

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM  
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM**

**SECTION: General Administration**

**NUMBER: 01.A.01**

**AREA: Administrative Guide**

**SUBJECT: Administrative Memoranda System**

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. University of Houston System Administrative Memoranda (SAMs) are intended to specify rules and regulations to implement Board policies, and/or to establish uniform rules, regulations and procedures on matters of overall System concern not addressed in Board policies.
- 1.2. This document describes the process for creating, revising, and publishing SAMs, and their format, enforcement, and monitoring.

2. POLICY

- 2.1. In accordance with [Board of Regents Policy 01.01.4](#), SAMs shall set forth policy and procedures only when necessary, common to all components in a well-articulated and understandable manner.
- 2.2. All System personnel shall have electronic access to current SAMs.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. Policy: A statement of principles and values which help ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promote operational efficiencies, or reduce institutional risks.
- 3.2. Procedure: A defined course of proceeding – often composed of steps, using established forms or methods – to carry out a particular policy.
- 3.3. Responsible party(ies): The executive officer(s) who has ultimate or delegated authority over and/or responsibility for a given policy area. This individual may also act as subject matter expert.
- 3.4. Subject matter expert (SME): An employee who is an expert in a policy-related issue and who typically works with the University Policies and Procedures Coordinator, and/or the responsible party, to create or revise SAMs. This individual may also act as the responsible party.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDA

- 4.1. The Chancellor delegates to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance the responsibility and authority for establishing the SAM system and publishing, cataloging, and maintaining all official SAMs.
- 4.2. The Chancellor delegates primary responsibility and authority for SAMs' content as follows:

<u>Executive Officer</u>	<u>Policy Area</u>
a. Senior Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance	General Administration Human Resources Facilities/Construction Management Financial Affairs Information Technology Risk Management Public Safety and Security
b. Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Academic Affairs Personnel (Faculty and Other Academic Staff)
c. Vice Chancellor for University Advancement	University Advancement
d. Vice Chancellor for Governmental and Community Relations	Governmental Relations
e. Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services	Student Affairs
f. Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs and General Counsel	Legal Affairs
g. Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology Transfer	Research and Technology Transfer Intellectual Property Management Industrial Partnerships
h. Vice Chancellor for University Marketing, Communication and Media Relations	University Marketing, Communication and Media Relations
i. Chief Audit Executive	Audits

5. AUTHORITY OF SAM

- 5.1. In the event of a conflict between a SAM and any other oral or written policy or procedure within the System, the SAM will govern, and the superseded policy or procedure will be revoked or revised to bring it into compliance with the official SAM.
- 5.2. In the event of a conflict between any SAM and a policy or procedure promulgated by a higher authority (e.g., federal law, state law, Coordinating Board policy, or Board of Regents policy), the higher authority will govern, and the SAM in question will be revised to reflect the policy or procedure of the higher authority.

6. FORMAT

SAMs shall be developed and published in the format indicated by this memorandum, generally consisting of the following key elements:

- 6.1. Header and footer: Name of manual; section name and area name (first header); SAM number; a clear and concise title describing the subject of the policy; date issued; date of most recent revision (if applicable); and page number and total number of pages of the SAM.
- 6.2. Purpose: Cites board policy, legislation, regulations or other basis for the development of the document. This area may also include statements of organizational objectives to be achieved by implementation of the policy.
- 6.3. Policy: A concise statement of the principle(s) which form(s) the basis of the policy.
- 6.4. Definitions: Definitions of critical terms used in the SAM.
- 6.5. Support information: Additional sections outlining the details of the policy, as required.
- 6.6. Procedures: Typically, SAMs do not include detailed procedural information. Only in cases where a procedure is determined and managed on a System-wide basis should the SAM contain such information.
- 6.7. Review and Responsibility: A section assigning a responsible party for review and documenting a specific review cycle, as listed in Section 4.2 above.
- 6.8. Approval: Signature lines for formal approval of the document.

- 6.9 Revision Log: A table with information documenting the revision history of the SAM. All SAMs will have Revision Log information included in the documentation starting in January 2011.
- 6.10 References may be added to SAM documentation before listing the Revision Log at the Subject Matter Expert's discretion.

