

# Faculty Handbook

## Table of Contents

<b><i>Faculty Handbook</i></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b><i>PREFACE</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>I. General Information</i></b> .....	<b>4</b>
A. History of the University .....	4
B. Vision and Mission Statements.....	4
C. Principles for University Governance .....	5
<b><i>II. Administrative Organization</i></b> .....	<b>11</b>
A. Board of Trustees.....	11
B. The President.....	11
C. Other Senior Administrative Positions .....	11
D. Administrative Councils .....	13
E. Academic and Research Councils .....	14
F. Standing Committees .....	16
G. Nonacademic Personnel.....	16
H. Organizational Chart .....	16
<b><i>III. The Faculty</i></b> .....	<b>17</b>
A. Organization of the Faculty: Charter .....	17
B. Organization of the Faculty: Bylaws .....	18
C. The Charter of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate .....	19
D. The Bylaws of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate .....	21
E. The Graduate Faculty .....	29
<b><i>IV. Faculty Responsibilities and Academic Operating Policies</i></b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b><i>V. Promotion and Tenure Procedures</i></b> .....	<b>31</b>
A. Scope .....	31
B. Academic Rank .....	32
C. Faculty Advancement .....	35
E. Promotion and Tenure Committees .....	43
F. Procedures for Faculty Promotion and Tenure.....	47

G. Appeals .....	53
H. Non-reappointment / Dismissal of Faculty.....	54
<b>VI. Department of Human Resources Management Policies and Procedures.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>VII. Other University Policies.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>VIII. Employee Benefits .....</b>	<b>56</b>

## **PREFACE**

The purpose of the Faculty Handbook is to provide information, as well as sources of information that faculty find beneficial. The Handbook describes Mississippi State University's history, vision, and mission and defines the university's principles of governance. In addition, the Handbook establishes the organization of the faculty. Faculty responsibilities, academic operating policies, university promotion and tenure procedures, Department of Human Resources Management policies, and other policies are addressed within the document. Where appropriate, this document links to original source material to ensure current and accurate information. This handbook is the result of the work of many people, compiled by the Faculty Handbook Committee, jointly appointed by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President of the Faculty Senate. Changes and corrections should be sent to the Faculty Senate office. Corrections and additions to the Faculty Handbook may be made to the online version as needed by the Faculty Senate Charter and Bylaws Committee. Substantive changes to the Faculty Handbook require approval from the senate, provost, and university president.

# I. General Information

---

## A. History of the University

Mississippi State University began as The Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi, one of the national land-grant colleges established after Congress passed the Morrill Act in 1862. It was created by the Mississippi Legislature on February 28, 1878, to fulfill the mission of offering training in "agriculture, horticulture and the mechanical arts....without excluding other scientific and classical studies, including military tactics." The College received its first students in the fall of 1880 during the presidency of General Stephen D. Lee. Other federal legislation provided funds for extending the mission of the College. In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act called for "instruction in practical agriculture and home economics to persons not attendant or resident," thus creating the state-wide effort that led to Extension offices in every county in the State; and in 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act provided for the training of teachers in vocational education.

By 1932, when the Legislature renamed the College as Mississippi State College, it consisted of the Agricultural Experiment Station (1887), the College of Engineering (1902), the College of Agriculture (1903), the School of Industrial Pedagogy (1909), the School of General Science (1911), the College of Business and Industry (1915), the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service (1915), and the Division of Continuing Education (1919). Further, in 1926 the College was first accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

By 1958, when the Legislature again renamed the College as Mississippi State University, the Graduate School had been organized (1936), doctoral degree programs had begun (1951), the School of Forest Resources had been established (1954), and the College of Arts and Sciences had been created (1956).

The School of Architecture admitted its first students in 1973, the College of Veterinary Medicine admitted its first class in 1977, and the School of Accountancy was established in 1979, rounding out the present structure.

Additional information about Mississippi State University can be found in John K. Betterworth's book, *People's University: The Centennial History of Mississippi State*, University Press of Mississippi, 1979, and in *Maroon and White: Mississippi State University, 1878-2003* by Michael B. Ballard, University Press of Mississippi, 2008.

## B. Vision and Mission Statements

The university is guided by its vision and mission statements which identify the values of the university. These can be found at

<http://www.president.msstate.edu/communications/vision-mission/>.

In the strategic plan, the university establishes specific goals and identifies the metrics by which it will assess its progress toward achieving its goals. The strategic plan was developed under the university administration's leadership with active participation by the faculty.

## C. Principles for University Governance

*As recommended by the Faculty Senate, Feb. 9, 1996;*

*As recommended by the Administrative Council, Feb. 12, 1996;*

*As recommended by Professional and Support Staff Advisory Council, Feb. 14, 1996;*

*As recommended by the Student Association;*

*Approved by the General Faculty, March 5, 1996 and*

*Amended by vote of the General Faculty, Fall 1999.*

*Amended by vote of the Faculty Senate, September 2012*

*Approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President, September 2012*

*Approved by the President, October 2012*

*Approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President, August 2013*

*Approved by the President, August 2013*

*Approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President, May 2022*

*Approved by the President, May 2022*

**PREAMBLE**The triad mission of learning, research, and service of Mississippi State University can best be achieved through cooperation, collaboration, and consultation among the membership of the entire university community. Achievement of that mission requires an understanding and commitment to the formal and informal decision processes by which the university conducts its work, maintains its standards, and responds to external feedback.

