



DEFINING  
THE VISION  
FOR THE NEXT  
100 YEARS

MARCH 13-18, 2011 ■ SEATTLE, WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE CONVENTION CENTER

# Admission Policy Development: A Learning and Engagement Opportunity

Presented by: Dr. Tammy Johnson,  
Marshall University

Tuesday, March 15, 2011 3:45 pm

Session ID 398

# Session Rules of Etiquette

- Please turn off your cell phone/pager
- If you must leave the session early, please do so as discreetly as possible
- Please avoid side conversation during the session

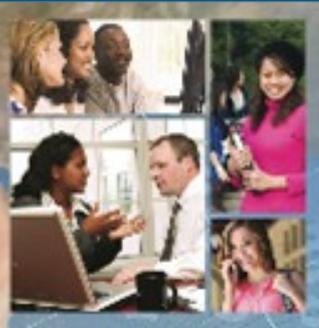
Thank you for your cooperation!

# Introduction

- The purpose of this session is to provide information regarding the development, evaluation, and refinement of admission-related policies. A general, step-by-step guide will be presented as well as examples of both effective and ineffective policies.
- This session is intended for new Admissions professionals or those with little experience in policy development

# Rationale for Session

- A well-conceived and well-designed policy can make your professional life much less difficult
- Very often, policies in Admissions (as well as other student services offices) are ineffective or non-existent
- Policies may be in need of updating, may no longer be applicable, or be ill conceived or written poorly
- There are many opportunities for policy development to govern new initiatives or programs
- Rather than ignoring ineffective policies or making constant exceptions, policies should be evaluated and revised in order to maintain relevance and effectiveness



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# Topic One

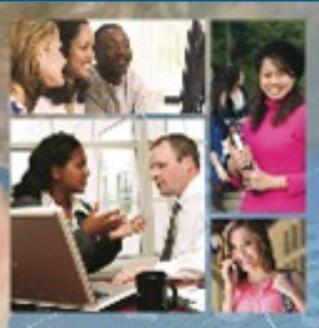
External vs. Internal Policy

# External Policy

- External: Any policy that will be viewed by external audiences
  - Should be general but informative and should not be secretive or contain vague language when at all possible
  - Define any term or phrase that is likely to be misunderstood or misinterpreted
  - A policy should not be so vague (whether an oversight or by design) that it fails to provide all necessary information for prospective students

# Internal Policy

- Internal: Any policy that will be viewed and utilized by internal constituents only
  - Can be more detailed
  - Try to account for most possible scenarios
  - Do not confuse policy with practice



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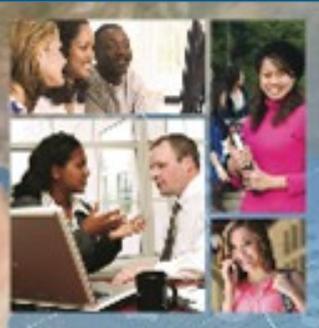
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# Topic Two

Approaches to Policy Development

# Approaches to Policy Development

- Many approaches are possible and can be effective
- Two basic approaches will be discussed today
  - Focused vs. broad based
- The approach to policy development should be determined based on the goal of the policy developer(s)
  - Is there a need to simply get an effective policy on the books for an issue that has limited scope/impact?
    - If so, the development of the policy can be equally limited.
  - Is there a need for a policy that will have far-reaching effects and will require the buy-in of multiple constituents?
    - In that instance, the development of the policy should include all affected areas/offices and should present an engagement opportunity for all involved.



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# Topic Three

Steps in the Policy Development Process

# Steps in the Policy Development Process

1. Identify how broad the policy will be and which areas/offices will be impacted?
  - Do you want to develop a policy to achieve a goal that requires minimal buy-in? If so, move to next step.
  - Do you want to create buy-in and consensus among a large group of constituents or provide a learning and engagement opportunity? If so, convene the committee at this stage.

# Steps in the Policy Development Process

2. Identify the purpose of the policy and the main points that you want to convey in the policy, including information for different populations who may require tailored messages (a short, bulleted list is sufficient at this stage).
3. How is information currently conveyed (current policy), if at all?

# Steps in the Policy Development Process

4. Research existing policy and practice at your institution and do not dismiss immediately. Try to recognize which parts of current policy are effective and which parts are not. Most importantly, try to determine *why* the policy developed in a certain way.
5. Research guidelines of governing bodies and other organizations such as state agencies, related institutional policies, AACRAO, NACAC, etc.

# Steps in the Policy Development Process

6. Research policies at peer institutions- this should not be done very early in the process as individuals have a tendency to want to 'adopt' others' policies without really examining if those are the best fit for their institution. This step is helpful for refining language and for identifying other issues not previously considered.
7. Create a draft based on all information obtained to date.

# Steps in the Policy Development Process

8. Ask potential 'audience' members to review the policy for understanding, adjust language as needed.
9. Obtain approval of committee (if convened in first stage) or of supervisor/others if the policy has limited scope and was developed without the assistance of a committee.
10. Monitor the effectiveness of the policy for a prescribed cycle, note needed changes, revise policy as necessary.

# Summary

- A good set of policies is invaluable for any Admissions Office
- Determine the type of policy you need to create
- More time/effort spent in development usually means less time/effort spent in redevelopment

# Thank You!

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