7. FORMULATION AND REVIEW

- 7.1. The need to create or revise SAMs may arise anywhere at any time, but every SAM must fall under the jurisdiction of an executive officer (i.e., vice chancellor, associate/assistant vice chancellor, or the Chief Audit Executive) as listed in Section 4.2. The executive officer acts as the responsible party for the SAM.
- 7.2. When the need to create or revise a SAM arises, the responsible party will assign or act as an SME to create a new draft or identify necessary revisions. The responsible party or SME will form a group, including at least one representative from each System component university, to address all pertinent issues related to a given policy prior to the review process and to produce a working draft.

Existing SAMs will also be forwarded to the SME by University Policies and Procedures when the documented review period for the SAM approaches (usually every 3 to 5 years); the SME is responsible for replying to University Policies and Procedures by the end of the documented review period, either with proposed updates to the existing SAM or with an indication that no updates are required. In such cases, the SAM will proceed through the standard review process even if no revisions are proposed by the SME.

- 7.3. The SME will then contact University Policies and Procedures to obtain the SAM template (for new documents) or a copy of the existing SAM (for revisions) in electronic form. The SME will use revision tracking on existing SAM documentation to indicate all changes. Upon completion, the SME will provide the new or revised draft to University Policies and Procedures. Where appropriate, the SME will provide comments explaining the reasoning for the proposed revision.
- 7.4. Housekeeping changes are changes which do not affect policy content, but may include corrected formatting or typos, references to supporting law or other policies, corrected titles, change of authority for the policy, updated contact or URL information, or very minor text changes for clarity.

Housekeeping changes that are made at interim intervals are not subject to the Review Cycle process, but will be posted on the Policies and Procedures web site.

- 7.5. Before beginning the Component Campus Review, the SAMs are forwarded to the Senior Vice Chancellor (SVC) of Administration and Finance for a preliminary review cycle of five working days. Any changes from this review

cycle will be forwarded to the SME to incorporate changes within 5 working days. The Component Campus Review will begin after the requested changes have been incorporated from the SVC of Administration and Finance.

University Policies and Procedures sends the SAMs to Component System Reviewers from UH – Clear Lake, UH – Victoria, and UH – Downtown, who have 10 working days to review SAMs and respond with any changes before the Component Campus Review. Any requested changes from this review cycle will be forwarded to the SME to incorporate changes within 5 working days.

- 7.6. University Policies and Procedures will issue the draft to all necessary and interested parties and concerns across the System for Component Campus Review.
  - a. All reviewers will have no more than 20 working days to review a document and respond with changes.
  - b. Any suggested changes to the draft must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a justification or rationale for the change, to University Policies and Procedures.
  - c. After 20 working days, University Policies and Procedures will forward all responses to the applicable SME for consideration. The SME will have five working days to determine which changes, if any, to include in the draft. The SME will make the approved changes with revision tracking and forward the redlined draft to University Policies and Procedures. If the SME rejects a change, the SME will notify the reviewer who submitted the change of this rejection, and the reasoning behind it. This information (both approved changes and rejected changes) will be documented electronically for the System Executive Review cycle on the appropriate web site.
  - d. University Policies and Procedures will electronically submit the redlined draft for review to the System Executive Review committee (SER), which is composed of the members listed in Section 4.2, plus other user members with specific responsibilities based on the SAM's documented content. The SER will have 20 working days to review a document and respond with changes.
  - e. Any suggested changes to the draft must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a justification or rationale for the change, to University Policies and Procedures.
  - f. After 20 working days, University Policies and Procedures will forward any SER responses to the SME for consideration. The SME will have five working days to make the approved changes and forward the redlined

draft to University Policies and Procedures, or rejecting the suggested changes and notifying University Policies and Procedures with the reasoning behind non-incorporation.

- g. University Policies and Procedures will prepare a final document and submit it to the responsible party(ies) and the appropriate vice chancellor for their approval.
- h. The responsible Vice Chancellor shall submit the policy to the Chancellor for signature after the other approval signatures have been completed. Once signed, the document will be forwarded to University Policies and Procedures for electronic posting and approval notification to the SAM Listserv.
- i. A summary flowchart of the SAM Review process may be found at the following web site:  
[http://www.uh.edu/af/universityservices/policies/SAMReview\\_CrossFunctional.pdf](http://www.uh.edu/af/universityservices/policies/SAMReview_CrossFunctional.pdf).