Members of the university community need to understand the university's noble and extensive mission and the part each member plays in its achievement. They need to understand how formal authority is shared, the scope and form of their involvement in governance, and the need for those in authority to achieve balance between codification and discretion. This understanding enhances each member's ability to sustain and strengthen the essential nature of the university and facilitates effective university governance and responsiveness to the needs of the people of Mississippi.

Central to effective and efficient university governance is open consultation, communication, and participation in decisions and decision-making bodies. An understanding of the responsibilities and limitations of authority by all members of the university community is also essential. Success of the university depends on collegial relationships and mutual respect among the faculty, professional and support staff, students, administrative officers, and representatives of external entities.

All members of the university community must be accountable for their roles and responsibilities. Adhering to policies and procedures is essential to achieving the mission and goals of the university.

Mississippi State recognizes the value of diverse opinions in decision making and pursues its mission in an atmosphere of shared governance and open communication. Faculty and staff are involved in policy formulation and in implementing the learning, research, and service missions of the university. Faculty and staff also recognize their shared accountability for the performance of the university in carrying out its mission. In the spirit of promoting effective governance of the university, the following statements of policy relative to members of the university community are adopted.

### **PRINCIPLES Authority**

Ultimate authority for governance of the university is vested by the State of Mississippi in the Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning and delegated by the board to the university president. The president exercises that authority through the vice presidents, deans, directors, and other officials of the administration in consultation, as appropriate, with units of the university and with the faculty, professional and support staff, and students.

### **Consultation**

To facilitate open communication and effective university governance, the president and other administrative officers of the university will exercise due diligence in consulting with the faculty, professional and support staff, students, and external constituents on issues affecting them. Consultation is characterized by early discussions with the affected constituencies, jointly formulated procedures for consultation, reasonable deadlines within the constraints of the academic calendar, access to appropriate information, adequate feedback, and timely communication of decisions to the affected constituencies.

### **Representation**

Effective university governance includes consultation with the faculty, professional and support staff, students, and external constituents on budget, policy, and procedure matters. Appropriate representation of these groups is normally obtained through the university's council and committee structure. Elected and appointed representatives should, as far as possible, be selected specifically for the roles in which they will serve. When temporary special committees, study groups, or task forces are established by the president to address matters affecting the mission of the university, a majority of the membership should be composed of elected representatives drawn from the general faculty. Professional and support staff, students, and external constituencies should be included as appropriate. The chairs of these bodies may be appointed by the president.

*Faculty Representation.* By the Charter of Organization of the Faculty of Mississippi State University, the Robert Holland Faculty Senate is the official representative of the faculty on all matters not delegated by the general faculty to other elected faculty bodies.

University-level curriculum, promotion and tenure, and grievance committees should be composed of elected representatives from the general faculty. These bodies elect their own chairs.

*Professional and Support Staff Representation.* The Staff Council is the official representative body for the professional and support staff and reports to the president. The staff should have appropriate representation on matters affecting them. Consultation with the staff should be conducted through their elected representatives and/or the staff council, as well as through normal administrative channels.

*Student Representation.* The Student Association is the official representative of undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate and graduate students should be represented on appropriate university councils, committees, and task forces. Consultation with students should be conducted through their elected representatives and/or the Student Association.

*Administrative Representation.* Administrative officers of the university represent entities for which they have administrative responsibilities on councils, committees, and task forces of the university. Officers who are members of the general faculty may also be represented through the faculty senate, and other officers may be represented through the staff council.

*External Entities Representation.* To advance the mission of the university, the officers of the administration may appoint members of external entities to serve on councils, committees, and task forces.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

*Administration.* The university president has been delegated authority to administer the university, to lead the university so that its mission and goals are achieved, and to coordinate university relations with officers of the Board of Trustees. The president recommends the appointment of appropriate administrative officers for the university to the Board of Trustees. The president exercises primary authority through members of the administration in:

- Control and allocation of the budgeted appropriation and other funds;
- Establishment of the administrative organization;
- Approval of personnel appointments;
- Administration of university programs and policies;
- Administration of student affairs and services;
- Administration of physical plant, campus operations, and fiscal affairs;
- Administration of athletics;
- Administration of resource development and fund-raising; and
- Accomplishment of all other assignments to the university by the Board of Trustees.

The president is required by the Board of Trustees to articulate long range university goals and to see that high standards are maintained in all university programs. The president exerts a major influence on the specific direction of change, not only through basic judgments on budgets and staff but also in the continuous evaluation of existing university programs and in the planning of overall program direction. Such evaluation

and planning necessitate the participation of faculty, staff, students, representatives of external entities, and administrative groups and is accomplished through the offices of the vice presidents.

The president is also responsible for maintaining fair employment practices, promotion procedures, and wage and salary distribution, as well as good working conditions for the benefit and safety of all personnel employed by the university.

