

# **MFT 1033: Introduction to Humanity, Ethics and Culture**

## **Cultural and religious perspective on policy development**

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## Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

Culture shapes the way we see the world. It therefore has the capacity to bring about the change of attitudes needed to ensure peace and sustainable development which, we know, form the only possible way forward for life on planet Earth. Today, that goal is still a long way off. A global crisis faces humanity at the dawn of the 21st century, marked by increasing poverty in our asymmetrical world, environmental degradation and short-sightedness in policy-making. Culture is a crucial key to solving this crisis.

**Source:**

[http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme\\_c/mod10.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_c/mod10.html)

Source: Preface, [World Culture Report](#), UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 1999.

## Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

Our cultural values, which often include particular religious beliefs, shape our way of living and acting in the world.

Source: A Guide To Policy Development (*Office of the Auditor General* MANITOBA)

## Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

### **Policy**

policy refers to those plans, positions and guidelines of government which influence decisions by government (e.g., policies in support of sustainable economic development or policies to enhance access to government services by persons with disabilities).

# Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

## Policy

There are various types and forms of policy

Among the range of policy types are:

- broad policy which enunciates government-wide direction; more specific policy which may be developed for a particular sector (the economy)
- or issue-area (child welfare);
- operational policy which may guide decisions on programs, and project selection.

With respect to the forms that government policy can take, it is reflected most typically in legislation, regulations, and programs. These are often referred to as policy instruments

**Source: A Guide To Policy Development (*Office of the Auditor General* MANITOBA)**

# Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

## Definition of Policy Development

The activity of developing policy generally involves research, analysis, consultation and synthesis of information to produce recommendations. It should also involve an evaluation of options against a set of criteria used to assess each option.

Source: A Guide To Policy Development (*Office of the Auditor General* MANITOBA)

## Cultural and religious perspective on policy development

### Culture

- noun 1. the quality in a person or society that arises from a concern for what is regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits, etc.
- 2. that [which](#) is excellent in the arts, manners, etc.
- 3. a particular form or stage of [civilization](#), as that of a certain nation or period: Greek culture.
- 4. development or improvement of the mind by education or training.
- 5. the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group: the youth culture; the drug culture.

## Policy Development Steps

steps for defining your policies.

- **Step One: Define the Issue or Problem**
- The process of policy development begins with recognizing the need for written policy. Often a board or superintendent faces a decision that would be easier to make if a policy existed.
- The board is not alone in identifying policy needs. Parents, students, teachers, local taxpayers, the superintendent, the state or federal government, and pressure groups are all sources of policy issues and problems.

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## Step Two: Gather Necessary Information on the Issue

- Sample policy language and analysis from your state association and NSBA
- Experience from other districts
- Education research
- Local input
- State association seminars
- State or federal laws and regulations

## Step Three: Secure Recommendations from Superintendent

- Once facts are available, the board listens to recommendations for handling the policy issue. The superintendent is often changed with recommending policy action, since he/she is the one responsible for carrying out the policy.

## **Step Four: Discuss and Debate at the Board Level** (include input of affected parties)

- Is the content within the scope of the board's authority?
- Is it consistent with local, state, and federal law? The U.S. and the state's constitution?
- Does it support the school district's goals or objectives?
- Is it good educational (personnel, business) practice?
- Is it reasonable? (Are any requirements or prohibitions arbitrary, discriminatory or capricious?)
- Does it adequately cover the subject?
- Is it limited to one policy topic?
- Is it consistent with board's existing policies?
- Can it be administered? Is it practical? How much will it cost?

## Step Five: Draft Policy

- After the board has reached consensus on policy content, the board's policy writer goes to work. This person must be able to write clearly, directly, and succinctly. Pomposity, verbosity, educational jargon, and "legalese" should be avoided unless necessary to meet legal requirements. Policy must be broadly stated with room for adjustment to fit special circumstances.

## Step Six: Hold First Reading

- Once in writing, the policy draft is placed on the board's agenda for a first reading, giving notice to everyone interested that the board has a specific policy under consideration. At this time the board has the opportunity for preliminary discussion of the proposed policy and, if it chooses, may hold a public hearing. This is recommended for important or controversial draft policies.

## Step Seven: Make Revisions

- Revise the policy based on the information gained from the questions, comments and suggestions obtained after the first reading.

## **Step Eight: Hold Second Reading**

- The period between the first and second reading allows time for all concerned persons to ask questions, make comments, and offer suggestions for changes and improvements. A second public hearing may also be held

## **Step Nine: Adopt the Policy**

## **Step Ten: Distribute to the Public**

- Seeing the policies are distributed as widely as possible is one way to ensure implementation.

## **Step Eleven: Oversee Policy Implementation**

- Policy oversight is a dynamic process that includes an evaluative component. Oversight is intended to make sure that the policy accomplishes its goal. Policy oversight can provide guidance on whether to continue or modify the policy and to determine future courses of action.



## Step Twelve: Policy Evaluation and Revision or Modification

- Policies should be reviewed on a regular basis as a part of the board's standard operating principles. They can become out of date, unclear, or even contrary to the way in which the school district is operating. When any of this occurs the policy needs modification or elimination. The policy amendment process is the same as the policy adoption process. The board sets policy and the superintendent implements the policy and manages the schools within the guidelines set forth in board policy. In the absence of policy, the superintendent must use his/her own judgment.

