

<b>Policy Name: Energy Policy</b>		
<b>Effective Date:</b> 02/01/2011	<b>Revision Date:</b> 01/15/2016	<b>Department/Area/Division:</b> BEM/FG/FA
<b>Department/ Area Policy #:</b>	<b>Departmental Contact:</b> Donnie Grill	

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide reliable and cost-effective energy services to the campus in support of teaching, research, and service. In addition, this policy will serve as a guide to faculty, staff, and students in providing comfortable conditions while being aware of energy conservation which will result in a savings for the University.

**Policy Statement:**

The University of Alabama spends \$22 - \$23 million dollars annually on utilities (electricity, natural gas, and water/sewer). As a result, it is imperative that the campus adopts an energy policy to promote the conservation of energy. Energy use reduction will result in savings that can be invested in University infrastructure upgrades, in addition to conserving our natural resources. Although energy conservation is the focus of this policy, comfortable work and study conditions must also be achieved. This policy is only a part of a comprehensive energy management program that also includes new building design and retrofits of existing buildings. The policy has been developed and will be updated periodically by the University standing committee on Energy Management. The committee welcomes comments and suggestions on this policy. Correspondence and petitions for the committee can be sent to [dgrill@fa.ua.edu](mailto:dgrill@fa.ua.edu).

**Policy:**

**University Temperature Guidelines** — In order to maintain reasonable comfort and lower energy expenditures, the University has established the following standards for comfort heating and cooling. Summer thermostat settings (air conditioning) are to be between 70 °F to 76 °F. Winter settings (heating) are to be between 66°F to 72°F.

The following areas are exempt from these energy set points:

- Laboratory facilities where temperature controls may affect on-going research and areas pre-designated for specific temperature and humidity control.
- Computer server rooms.
- Facilities that have art collections, museum pieces, musical instruments, and archives that require specific temperature and humidity control.

During unoccupied times the building heating and cooling equipment will have the set points modified. Exceptions to these guidelines must be approved.

**Building Resource Management** — Windows and doors should be kept closed during the heating season and during the summer in those areas that have mechanical cooling. Every member of the University community should assume the responsibility of closing windows, turning off computers

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and other office equipment when not in use, and turning off the lights when leaving a room. It should not be assumed that someone else will do it. Energy management devices and strategies will continue to be added. Schedulers of classes, meetings, and other campus activities should endeavor to minimize energy use. Evening classes should be concentrated in the fewest buildings possible, and where appropriate, the buildings used should be those that already have late night temperature setback. Use of stairs rather than elevators, except for the physically challenged and persons transporting heavy equipment or materials, is encouraged.

**Lighting** — Interior lighting will be fluorescent, whenever possible. New energy-saving fixtures, lamps and ballasts will be used to replace existing less efficient lighting whenever economically feasible and appropriate. Exterior lighting will be metal halide or L.E.D. whenever possible, and will meet minimum current safety requirements. Decorative lighting will be kept to a minimum. Lighting levels recommended by the most recent edition of the IES (Illuminating Engineering Society) Lighting Handbook shall be used as guidelines. Where it makes economic sense, occupancy/motion sensors (ultrasonic or infrared) wired to area lighting will be installed to reduce and/or turn off lights in unoccupied, vacated areas. Day-lighting controls will be installed to automatically adjust lighting levels as appropriate. Task lighting, such as desk lamps, is recommended to reduce overall ambient lighting levels. Desk lights should be of the fluorescent or L.E.D. type, which are now readily available at local stores including the University Supply Store.

**Space Heaters** — Whether purchased by the University or personal property, two issues affect the use of space heaters in campus buildings — fire safety and energy efficiency. All space heaters used on campus must be approved for fire safety, as classified by the National Fire Protection Association. No liquid fueled space heaters (e.g., kerosene heaters) shall be used in any residential, office, classroom or research buildings. Some electric space heaters also pose an unacceptable fire hazard. All space heaters must meet the following four specifications: Heaters must (1) be UL approved, (2) have elements that are protected from contact, (3) be tilt-proof (when tipped over, heater goes off), and (4) be thermostat-controlled. The issue of energy efficiency is also important — electric space heaters are a very costly means of heating. If a member of the campus community feels that a space heater is necessary for adequate warmth, this may indicate that the central heating system needs repair. The University Energy Management Department should be contacted by the Building Representative if the central heating system is incapable of meeting comfort requirements. Campus Energy Management should also be contacted through the Building Representative if a space heater is to be used to offset excessive air conditioning. State regulations require that the University follow ASHRAE Standard 90.1, which says that heating and cooling are not allowed simultaneously in the same space for the sole purpose of achieving comfort. Excessive cooling of a space on campus below the summertime University Temperature Guidelines should be reported to University Facilities so that air-conditioning levels can be adjusted.