*Faculty.* The principal responsibilities of the faculty are teaching, research, and service. Because an important additional responsibility of the faculty is to ensure that the university fulfills its educational mission, the faculty must be involved in the generation and implementation of policies that affect the university's mission. On matters primarily affecting the academic mission of the university (curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, advising, degree requirements, faculty scholarship, faculty status, and faculty service), the principal responsibility for formulating and evaluating ideas lies with the faculty. The faculty advises the administration through appropriate channels on these matters. The administration customarily follows this advice. On those extraordinary occasions when this advice is not followed, the administration will identify the reasons that render the proffered advice unwise or impracticable and so inform the faculty. A less direct but no less important role of the faculty is to advise the officers of the university about certain administrative matters that are intrinsically related to the health of the university. Among these matters are:

- Assessment of faculty performance;
- Selection of university officers;
- Determination of university priorities; and
- Establishment of principles for determining salaries.

*Professional and Support Staff.* The Staff Council is an advisory organization with the primary goals of facilitating communication between the staff and the administration and providing input to the administration on university policies and procedures. The primary role of the staff is to support the faculty and the administration in fulfilling the university's mission. The staff conducts the day-to-day affairs of the university, provides essential input to the faculty and administration in planning and decision-making processes, and reports on the operations of the university for internal (management) and external (accountability) purposes. On matters of university governance affecting the academic mission of the university, the staff shall have an advisory role.

*Students.* The purpose of the Student Association is to stimulate university-wide student involvement in all areas of university life that lead to achievement of the university's mission. The voice of students is important in all aspects of the university; students should provide input, when appropriate, through university committees, councils, and task forces.

*Administrative Councils and Committees.* Administrative councils and committees play important roles in the governance of the university. These councils and committees may be composed of faculty, staff, students, administrators, and representatives of external entities. The members are elected by the appropriate bodies or are appointed by the



president or appropriate vice president to advise the administration in the development of institutional policy, procedure, and practice. A listing of the university's councils and committees with the membership of each is updated annually online (<http://www.msstate.edu/web/standing/>).

## **Participation**

*Evaluation of Administrators and Faculty.* The performance of faculty, staff, and administrative officers should be evaluated periodically. Students should participate in periodic evaluation of the instructional faculty, and those evaluations should be considered important sources of guidance to improve course content and overall learning and teaching effectiveness. The faculty, staff, administrative officers, and students should participate in periodic evaluations of those responsible for the units affecting their roles in the university community including department heads, directors, associate and assistant deans, and deans. The role of the various groups in such evaluations should be in accordance with their legitimate interest in the performance of the person being evaluated and the group's competence to make evaluative judgments. Evaluations should conform to commonly accepted procedures of evaluation established in consultation with those being evaluated and those evaluating.

*Financial Decisions.* Representatives chosen by the faculty, staff, and students should be consulted in university level discussions of resource allocation and budgetary policies and procedures. The administration may choose additional faculty, students, and staff to participate in discussions of these issues. Consultation in these issues should also occur in colleges, schools, departments, and other units.

### *Administrative, Faculty, and Professional Staff Appointments.*

- All professional positions will be created and filled in consultation with the affected faculty, staff, and students and with the appropriate external constituencies.
- For the Provost and the Vice Presidents for Agriculture and Research, for deans, assistant and associate deans, directors, chairs, and heads of academic, research, or service units, and for all faculty positions, search committees are required and will contain a majority of elected representatives of the faculty. Staff, students, and external constituencies shall be drawn from the affected units, as appropriate. Exceptions may be made for one-time, one-year appointments as approved by the appropriate vice president.
- For the Vice Presidents of Finance and Administration, Development and Alumni, and Student Affairs, search committees will be appointed by the university president in consultation with the Robert Holland Faculty Senate president. The university president will publicize the membership of the search committee and the process of selection.

- Specific administrators who serve primarily as advisors or assistants to university-level executives and who do not regularly exercise independent executive and budgetary authority may be appointed without a search committee.

On those extraordinary occasions when the advice of a search committee is not followed, the administrator making the appointment will inform the committee of the reasons that render the proffered advice unwise or impracticable.

## II. Administrative Organization

---

### A. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the constitutional governing body of the State Institutions of Higher Learning. The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to manage and control Mississippi's public institutions of higher learning in accordance with the state constitution and to see that the IHL System mission is accomplished. To do so, the board operates a coordinated system of higher education, establishes prudent governance policies, employs capable chief executives, and requires legal, fiscal, and programmatic accountability. The board annually reports to the legislature and the citizenry on the needs and accomplishments of the IHL System. The mission and structure of the board is outlined in the *IHL Policies and Bylaws* which is continually revised (<http://www.mississippi.edu/board/downloads/policiesandbylaws.pdf>). The mission statements are listed in section 102 and the Constitutional Organization is described in section 201. The board office is located in the Education and Research Center, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39211, phone 601-432-6198.

