**HOP APPROVAL PROCESS**

**A. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the procedure for amending The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP) including obtaining input from departments, offices, or faculty, staff or student advisory bodies that may be affected by changes in policies and procedures.

**B. Persons Affected**

This policy applies to all individuals associated with or on the premises of UTRGV, including without limitation, employees, faculty, students, visitors, volunteers, contractors, or vendors.

**C. Definitions**

1. *Educational Policy* - Sections of the HOP that pertain to the areas of faculty responsibility as set forth in The University of Texas System Board of Regents’ *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40101.

2. *Governance of the Institution* - Consists of the policies and procedures, except medical procedures or protocols, affecting the way UTRGV directs, administers or controls UTRGV. This includes policies and procedures:
   a. directing compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, rules and regulations, UT System policies and other policies with System-wide application;
   b. addressing or affecting the responsibility or authority of the various offices and bodies that make up UTRGV; and
   c. addressing the relationships between administration, faculty, students, and staff and institutional values or goals.

3. *HOP Committee* - The standing Committee appointed by the UTRGV President to review and make recommendations regarding the HOP to the President. The HOP Committee membership includes the President or his or her designee, the Vice Presidents or their respective designees, the Faculty Senate President, Staff Senate President, Student Government Association President, the Policy Coordinator and other individuals as appointed by the President.

4. *Policy Impact Statement* - An initiating document proposing a new policy or revision to an existing policy. It provides relevant background information addressing the rationale, scope, and potential impact issues (resource, operational, financial, training, etc.).
5. **Policy Coordinator** - Person appointed by UTRGV’s President to ensure institutional compliance with this policy.

6. **Responsible Executive** - The institutional official or designee who is responsible for the programmatic, functional or administrative areas addressed by the policy and procedure.

7. **Significant change** - A change that results in a substantive change in the rule including changes to essential principle(s), scope or application of the HOP policy or procedure. Editorial changes, changes to reflect institutional organizational changes, paragraph and outline numbering, and reference citations are not significant changes.

8. **Stakeholder** – Department, office, or faculty, staff or student advisory body with a key interest in changes to a policy.

10. **Stakeholder Review Plan** - A plan for obtaining advisory input from identified stakeholders that may be affected by changes in HOP policies and procedures.

D. **Policy**

The UTRGV HOP contains official policies and procedures for the governance of UTRGV. The rules and regulations constituting the HOP must not conflict with any rule or regulation in the Regents’ Rules and Regulations. Any HOP rule or regulation that is in conflict with any rule or regulation in the Regents’ Rules and Regulations is null and void and has no effect. The HOP does not constitute a contract between UTRGV and its employees.

The UTRGV President has the authority and responsibility to develop and administer the rules and regulations for governance of UTRGV. The President may delegate responsibility for coordination of policy development and review. The development and review process will include an opportunity for faculty, staff and student advisory bodies to provide input regarding proposed changes to policies that may impact the respective groups. All rules and regulations or amendments to the HOP must be approved by the President and by either UTRGV’s Chief Legal Officer or the Vice Chancellor and General Counsel of The University of Texas System.

E. **Procedures**

The Policy Coordinator will chair the HOP Committee and have administrative oversight with regard to policy coordination, development, and review. The HOP Committee will review all HOP sections and for each section, is responsible for designating a Responsible Executive; determining a periodic review schedule; designating whether it pertains to the areas of faculty responsibility in educational policy formulation; and developing a Stakeholder Review Plan.

1. **HOP Review Process**
   a. Policies Not Related to Educational Matters
i. A stakeholder proposing a new policy or amendment to a policy will draft the policy or amendment in correct HOP format based on the HOP Style Guide, and will prepare a Policy Impact Statement. (The Policy Coordinator or designee will provide assistance upon request.) The proposing stakeholder will route the documents through the appropriate dean, director, or administrative equivalent to the Responsible Executive.

ii. The Responsible Executive will submit the proposal to the Policy Coordinator who will distribute it to the HOP Committee for initial review and to confirm the Stakeholder Review Plan. The Stakeholder Review Plans for policies not related to educational matters require review by all stakeholders within 30 calendar days. Educational matters require a review by all stakeholders within 60 calendar days.

iii. The Policy Coordinator will distribute the proposed HOP policy in accordance with the Stakeholder Review Plan and timelines.

iv. Advisory input from stakeholders returned timely to the Policy Coordinator will be provided to the Responsible Executive for consideration.

v. The Responsible Executive will resubmit the proposed HOP policy with any incorporated changes to the HOP Committee for final consideration and action within 15 calendar days.

vi. Once the HOP Committee has approved the proposed HOP policy, it will be submitted to the Chief Legal Officer for consideration and action within 30 calendar days.

b. Educational Policy

i. New or amended Educational Policies will be reviewed in accordance with Section E.1.a. (i)-(vi).

ii. The Stakeholder Review Plan must include review by the faculty advisory body.

iii. The faculty advisory review timeline will be reasonable (60 calendar days or less).

c. HOP Policies with No Significant Changes

Proposed changes to a HOP policy that are not significant do not need to be approved in accordance with this policy or reviewed by the Chief Legal Officer. The Policy Coordinator, in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, shall determine whether the change is significant.

2. The Policy Coordinator will submit the proposed HOP policy to the Chief Legal Officer (or designee) for review and approval. The Chief Legal Officer has the discretion to refer any
proposed HOP Policy to the Vice Chancellor and General Counsel of the UT System (or designee) for review and approval.

3. The Policy Coordinator will notify the HOP Committee and Responsible Executive regarding the resolution of any comments received from the Chief Legal Officer or Vice Chancellor and General Counsel of the UT System and make conforming changes as needed. Recommendations and comments from UTRGV or UT System attorneys are legal advice provided to university administration and are to be treated as privileged and confidential attorney-client communications.

4. The Chief Legal Officer (or designee) will then submit the policy to the President for final approval. The submission should include track changes and a brief background and rationale for the proposed policy.

5. The Policy Coordinator will be responsible for the notification of the UTRGV community regarding approved HOP amendments as well as place them in the HOP.

6. All policies shall be subject to periodic review.

F. Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards

University of Texas Board of Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Rule 20201, Presidents

University of Texas Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Rule 10100, Rule on Rules and Regulations

University of Texas Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Rule 40101, Faculty Roles in Educational Policy Formulation

G. Dates Reviewed or Amended

Amended on March 24, 2017