**Effective Board Policy** Is reflective of the educational goals of the school district;

- Is written within the scope of the school board's authority;
- Is adopted through proper board procedure;
- Is respectful of legal and constitutional rights and requirements; and
- Is communicated to the persons it will affect.
- (The above materials are adapted from the Washington State School Directors' Association's Passport to Leadership materials.)
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# Models of Policy Development Cycle Planning – the **policy development cycle**

Website: [ace.schoolnet.org.za](http://ace.schoolnet.org.za)

## THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

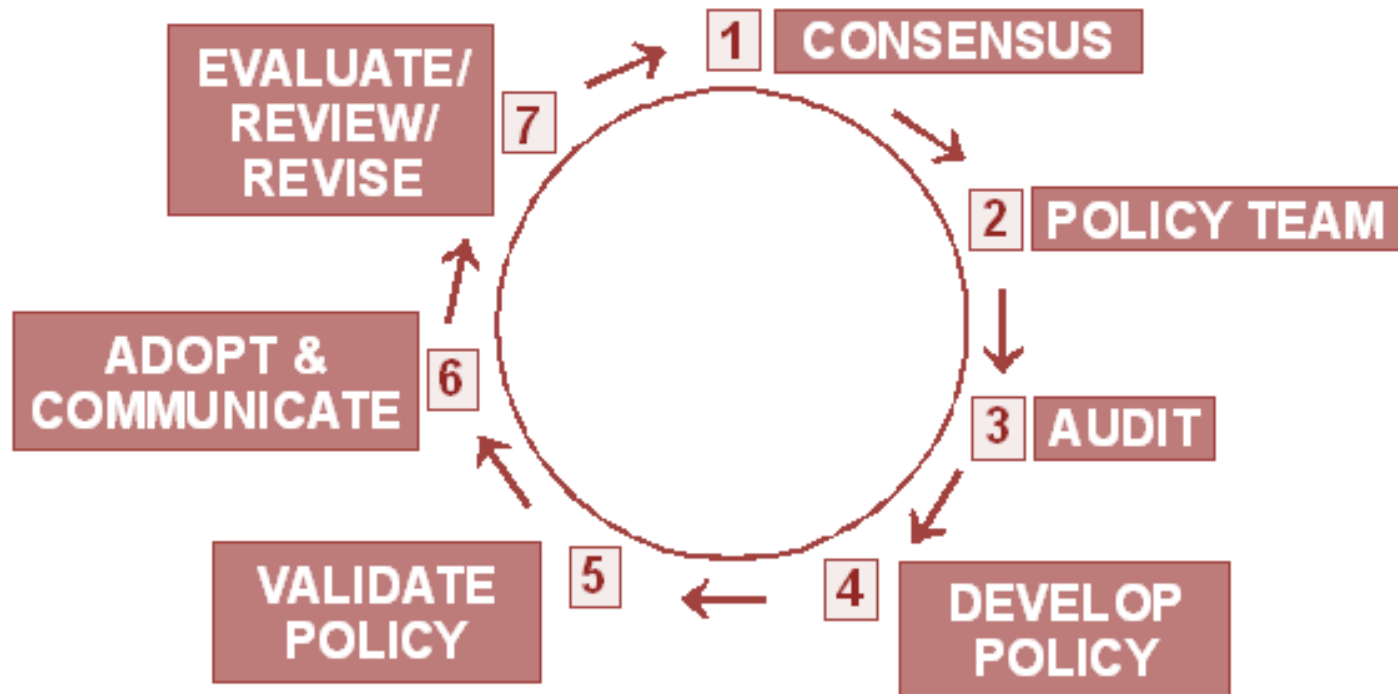


Diagram: Population issues and the **policy development cycle**  
Website: [population.govt.nz](http://population.govt.nz)



# RELIGION, VALUES, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UNESCO)

- The World Commission on Culture and Development defined culture as ‘ways of living together’ and argued that this made culture a core element of sustainable development.
- Almost all of the grave threats confronting human and planetary survival originate in human actions. However, much narrow thinking on sustainable development has focused almost exclusively on the relationships of people to the natural environment – without considering the people-to-people relationships that lie at the core of a **sustainable society**.

[source](#)

[http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme\\_c/mod10.html?panel=1#top](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_c/mod10.html?panel=1#top)

# RELIGION, VALUES, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UNESCO)

- **Religion** is a major influence in the world today. It seems that people in all cultures have a set of beliefs that go beyond both the self and the natural world. We use these beliefs to help explain reasons for human existence and to guide personal relationships and behaviour.
- Part of the great diversity of humankind is the many different religions and belief systems we have developed – Animism, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Taoism, and many more.
- Religious beliefs have a strong influence on the culture of a community. Indeed, for many people around the world, religious beliefs are central to their culture and provide the moral codes by which they live. Even where people in the contemporary world believe that the traditional beliefs of their parents and societies are not so relevant to their everyday lives, underlying religious beliefs about human worth and how to relate to other people and the Earth are still important parts of their lives.

[http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme\\_c/mod10.html?panel=1#top](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_c/mod10.html?panel=1#top)

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## End of Topic 5