### B. The President

The President of Mississippi State University is the sole agent of the Board of Trustees on the campus. Full authority to manage the institution is conferred upon the president in accordance with policies and procedures established by the board and with certain laws specifically applicable to the institution. In conferring full authority, the board requires full responsibility; the president alone reports to the board and, in turn, delegates limited and specific authority to several administrative officials, each with responsibility commensurate with the delegated authority. The president's specific responsibilities include financial management of the institution; the physical plant and campus operations; recruiting, contracting with, and supervising all personnel; recruitment, admission, and instruction of all students; and relationships with people and interested units outside the institution. All functions of the university as it conducts teaching, research, and services are the president's responsibilities.

### C. Other Senior Administrative Positions

#### **Provost and Executive Vice President**

The Provost and Executive Vice President is responsible for leading and administering

the academic programs of the university. The provost prepares, allocates, and administers the academic budgets; administers all academic personnel procedures, including affirmative action, recruitment, appointment, retention, and promotion and tenure; provides leadership for vice presidents, deans, directors, faculty, and staff to meet stated goals; encourages faculty research and scholarly activities; ensures that academic procedures preserve academic freedom; and manages academic facilities and support services, including the Libraries, Information Technology Services, Human Resources Management, Registrar's Office, the University Academic Advising Center, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Career Center, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and all academic colleges and programs. In the absence of the president, the provost serves as the chief executive officer of the university.

### **Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine**

The Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine is responsible for providing administrative leadership and coordination of the units comprising the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, which includes the Forest and Wildlife Research Center, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, Mississippi State University Extension Service, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Forest Resources, and College of Veterinary Medicine. Responsibilities for instructional programs are shared with the provost and executive vice president.

### **Vice President for Development and Alumni**

The Vice President for Development and Alumni is primarily responsible for coordinating the operations and activities of the MSU Foundation and Alumni Affairs. The primary function of these units is to communicate with alumni, friends, opinion leaders and the general public concerning the value of the contributions of the university to the State of Mississippi and beyond and to raise private financial support. The vice president also plans, coordinates, and monitors efforts to secure private funds, ensuring that university programs are matched and coordinated with sources of private funds most appropriate to meet these needs. The university aircraft operations also report to the Vice President for Development and Alumni.

### **Vice President for Research and Economic Development**

The Vice President for Research and Economic Development has administrative responsibility for research and externally sponsored activities in the academic division of the university and is the university's interface for economic development activities and support. Activities concerned with the development and coordination of basic and applied research are coordinated under the vice president and include formally organized research centers and institutes, as well as individual faculty research. The vice president supervises and administers operation of university-level centers and institutes, the Office of Sponsored Programs Administration, the Office of Regulatory Compliance and Safety, the Office of Research Security, and the Office of Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer, Institute for Imaging and Analytical Technologies, and Thad Cochran Research, Technology and Economic Development Park.

### **Vice President for Student Affairs**

The Vice President for Student Affairs has administrative responsibility for planning and implementing services to meet students' out-of-class needs and providing programs to help students develop psychologically, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. The vice president supervises and administers the Division of Student Affairs, including operations and fiscal planning for the division, and coordinates, in consultation with other professionals, the areas of emphasis for programs and services to be provided for students.

### **Vice President for Finance and Administration (CFO)**

The Vice President for Finance and Administration (CFO) of the university is responsible for providing financial and operational leadership and coordination for the university. The subdivisions making up the Division of Finance and Administration include Office of the Controller and Treasurer, Campus Services, and Procurement & Contracts. Financial functions of the university, centralized in the Division of Finance and Administration, include the receiving, managing, and disbursing of funds from all sources and for fiscal planning and the development of budgets for the university. Operational functions of the university, centralized in the Division of Finance and Administration, include the managing of facilities, parking, transit, and construction (planning and design).

### **Vice President for Access, Opportunity, and Success**

The Vice President for Access, Opportunity, and Success (VPAOS) is a senior leader who serves as a catalyst to leverage best practices and resources across Mississippi State University's campuses to promote a culture of student success across the institution where individuals from all racial and ethnic identities, ages, nationalities, social and economic status, first-generation status, and physical and mental abilities are able to thrive and be engaged. The VPAOS plays a pivotal role in advancing retention, student learning, and success. This includes expanding pathways and services for support and care that enhance academic achievement, student development, persistence, and degree completion. It also includes cultivating excellence through a supportive campus environment, transformational learning experiences, and immersive engagement opportunities at all levels.

## **D. Administrative Councils**

The university president is advised and assisted in administering the affairs of the university by the Administrative Council and the Executive Council.

### **The Administrative and Executive Councils**

The Executive Council proffers advice to the president on matters brought before it which include revision and creation of university policies. The council is chaired by the university president and consists of the provost and executive vice president, the vice presidents, the athletic director, the general counsel, the chief information officer, the president of the faculty senate, the chair of the staff council, and the President of the

Student Association. It also has a non-voting staff consisting of the director of internal audit and the assistants to the university president. Minutes of the council are available online at <http://www.president.msstate.edu/people/executive-council/> .

The Administrative Council advises the president of the university and serves as the board of directors of the MSU Educational Building Corporation. It is chaired by the university president and consists of the provost and executive vice president, the vice presidents, general counsel, and the athletic director.

