



## **POOLED CASH INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

Last Revised February 21, 2025  
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## **I. INTRODUCTION AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

Given the importance and amount of pooled cash balances, the university recognizes that deliberate management of the pooled cash balances is necessary and desirable.

This Pooled Cash Investment Policy Statement was adopted by the University of Puget Sound to establish a clear understanding of the philosophy and investment objectives for pooled cash balances.

The Board has delegated authority to the Finance and Facilities committee to approve this policy. It is anticipated that the Investment Subcommittee of the Finance and Facilities Committee will review this policy periodically (typically on an annual basis) and make recommendations for changes, as needed, to the Finance and Facilities Committee. It is expected that members of the Investment Subcommittee, the external management firm (if one is engaged), and staff will propose revisions to this policy any time they believe the policies impede the stated investment objectives. Staff, as directed by the Investment Subcommittee, are responsible for implementation of this policy.

## **II. POOLED CASH OVERVIEW**

The University of Puget Sound's pooled cash consists of the following:

- A. Operating cash without donor restriction
- B. Cash designated or donor-restricted to a specified expendable use, including capital projects
- C. Cash designated or donor-restricted to endowment and loan funds
- D. Agency cash held for others
- E. Other special purpose cash

## **III. INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE**

The primary pooled cash investment objectives are, in order of priority: preservation of capital, maintenance of necessary liquidity, and maximization of investment return within appropriate risk constraints.

#### **IV. INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The university pools the cash balances from its various funds, including those without donor restriction, designated, donor-restricted, and in agency funds to achieve economies of scale necessary for maximizing investment returns and creating internal operating efficiencies.

The university depends on preservation of capital and available liquidity to support its ongoing operations and from time to time to fund specific future capital projects. To ensure this support, the bulk of the pooled cash balance shall be invested in highly liquid, short-term investment vehicles with minimal downside risk. This portion of the pooled cash is referred to herein as “transaction cash.” Transaction cash includes all pooled cash designated or donor-restricted for capital projects, endowment, certain life income agreements, agency funds, loan funds, and other special purposes, as well as the bulk of operating cash. It is recognized that a portion of the operating cash is not required to meet daily, monthly, or annual needs because of built-in float related to upfront collection of tuition payments relative to the spreading of payroll over a twelve-month period, as well as the general practice of spending endowment payout in the year after it is earned and distributed. This portion of the pooled cash is referred to herein as “core cash.” Core cash may be invested in short-to-intermediate fixed income vehicles.

Staff shall regularly analyze the components of cash balances relative to liquidity needs, including liquidity requirements associated with the university’s long-term debt, and shall monitor the adequacy of transaction cash and the appropriate level of core cash.

Note: It is understood that certain cash balances are required to be segregated (including such items as self-insured workers’ compensation reserves) and will not be pooled. These amounts are referred to herein as “segregated cash.”

#### **V. APPROVED INVESTMENTS AND LIMITS**

##### **Transaction and Segregated Cash**

- A. The university may, with approval of the Investment Subcommittee, hire a qualified external management firm to manage short-term investments.
- B. Portfolios of transaction cash shall:
  - 1. maintain an overall weighted-average portfolio rating no less than three notches below the lowest rating assigned to the U. S. government by Standard and Poor’s/Moody’s/Fitch;

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2. assure that the exposure to any one issuer shall not exceed 3% of the total portfolio as measured at market value at date of purchase, except for securities issued by the U. S. government or its agencies. If the issuer exposure should subsequently exceed 5% as measured at market value, the external management firm will notify the university and provide a recommended course of action.
- C. The maturity date of any transaction or segregated cash investment shall never be more than twenty-five months from the day of settlement, with the exception of asset-backed securities, providing the weighted average life of each of the portfolio's asset-backed securities does not exceed eighteen months.
- D. The following investments are permitted (where split ratings exist, the investment shall be considered to have the lower rating):
- United States Treasury bills, notes, bonds, zero coupon bonds, STRIPs, TIPS;
  - Securities issued by federally related institutions (with full faith and credit backing by the U. S. government);
  - Securities issued by other federally-related institutions, if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and those ratings at date of purchase are no less than the rating of securities issued directly by the U. S. government;
  - Securities issued by Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs—privately owned, publicly chartered entities), if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and those ratings at the date of purchase are no less than the rating of securities issued directly by the U. S. government;
  - Sovereign and supranational notes and bonds, if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and those ratings at the date of purchase are no less than A3 by Moody's, A- by Standard and Poor's or A- by Fitch;
  - Overnight Repurchase Agreements, collateralized with Treasury or Agency securities at 102% or more, with collateral held in third party remote trusts to reduce counterparty risk;
  - Commercial paper with an A-1 or P-1 rating;
  - Commercial paper with an A-2 or P-2 rating and/or corporate notes and bonds rated no less than Baa2 by Moody's, BBB by Standard and Poor's or BBB by Fitch, up to a maximum of 20% of the portfolio's market value at the time of purchase;
  - Master notes with an A-1 or P-1 rating;
  - Corporate notes and bonds, including Yankees, if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and those ratings at the date of purchase are no less than A3 by Moody's, A- by Standard and Poor's or A- by Fitch;

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- Market sector exposure, at the time of purchase, should not exceed 75% finance, 50% industrial and 15% utility.
  - Asset backed securities if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and rated no less than Aaa/AAA/AAA by Moody's, Standard and Poor's and/or Fitch at the time of purchase;
  - Taxable and tax-exempt municipal obligations, if rated by at least two of the three rating agencies and those ratings at the date of purchase are no less than A3 by Moody's, A- by Standard and Poor's or A- by Fitch;
  - Certificates of Deposit (CDs) at financial institutions with a short-term credit rating of A-1 or P-1 or higher, and within segregated cash with certain high quality, but unrated financial institutions, as evaluated and approved by a financial officer of the university. CDs are limited to \$5 million per financial institution, notwithstanding the concentration limits outlined in Section V.B.2.;
  - Certificates of Deposit under a brokered CD program which provides a syndicated method of ensuring FDIC protection for large dollar amounts;
  - Money Market funds with Moody's rating of Aaa or Standard and Poor's rating of AAAM.
- E. External regulatory restrictions on segregated cash may impose particular investment criteria. In such cases, the university's financial officers (elected by the Board), or their delegates, are authorized to deviate in a prudent manner from the above permitted investments to satisfy external regulatory requirements.

### **Core Cash**

Core cash of up to \$10 million may be invested in short- to intermediate-term fixed income funds approved by the Investment Subcommittee. Although the university cannot dictate policy to pooled/mutual fund investment managers, it will seek to select managers/funds that invest within the following investment guidelines:

- A. The Fund will invest under normal circumstances at least 65% of its total assets in a diversified portfolio of fixed income instruments of varying maturities. The average portfolio duration for the Fund is zero to four years.
- B. The Fund invests primarily in investment grade debt securities but may invest up to 15% of its assets in non-investment grade bonds.
- C. The Fund may invest up to 30% of its total assets in non-dollar denominated bonds.
- D. The Fund may utilize derivative instruments, such as options, futures contracts, forward contracts or swap agreements, up to 50% of net assets.
- E. The Fund may lend its portfolio securities to brokers, dealers, or other financial institutions to earn income.