

Standard Operating Procedures Manuals

Standard operating procedures manuals help to build an empowered workforce, providing basic information to keep things moving when individuals who have answers are not readily available. When created as a resource, these manuals help to provide consistency, clarity, and serve as a tool to build healthy interdependence/cross training in a division/department.

Standard Operating Procedures Manuals ARE...

- an orientation guide to mentor employees
- a tool to clarify operating standards and increase overall efficiency of a division/department
- a guide to assist employees in dealing with situations that may arise during the daily operation of the division/department
- a readily available resource for employees

Standard Operating Procedures Manuals are NOT...

- a comprehensive list of policies

Basic content for SOP's might include, but is not exclusive to the following The College

- Lane vision, mission, values, and Strategic Directions

The Division/Department

- Overview of the division/department purpose statement
- Division/department mission (who you serve and the product/service you provide)
- Division/department goals
- Division/department culture (department values – underlying beliefs that drive decisions, ie, learning, teamwork/collaboration, diversity, integrity, etc.)
- Division/department organization chart (with employee names and contact information)
- Frequently asked questions for your division/department

Operating Procedures... how things get done - (topics might include...)

- Personnel procedures
- Purchasing procedures
- Timelines (ie, unit-level planning, college budget planning, etc.)
- Expectations for customer service
- Travel requests and reimbursements
- Other topics specific to your department...

Formatting your Standard Operating Procedures Manual

- Find a size that is easy to use
 - if it is “too small”, it will probably be misplaced
 - if it is “too large”, it will probably be stored out of the way and forgotten
- Provide concise answers (ie, discussion of subjects within one page at the most, etc.)
- Include drawings, charts, visuals to tap into the variety of learning styles of employees
- Utilize a format that can easily be updated (web based; three-ring binder, etc.)
- Where possible, maintain one copy in the department, centrally located and available to all employees, for ease in updating and consistency in content