## **E. Academic and Research Councils**

### **The Academic Deans Council**

The Academic Deans Council provides leadership in establishing academic policies and procedures, in making decisions about academic programs, and in recommending new degree programs. This body participates in developing long range plans for the university. The Academic Deans Council is chaired by the provost and executive vice president and includes the associate provost and associate vice president for administrative affairs, the deans of the colleges, the director of the center for distance education, the dean of university libraries, the dean of the Shackouls Honors College, the vice president of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, and the Vice President of the Student Association.

### **The Associate Deans Council**

The Associate Deans Council recommends academic policies and operational procedures to the Academic Deans Council and implements approved policies and decisions. The Associate Deans Council consists of the associate provost, who serves as chair; the chief information officer; the associate vice president for administrative affairs; the registrar; an associate or assistant dean (or designated representative) from each school, college, or division, as assigned by the appropriate dean; the chair of the academic affairs committee of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate; and attorney general of the Student Association. Other individuals may be invited to attend as resources .

### **The Graduate Council**

The Graduate Council is the executive committee of the graduate faculty and is responsible for the evaluation and recommendation of academic policy and programs related to graduate study at Mississippi State University. In addition, the members of the council may advise the college deans on any matter they or the deans believe is appropriate. The chairperson of the Graduate Council is elected from the membership for a one-year term that is renewable.

The council is composed of one elected member from each of the academic colleges or schools offering graduate study (programs), and one less in number appointed by the provost. Not more than two appointed faculty members may be from the same college or school. To be eligible for membership on the council, members must have Level 1 status on the graduate faculty. The term of office is three years. Vacancies on the council are filled in the same way the member vacating the position was selected.

In addition to the faculty, the council has one graduate student representative who is usually the president of the Graduate Student Association and is appointed for a one-year term.

Ex officio members of the Graduate Council include the dean of the graduate school, the associate dean of the graduate school, the provost and executive vice president, the vice president for research and economic development, the associate provost, the dean of university libraries, the director of distance education, the chair of the University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC), the director of the office of institutional research and effectiveness, the director of the international institute, the graduate studies manager, and the associate director of admissions.

### **The Research and Technology Council**

The Research Council, chaired by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, advises the university president on research policies and procedures and on strategic initiatives in research and economic development. Members of the council are identified and appointed by the vice president in consultation with the president.

### **The Associate Deans for Research Council**

The Associate Deans for Research Council, chaired by the Associate Vice President for Research, advises the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development (ORED) on the university's research agenda, policies, and strategic direction. When requested, this council works together to recommend solutions to current questions being considered by ORED. Members of the council include all associate deans for research.

### **The Faculty Research Advisory Committee**

The Faculty Research Advisory Committee (FRAC), chaired by the Associate Vice President for Research, represents faculty interests in the research program. It may function as an advisory body review panel for internal competitive grants programs and make recommendations on operation of university research programs. Members of the FRAC include appointed members from the colleges, the director of Sponsored Program Administration (ex officio) and one representative from the faculty senate.

### **The International Institute**

The International Institute is responsible for providing oversight for international academic, research, and outreach activities. The institute encompasses the Office of International Programs, Study Abroad, and the International Services Office. The associate vice president and executive director of the institute is responsible to the Provost and Executive Vice President, the Vice President of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, and the Vice President of Research and Economic Development.

### **The Academic Department Heads Executive Committee**

Members of the Academic Department Heads Council serve as liaisons between the provost's office and their college-level peers, including other heads and directors. The committee advises on issues related to the effective management of the academic

departments to ensure a productive work environment and adherence to university policies.

## **F. Standing Committees**

Each fall the *Standing Committees* listing is published on the university website (<https://www.msstate.edu/directory/standing-committees/>) listing appointments of faculty, staff, and students to the university's system of standing committees. Committee appointments, which begin in August, typically are for terms of not more than three years, although successive appointments may be made. The website displays the year in which an individual's appointment to a particular committee expires. Individuals whose university titles are given in lieu of an expiration date serve on that committee by virtue of their position or special expertise and are appointed for indefinite terms. Most of the committees serve as advisory bodies. *Ad hoc* committees are appointed during the year as needs arise.

## **G. Nonacademic Personnel**

Nonacademic divisions of the university are generally organized in ways similar to the organization of the academic subdivisions, with departmental heads in charge. The heads, subject to the approval of their superiors, are responsible for hiring personnel and for supervising their performance. The organizational chart of the university shows how the nonacademic departments relate to the university president.

## **H. Organizational Chart**

**The organizational chart for the university is updated  
and posted online at  
[https://www.president.msstate.edu/communications/  
org-chart/](https://www.president.msstate.edu/communications/org-chart/)**



# III. The Faculty

---

## A. Organization of the Faculty: Charter

The faculty of Mississippi State University is organized under the guidelines set down in *The Charter of Organization of the Faculty of Mississippi State University*. The faculty is divided into two categories: the general faculty and the graduate faculty.

