Responsibility for the RCR policy rests with University Council, and that the policy is currently under review via appropriate channels.</td>
<td>University Council (via its Research, Scholarly and Artistic Works Committee) should ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms to deal with individual faculty member conflicts of interest in the RCR policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gift Acceptance Policy</em></td>
<td>In its present form, this policy is sufficiently robust so as to protect against undue external influence.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of Interest Policy</td>
<td>The policy itself is appropriate, but would benefit from, and be strengthened by, accompanying procedures and guidelines that would assist in communication, interpretation, and implementation of the policy.</td>
<td>That the Board of Governors initiate the development of procedures and/or a procedural flow chart to accompany the policy, and that an appeal mechanism and resolution process be developed for allegations of conflict of interest. Consider the possibility of institutional bias.</td>
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On April 18, 2020, a motion was endorsed by Senate to recommend to the Board of Governors that procedures be developed to accompany the Conflict of Interest policy, and to Council that should ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms to deal with individual faculty member conflicts of interest in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) policy.

**Donor and Gift Anonymity Policy**
*Approved by the Board of Governors on July 7, 2020*

The Donor and Gift Anonymity Policy was revised from the current version created in 2001 to reflect the legal obligation to disclose the name of donors and nature and value of their gift under the authority of the Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (LA FOIP). In addition, it was added that the University must receive requests for anonymity in writing and that the donor’s name and details of gifts will not be published in any publication or digital media to honour the donor’s request.

**Investment Policy**
*Considered on October 7, 2019 and approved by the Board of Governors on December 17, 2019.*

This policy establishes investment principles and clarifies responsibilities for investments. In addition to consolidating all investing strategies (including pensions, endowments, and pooled cash), the policy incorporates a statement on responsible investing and assigns university management (through the Vice-President, Finance & Resources) responsibility for investments. Shifting responsibility for this activity to university management will provide the ability to align investing with institutional strategy and to execute decisions and actions as evolving market conditions and solutions develop. Instead of involving the Board in tactical decisions, the policy will engage the Board in their fiduciary oversight through regular performance reporting and annual updates on investment strategy, structures, and assets.
In the absence of an investment policy, the Board of Governors has made investment decisions through the Finance and Audit committee and an Internal Investment subcommittee. While the Vice-President, Finance and Resources has been responsible for managing investments, management did not have the ability to make decisions to adjust investment parameters and strategies to align with university strategy without approval of the Board.

Drawing on practices from other not-for-profits, this policy moves toward a policy governance model that engages university management in the leadership of investments under a board policy, risk management framework, and institutional strategies.

**Other Policies in Progress**

**Policies Undergoing Revision**
- Centres Policy
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Alumni Affinity Policy

**Policies in Development**
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Living our Values
- Intellectual Property