



## Open Letter to the Senate Executive Council

FINAL

January 24, 2025

Dear Senate Executive Committee,

We write as co-chairs of the University Structure and Governance to draw your attention to an important matter concerning university policies.

At the November 14, 2024 meeting of the University Structure and Governance Committee, we hosted the Policy Manager for Rutgers University. At that meeting, the Policy Manager clarified that all Rutgers policies must (1) go through a specific outlined [process](#) and (2) be available in the [Rutgers policy database](#). It is our understanding that any guidelines, suggestions, or rules – regardless of how they are characterized – that fail to meet both requirements are not held to be a Rutgers policy. Here is the relevant section of our meeting note<sup>1</sup>:

The USGC has now clarified that for any set of rules or guidelines to become a legitimate and enforceable university policy, they must go through the formal policy workflow process and be available on the Rutgers University Policy Library, which is online. The Board of Governors can subvert this process in specific circumstances, but there are no other exceptions. University correspondence or other guidance that do not follow the policy approval process are not official university-wide policy.

In the past year, the Rutgers administration has announced “guidelines” that have drastically changed what, they claim, is permitted on campus, such as the [Freedom of Expression Guidelines](#). But, as per Rutgers policy process, USGC is of the view that those guidelines are not held to be formal policy since they did not go through the policy workflow process and are not listed in the Policy Library. Thus, we would infer that they cannot be enforced with similar rigor.

We urge the Senate Executive Committee make efforts to clearly communicate to the wider Rutgers University community when a policy is held to be a formal university policy, and indeed (and perhaps most importantly) when it is not.

Sincerely,

James Boucher and Wendy Purcell  
Co-Chairs USGC

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that this is an extract of our meeting note and not a formal minute of the meeting. It represents USGC’s best understanding at the time and does not constitute a verbatim or formal statement by the Policy Manager.