### THE CHARTER OF ORGANIZATION OF THE FACULTY OF MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

#### The General Faculty Composition

The general faculty shall consist of all professionals of the university with these appropriate ranks:

##### **Academic**

Instructor I, II, and III  
Assistant Professor  
Associate Professor  
Professor  
Assistant Teaching Professor  
Associate Teaching Professor  
Teaching Professor  
Assistant Professor of Practice  
Associate Professor of Practice  
Professor of Practice

Associate Clinical Professor  
Clinical Professor

##### **Extension**

Extension Instructor I, II, and III  
Assistant Extension Professor  
Associate Extension Professor  
Extension Professor

##### **Research**

Assistant Research Professor  
Associate Research Professor  
Research Professor

##### **Clinical**

Clinical Instructor I, II, and III  
Assistant Clinical Professor

and other appropriate ranks as recommended by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate and approved by the general faculty.

#### **Voting Eligibility**

All the members of the general faculty may vote.

#### **Officers**

The officers of the general faculty shall be a chair, who is the president of the university, and a vice chair, who is the president of the faculty senate. The vice chair shall act as the recorder at meetings and as the chair of the general faculty in the absence of the

president and the president's designated representative. In the latter case, the vice chair shall appoint a member of the general faculty to act as recorder.

### **Organization**

The chair of the general faculty shall appoint a committee to draft the necessary bylaws not contradictory to this charter, to enable the general faculty to perform its functions. These bylaws will become effective upon approval by a majority of the voting members.

### **Meetings**

The general faculty shall meet twice a year within 30 days after completion of registration of spring and fall semesters and at other times upon call of the president of the university or of the faculty senate or by petition of 25 percent of the general faculty. A quorum shall consist of two hundred and fifty (250) members who are present and eligible to vote.

Official business of the general faculty will be proposed and discussed during a general faculty meeting. Voting on items can be conducted electronically for up to one (1) week after the general faculty meeting or can be conducted during the general faculty meeting if 250 voting members are present. The vice chair will be responsible for accomplishing the balloting and for reporting the results to the faculty within one month of voting.

### **Functions**

The general faculty shall elect, according to the Charter of the Faculty Senate, the members of the faculty senate.

The general faculty shall function individually or collectively to recommend and refer to the faculty senate those matters dealing with the academic community and welfare of the university that it would desire to have the senate consider. This does not deny the right of direct approach of any member of the general faculty to the university president or the administration.

The general faculty shall consider all matters referred to it by the president of the university, the faculty senate, or members of the general faculty and make recommendations concerning them at its discretion.

### **Amendments**

The Charter of Organization of the Faculty can be amended by a petition submitted by the officers of the general faculty, or by a petition signed by 25 voting members.

Amendments must be provided at least thirty (30) days prior to the next general faculty meeting. Amendments must be approved by a majority of faculty voting on the amendment. Amendments shall then be submitted to the president of the university and become effective upon the president's approval.

## **B. Organization of the Faculty: Bylaws**

### **Membership List**

The vice chair of the general faculty shall keep available a current list of the membership of the general faculty.

## **Meetings**

Members of the general faculty shall be notified at least seven days in advance of the date of each meeting unless an urgent meeting is summoned to deal with some emergency that will not admit delay. Convocations of the faculty community that are called for the purpose of introducing new members and welcoming the community to a new school year may not be considered as meetings of the general faculty that are called for by the charter.

## **Committees**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate, as prescribed in the Charter of Organization of the Faculty of Mississippi State University, is a standing committee of the general faculty.

## **Special Committees**

The general faculty may create special or *ad hoc* committees for special purposes at any time. Each such committee will report its findings to the general faculty upon completion of its charge.

## **Order of Business**

The regular order of a meeting shall be:

1. Old business
2. Report from the president and chair of the general faculty
3. Report from the Robert Holland Faculty Senate
4. Reports from university committees designates
5. Time for questions
6. New business

During that portion of the meeting devoted to questions, the chair shall reply to questions on the operation, policies, practices, and other aspects of the university.

Questions may be submitted in advance to the Office of the President.

If time does not allow answers to be given to written questions submitted to the Office of the President prior to the meeting, a written response to the unanswered questions will be sent to members of the general faculty within two weeks of that meeting.

## **Authority and Records**

The general authority for parliamentary procedure in all matters not inconsistent with these bylaws shall be *Robert's Rules of Order*, current edition.

## **C. The Charter of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate**

The general faculty elects representatives (senators) to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, which functions as a channel of communication between the faculty and the president of the university. The Robert Holland Faculty Senate advises the president on matters referred to it.

## **Composition**

Senators of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, referred to elsewhere in this document as the faculty senate, shall be elected from the members of the general faculty who have had at least one year of service. Administrative officers at or above the assistant dean level (or equivalent) at Mississippi State University shall not be eligible for elected membership. The president and vice presidents are members of the senate ex officio. Four advisory (non-voting) members shall be the presidents of the Graduate Student Association and the Student Association, or their designates, and elected representatives of the Division of Student Affairs and the Professional and Support Staff Council.

Senators shall be elected by secret ballot from and by full time faculty members of the divisions of the university to be listed below. Faculty members are eligible to vote only within and for members of their particular division. The maximum number of senators on the faculty senate shall be 50. The senate seats shall be allocated on the basis of proportional representation from each of the divisions. All divisions shall be entitled to at least one senator.

