

Policy 3-004: Processing and Signing Official Documents

I. Purpose

To establish responsibilities for the review, approval, and signing of Official Documents.

II. Definitions

- A. Official Document - A written agreement, proposal, or other formal instrument regarding a course of action, the expenditure of University funds, or other contractual obligation - which is intended to be binding upon the University. Official Documents obligate the University as a whole, or its divisions, to act, engage, consent, perform, or pay. Typically, at least one party to the transaction is external to the University. Official Documents may be in the form of contracts, proposals, agreements, statements, notices, resolutions, letters, memorandums, licenses, indentures, etc. But such documents may go by other names as well.
- B. University Officer - An individual holding an executive level position at the University - typically a member of the President's Cabinet. A University Officer has implicit authority to sign Official Documents as they pertain to his/her area of authority.
- C. Authorized Alternate - An individual designated in writing by a University Officer to act in his or her behalf in matters requiring signatures on Official Documents as outlined in this Policy. An Authorized Alternate may exercise such authority in the planned or occasional absence of a University Officer, as a "proxy"; or may receive a more permanent delegation of authority for one or many particular Official Documents.

III. Policy

- A. All Official Documents shall be signed by a University Officer, an Authorized Alternate, or as otherwise permitted by University Policy. For instance, University

Policy allows for the fact that many business processes, forms, and related documents provide instructions for authorized approvals and signatures to facilitate the processing of routine transactions, such as Campus Orders, Limited Purchase Orders, Travel Reimbursements, and the like . These documents are properly handled at the dean, director, or department chair level. This Policy is not intended to supersede other policies or change approval requirements for these established business processes. See Section V. below for references to such other policies.

- B. The originator of an Official Document shall route the document to the office of the appropriate University Officer for review, processing, and signature after obtaining necessary approval and/or signature of the department head, dean, or director.
- C. Exceptions to the signature requirements of this Policy may be authorized by the president or the appropriate vice president when special circumstances or emergency conditions make strict compliance impracticable. Authorization shall be in writing and filed in the Office of the Vice President for Administrative Services.
- D. The designation of any Authorized Alternate and any exceptions to this Policy shall be in writing and filed in the Office of the Vice President for Administrative Services.
- E. Official documents with significant legal implications should be forwarded to the University Office of General Counsel for review before execution by the appropriate University Officer. Documents such as summonses or subpoenas may be received and signed for by a University Officer representative, as appropriate, but should be referred to the Office of General Counsel for review before any action is taken.
- F. During the absence of individuals authorized to sign Official Documents, approval and signature should be obtained from the Authorized Alternate or other

University Officer. The individual designated as an Authorized Alternate will sign his or her own name and not the name of the University Officer who made the designation, or of any other person.

- G. Official Documents shall be routed to the cognizant University Officer for signature. To assist in identifying an appropriate division of duties with respect to the categories of Official Documents, and to facilitate the changing nature of these documents and the responsibilities of University Officers over time, a separate listing of Official Documents segregated by University Officer will be maintained by the Vice President for Administrative Services. The Listing of Official Documents by Vice Presidential Area is incorporated within this Policy by reference, and may be found through the link provided in Section IV.A. below.

IV. Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms and other Related Resources

A. Rules

[R3-004A](#), Listing of Official Documents by Vice Presidential Area

B. Procedures *[reserved]*

C. Guidelines *[reserved]*

D. Forms *[reserved]*

E. Other Related Resources *[reserved]*

V. References

A. [Policy 3-051](#), Banking Policy

B. [Policy 3-110](#), Lease or Rental of Property for University Use

C. [Policy 3-111](#), Independent Consultant and Independent Contractor Professional Service Agreements

D. [Policy 3-190](#), Requisition Preparation and Processing

VI. Contacts

Acting as the Policy Owner, the Associate Vice President for Financial & Business Services is responsible for answering questions regarding the application of this policy. Acting as the Policy Officer, the Vice President for Administrative Services has the authority to allow exceptions to this policy.

VII. History

A. Revision 4; Approved by Board of Trustees: 01/12/2010

1. [Executive Summary](#)

B. [Revision 3](#); Editorially revised 12/27/1999

C. [Revision 2](#); Editorial revisions approved by Cabinet 9/8/1983