**Window Air Conditioning Units** — The use of window air conditioning/heat pump units is discouraged except in cases of last resort. Window units cause damage to the buildings, they have high life cycle cost (energy and maintenance), and are noisy. Additionally, operating an air conditioning unit in cooling mode below about 50°F outside air temperature will quickly damage the

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unit. The Campus Energy Manager and Building Representative must approve a new application of a window unit. Specific petitions for installation will be reviewed only after University Facilities has determined that the primary heating/cooling source is not capable of meeting University Temperature Guidelines.

**Computer Power Management** — Set your computer power management so that your computer monitor turns off and your CPU enters into hibernate or sleep mode when you leave your desk for more than 15 minutes or leave for the day. Shut down computers over the weekend.

**Switchover from Heating to Cooling** — Facilities maintenance personnel perform the required changeover from heating to air-conditioning in the spring. Because of the varying types of equipment installed throughout campus, buildings must be changed over individually. Facilities performs the changeover on the basis of priorities established to (1) provide comfort to students living in University Housing, (2) maintain required temperatures to protect equipment and research in progress, and (3) serve the greatest number of individuals and activities. Air conditioning may not begin until outside temperature exceeds 75 °F for three consecutive days. Temperature projections are also considered. The wide swings in temperature during the Spring of the year and the high cost associated with switching between heating and cooling make this policy necessary. Special problems or hardships with this policy should be addressed to the University Energy Manager through your Building Representative.

**Operation of Campus Steam Plant** — Much of campus is heated by a campus steam system using large natural gas fired steam boilers. Steam production will be maintained to provide the most comfort to the greatest number of people. The plant may not start until the outside air temperature has dropped below at least 55 °F for three consecutive days, although temperature projections are also considered.

**Switchover from Cooling to Heating** — Facilities maintenance personnel perform required changeover from air-conditioning to heating in the fall. Because of the varying types of equipment installed throughout campus, buildings must be changed over individually. Facilities performs the changeover on the basis of priorities established to (1) provide comfort to students living in University Housing, (2) maintain required temperatures to protect equipment and research in progress, and (3) serve the greatest number of individuals and activities. Heating may not begin until the high outside air temperature has dropped below at least 55 °F for three consecutive days. Temperature projections are also considered. The wide swings in temperature during the Fall of the year and the high cost associated with switching between cooling and heating make this policy necessary. Special problems or hardships with this policy should be addressed to the University Energy Manager through your Building Representative.

**Holiday Periods** — A period of closure for the University offers a great opportunity to save money on utilities that can be spent in other areas. Past history has shown that very few people occupy the buildings for any substantial time during the holidays. With this in mind, buildings will be only minimally heated/cooled during holiday periods. Every effort will be made to shut down the campus steam system during every holiday period. The exception to the policy will be buildings that contain special collections or sensitive equipment, or buildings that are officially open during the

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holidays. A building will not be officially open just because a few people may want to work during the holidays. Requests for exceptions to this policy with justification should be addressed to the Campus Energy Manager via the Building Representative after curtailment plans for the upcoming holiday period have been issued.

**New Construction** — The University will seek to reduce future energy costs in new facility construction and renovation whenever feasible. Current standards outlined in ASHRAE Standard No. 90.1 Energy Efficient Design of New Buildings Except Low Rise Residential Buildings will be followed as closely as possible. Additionally, all city, state, and federal regulations will be followed. All planning for major construction and equipment purchase/installation must include energy life cycle costing. Design standards for new building construction shall include energy efficiency requirements.

**Suggestions** — The Energy Management Committee encourages suggestions for additions or modifications to this Energy Policy as well as other energy conservation suggestions. Please send to [dgrill@fa.ua.edu](mailto:dgrill@fa.ua.edu).

**Office of the Vice President of Financial Affairs:**

Approved by: Duna Skeith

Date: January 15, 2016