Senate representation shall be refigured at two-year intervals or as necessitated by a change in the number of units represented. The units to be represented are as follows:

- College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and associated personnel of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station
- College of Architecture, Art and Design
- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business
- College of Education
- Bagley College of Engineering
- College of Forest Resources and associated personnel of the Forest and Wildlife Research Center
- College of Veterinary Medicine
- Mississippi State University Extension Service
- Mississippi State University-Meridian Campus
- The Libraries

Other units composed of members of the general faculty may be represented upon the recommendation of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate and the approval of the general faculty. Faculty equivalent individuals who report to various administrative entities but do not hold appointments in one of the units listed above shall be assigned to one of the above units by the appropriate vice president.

Each senator shall serve a period of three years, with elections to be completed by March 15<sup>th</sup> for membership to be assumed during the April meeting and to participate in meetings thereafter. A senator may serve two consecutive terms, after which the senator is ineligible for membership for one year. A senator elected to serve out more than half of an unexpired full term shall be considered, for this purpose, to have served a full term.

## **Voting Eligibility**

Only elected members of the faculty senate (senators) may vote.

### **Officers**

Officers of the faculty senate shall consist of a president, vice president, and secretary who shall be elected in April by a secret majority vote of the senators present. These officers shall serve for a period of one year (July 1 through June 30). Those holding the offices of president and vice president shall not be eligible for more than two consecutive terms.

### **Organization**

The president of the faculty senate will appoint a committee to draft the necessary bylaws not contradictory to this charter, to enable it to perform its function. These bylaws will become effective upon approval of the majority of the senators present at a regularly scheduled senate meeting.

### **Support**

The university shall consider in its budget an appropriation of funds or the appointment of facilities sufficient to allow the faculty senate to perform its functions.

### **Meetings**

The faculty senate shall hold regular meetings in August, September, October, and November during the fall semester and in January, February, March and April during the spring semester and upon call of the president of the senate or petition of seven of its senators. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the senators eligible to vote.

### **Functions**

The faculty senate shall make recommendations to the president of the university on matters pertaining to the welfare of the university.

- The faculty senate shall consider all matters brought before it by the president of the university, the administration, the general faculty, or individuals of the general faculty, and make recommendations concerning them when appropriate.
- The faculty senate shall keep the general faculty fully informed of recommendations.
- The faculty senate shall be represented by its president or its president's representative on the Athletic Council, Board of Directors of the Alumni Association, Executive Council, Planning Committee, and University Faculty Senates Association and other committees as requested by the senate and/or university administration.
- The faculty senate shall be represented by its vice president or its vice-president's representative on the Academic Deans Council, University Faculty Senates Association, and other committees as requested by the senate, the president of the senate, and/or university administration.

## **D. The Bylaws of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate, having been brought into being by the Charter of Organization of the Faculty of Mississippi State University, conscious of its role as an agency for stimulating, ascertaining, and appropriately articulating considered views and opinions of and for the general faculty will assist in the continued improvement of the university.

### **Duties of Officers**

*President.* The President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate is the chief administrative official of the senate and its presiding officer and has the powers and responsibilities commensurate with such functions. Specifically, the president is charged with the responsibility to:

- send to senators, so as to reach them not less than three full days before a meeting, a notice of the specific items or subjects known to be on the agenda for the coming meeting;
- ensure that a record of the actions of each meeting be available to members of the general faculty within two weeks following each meeting;
- appoint the members and the chair of each senate committee;
- transmit to the president of the university, or to such other person to whom a senate recommendation may be directed, the recommendation of the senate;
- keep the senate informed of the disposition of each recommendation that is made;
- state clearly each issue that is being voted on before the vote is taken and announce the results of the vote immediately thereafter;
- notify newly elected senators of their right to participate in the nomination of candidates for the position of president of the senate;
- notify the dean or head of each college or division when any vacancy occurs that an election should be held to fill such vacancy on the senate;
- appoint members of other committees as specified by university policy;
- represent faculty senate on the Athletic Council, Board of Directors of the Alumni Association, Executive Council, Planning Committee, University Faculty Senates Association, and other university committees as requested by the senate and/or university administration.

*Vice President.* The Vice President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate shall preside at senate meetings in the absence of the president and shall be designated to represent the senate at other appropriate meetings when the president is unable to do so. If for any reason the position of senate president should become vacant, the vice president shall become president and a new vice president shall be elected according to the procedure set forth in this document. In the event of the absence of the president and the vice president at a meeting, the senate must select one of its senators to be the temporary president for that meeting.

The vice president of the senate or their representative shall represent the faculty senate on the academic deans council and other committees as requested by the senate, the president of the senate, and/or university administration.