7.7. Certain information within an official SAM may become obsolete or require revision due to changes in legislation or other higher authority; organizational structure; or administrative initiative. Additionally, legal authority may require that the Board of Regents or Chancellor implement or approve certain policies to comply with federal or state law. When such information is not open for interpretation or debate, the document will not be subject to the standard review process. Instead, the document will be revised in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs/General Counsel and submitted directly to the Chancellor for approval. In such cases, a courtesy copy of this documentation will be sent to the University Coordinating Commission (UCC) for informational purposes.

7.8. Other circumstances may require that a SAM be issued immediately (before the review process can be completed) or for a finite amount of time. Such a document will be issued as an “interim” policy. Interim SAMs shall be submitted through the regular review process during the next review cycle or as soon as practicable thereafter.

## 8. DISTRIBUTION AND FILING

8.1. University Policies and Procedures will maintain at least one electronic archival set of all SAMs.

8.2. All official SAMs will be maintained on the SAM web site at <http://www.uh.edu/af/universityservices/policies/sam/index.htm>. New and updated SAMs will be posted within 5 working days of being approved and signed. Members of the System community can obtain update notifications electronically by registering their e-mail addresses at the SAM ListServ portal on

the Policies and Procedures web site at  
<http://www.uh.edu/af/universityservices/policies/samlist.htm>.

9. IMPLEMENTATION, ENFORCEMENT, AND MONITORING

- 9.1. The vice chancellors and General Counsel are responsible for monitoring the System-wide implementation and enforcement of those SAMs over which they have assigned authority.
- 9.2. Component university presidents are responsible for implementing and enforcing all SAMs at their institutions within 30 days of receipt, or as necessary to maintain compliance with existing laws.

10. RESCINDING SAMs

Only the Chancellor has the authority to rescind SAMs and does so only when clear justification exists. However, any System personnel may propose rescission of existing SAMs.

- 10.1. Rescission proposals must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a thorough justification for the rescission, to University Policies and Procedures.

Note: This justification must include official documentation, such as supporting legal authority for the rescission or other rationale, such as that a new or existing SAM contains the information in the SAM to be rescinded.

- 10.2. System personnel generating the rescission proposal are responsible for communicating the rescission and justification behind it to areas impacted by the potential removal of the SAM documentation. Additionally, the employee requesting the rescission shall inform the University Policies and Procedures Coordinator of which offices were notified, and shall work with the Coordinator to ensure that impacted offices are aware of the proposal. Examples include, and are not limited to, the System Office of Finance for fiscal information, University Information Technology (UIT) for information technology information, and General Counsel for any documents with specific legal impact.
- 10.3. University Policies and Procedures will forward rescission proposals to the appropriate vice chancellor for his or her review. If the vice chancellor accepts the proposal, he or she will submit the proposal to the Chancellor for review and signature.
- 10.4. Once it has been determined that an existing SAM should be rescinded, electronic notification of this rescission will be communicated to each component university.

11. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Parties: Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration  
 Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance

Review: Every three years on or before March 1

12. APPROVAL

Approved: Jim McShan  
 Interim Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

Renu Khator  
 Chancellor

Date: March 23, 2016

**REVISION LOG**

Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
1	05/01/1988	Original edition (SAM number was SAM 01.01)
2	09/04/1990	Added new SAM Template. Changed SAM number from SAM 01.01 to SAM 01.A.01. Reformatted information from original template. Changed Administrative Council to Chancellor’s Advisory Council in Section 3.1. Changed Administrative Council to Advisory Council throughout text. Added example of numbering plan in Section 6.1. Lowered number from 01 – 99 to 01-10, up to 99 for expansion. Changed review period from even numbered years by May 1 <sup>st</sup> to odd numbered years on or before June 1 <sup>st</sup>
3	11/08/1990	Changed document number from SAM 01.A.01 to SAM 01.01. Changed Chancellor’s Advisory Council to University Counsel in Section 3.1. Added new Section 3.3 on review process by University Counsel and Vice Chancellors. Removed specific distribution information in Section 5.3. Archival information is maintained by the Chancellor’s Office in Section 5.4. Changed numbering plan in Section 6.1 from numeric-alphabetic-numeric to numeric-numeric, and reduced section possibilities to General Administration, Personnel, Fiscal Affairs, and reserved for expansion



Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
4	12/07/1990	Changed document number from SAM 01.01 to SAM 01.A.01. Added page number to formatting in Section 2.1. Added Chancellor's Executive Cabinet (CEC) and removed Vice Chancellors for reviewing documentation to Section 3.1. Added new Section 3.3 on proposal of new SAMs. Added original distribution information by office in Section 5.2. Added institutional President to maintain one archival set of SAMs in Section 5.4. Changed Section 6.1 to numeric-alphabetic-numeric. Added Internal Audit, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, and Governmental Relations to section possibilities
5	06/17/1992	Contents rewritten to reflect current process. Section 2.0 included a chart of responsibility for SAMs. Added Legal Affairs to section possibilities, and responsibility of the Office of Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance to assigning numbers, maintaining the index, and keeping archived SAMs
6	01/11/2000	Applied revised SAM template. Contents rewritten to reflect current process and format for SAMs, complying with a directive from the Board of Regents to streamline policy processes and minimize turnaround time. Updates include information from the rescinded SAM 01.A.01, Administrative Memorandum Development. Changed responsible party and updated review period from odd numbered years on or before June 1 <sup>st</sup> to every three years on or before September 1 <sup>st</sup> . Updated Index terms
7	06/16/2004	Applied revised SAM template. Document was revised to include updated titles of System executive officers. New language has also been added to this document to require that all official SAMs will be placed on the SAM web site within 10 working days of approval. Updated Index terms
8	10/16/2007	Applied revised SAM template. Updates were made to documentation about the quarterly review and approval process for SAMs and eliminate working related to the hard-copy distribution of SAMs, as the most current versions of these documents are available on the SAM web site
9	06/09/2009	Position titles and department names were corrected throughout the document, and the working was updated to be consistent with other SAMs. The Executive Review period was extended to 30 working days. Changed review period from every three years on or before September 1 <sup>st</sup> to every three years on or before March 1 <sup>st</sup> . Removed Index terms

Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
10	09/07/2011	<p>Applied revised SAM template and added new Revision Log. Changed responsible organization from Business Services to University Policies and Procedures throughout the procedure. Corrected table in Section 4.2 to reflect current operating responsibilities. Added Section 6.9 on Revision Logs. Added documentation in Section 7.2 on responsibilities of SME to review SAM information during documented review period and respond with either updates or indicate no revision needed by the end of the documented review period. Added information to Section 7.4 on the Component System Review (10 working days' duration) and the EVC for Administration and Finance review (no time limit) before beginning the Component Campus Review. System Executive Review changed to 20 working days. New and updated SAMs will be posted within 5 working days of approval. Changed the SAM web site location per current operating requirement and added signing up for SAM updates via the SAM Listserv portal</p>

Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
11	03/23/2016	<p>Added “electronic” access to current SAMs in Section 2.2. Revised the listing of primary responsibility and authority in Section 4.2 with current titles. Changed Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance to Senior Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance throughout text. Updated Section 6 with minor redlines to reflect current SAM template, and added Section 6.10 concerning adding a reference section at the SME’s discretion. Added information to Section 7.2 about documented review periods and SAMs without updates from a documented review period continuing through a standard review process. Revised information in Section 7.3 on the SME using revision tracking and providing comments for the proposed revision. Added Section 7.4 on housekeeping changes. Added preliminary review cycle time period of five (5) working days in Section 7.5. Updated Section 7.6.c regarding resolution of user questions being posted on the Policies and Procedures web site during Executive Review. Provided information concerning the members of the System Executive Review Committee in Section 7.6.d. Added the option of SME rejecting suggested changes in Section 7.6.f with notification of reasoning. Included link to SAM review flowchart in Section 7.6.i. Updated Section 7.7 with information regarding legal authority and Board of Regents changes in consultation with Legal Affairs/General Council, and a courtesy copy provided to the University Coordinating Commission (UCC) for informational purposes. Revised Section 7.8 on Interim policies and subsequent review cycles. Added web site information in Section 8.2. Updated Section 9.2 with caveat for implementing and enforcing SAMs as necessary to maintain compliance with existing laws. Added information on rescission process in Section 10.2. Revised Section 11 responsible parties from Assistant Vice President for University Services to Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration and Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance. Updated Revision Log with new documentation on revised documentation for SAM 01.A.01</p>