*Secretary.* The secretary of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate shall:

- maintain a record of senate deliberations and keep current a membership list of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, which shall include the date of expiration of each elected senator's term;
- keep current a membership list of each committee of the senate;
- maintain a list of senate designates on university committees;
- maintain records posted on the faculty senate website ()

## **Procedures**

### *Studies and Recommendations*

- Each proposal for a study or recommendation by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate must be presented to the senate president in writing with the proposer's name appearing thereon. Each new proposed study or recommendation shall be provided in written form via electronic or print format or read by the president to the senate prior to voting to accept the study or recommendation.
- After introduction, the question shall be on sending the proposed study or recommendation to committee for further processing.
- Upon the senate's approval, each proposed study or recommendation shall be assigned to the appropriate committee by the president, and a report from that committee is expected in a timely manner at a subsequent meeting of the senate.
- Following the questions of fact, debate shall take place on the question of adopting the proposed recommendation, as presented by the committee, as a recommendation of the senate. Amendments may be offered from the floor.
- One recommendation, or more, adequately based on such a report, may be adopted in the meeting at which the report is given only if the committee has provided the senators with a written copy (electronic or print format) of its report at least three full days before the meeting at which the report is given.
- A recommendation of no action, or the failure of a committee to make a report or recommendation, shall not preclude the right of the senate to take further action on a proposed recommendation or a variation of it.

*External Resolutions:* The proposing and adopting of resolutions pertaining to persons or matters outside the senate shall follow the procedure of a proposed recommendation, except that if the proposed resolution has been presented to the senate president for inclusion in the notification of the agenda to the senators at least three full days in advance of a meeting, it can be moved for adoption at that meeting.

*Internal Affairs:* Motions and resolutions pertaining to internal matters of the senate, which are not otherwise provided for by these bylaws or by the senate's charter, can be initiated and passed in a single meeting. A majority vote of those senators present and voting "aye" or "nay" is required for adoption of such motions and resolutions.

*Amending the Bylaws:* Each proposal for an amendment to these laws shall follow the procedure of a proposed recommendation, except that for any amendment to be adopted it must receive a two-thirds vote of the senators present.

*Election of Senators:* Each senator shall serve a period of three years, with elections coordinated by the Faculty Senate to be completed by March 15<sup>th</sup> for membership to be assumed during the April meeting. Colleges/units may elect senators by any procedure provided that:

- the call for nominations is open to the entire college/unit for a reasonable time;
- each person named on the ballot has agreed to serve, if elected;
- there is a clear provision, announced in advance, to determine how multiple vacancies of different terms (three-year term, completion of three-year term, sabbatical-replacement) will be filled;
- elections occur during the 9-month academic year, except in units in which all faculty members have 12-month contracts.

*Election of Officers:* Nominations for the position of President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate shall be provided in writing to the Faculty Senate Office or the elections officer by any person who shall be a senator in the forthcoming year. The nominations shall be made during a specified time interval between the regular March and April meetings of the senate. In 2008, the faculty senate approved the following procedures for the election of officers:

1. Nominations and elections will be supervised and facilitated by an “elections officer” in the following order of appointment: a) outgoing president, b) elected officer (outgoing vice president, then outgoing secretary), c) a member of the executive committee appointed by the outgoing president, provided the member is still on the senate and not a candidate for office. The elections officer will be appointed at the March meeting of the senate.

Duties of the elections officer will be to:

- A. Conduct the elections of officers
  - B. Call on candidates for speeches prior to election using alphabetical order
  - C. Develop questions for candidates to answer prior to the third round of balloting if necessary.
  - D. Send out and receive absentee ballots for the first round of balloting
2. All candidates nominated and willing to stand for election will submit electronically a one-page statement indicating qualifications and reasons for seeking election to the specific senate office and a vita for distribution to the senate members no later than 5 p.m. one week prior to the date of elections. Statements and vitas will then be electronically forwarded to all senators no later than 5 p.m. the Monday prior to the election.
  3. In the event there are not two candidates for an office, candidates running from the floor should bring a statement indicating reasons for seeking election to the specific senate office for distribution at the senate meeting and will distribute such statement to all senators present.



4. All candidates shall have a maximum of five (5) minutes to speak prior to the first ballot for their position. After the second ballot candidates will respond to a question formulated by the elections officer and again will have a maximum of five (5) minutes to respond to the question.
5. Absentee ballots will be permitted on the first ballot only. In order to receive an absentee ballot, the senator must request an absentee ballot from the elections officer and must provide an excuse for senate absence. Ballots must be requested no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday prior to the elections. Absentee ballots must be returned to the elections officer no later than 5 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the elections. Absentee ballots may be submitted to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate or emailed directly to the elections officer.
6. After the March elections of new senators from their respective colleges, a detailed description of the "Nominations and Elections Operating Procedures" will be provided to all senators eligible to vote in the April election of senate officers. This will include instructions for requesting and submitting absentee ballots from and to the appointed "elections officer."

The president's notice of the agenda for the election meeting shall contain an alphabetical list of the names that have been placed in nomination. If no more than one name has been received in nomination, then additional names can be placed in nomination from the floor. No person having served on the senate for less than one year shall be nominated for office.

At the election meeting, secret balloting for the office of president, from among those nominated, shall be conducted immediately following old business. Note that outgoing senators' terms are over at the conclusion of old business of the April agenda. Senators whose terms expire in April that year (and were not re-elected by their college) are not eligible to vote in officer elections. Newly elected senators are not able to vote on old business during the April meeting, but they are eligible to vote on the officer elections and new business.

If no person receives a majority of votes from the voting senators, which includes absentee ballots in the first round only, a second balloting shall take place between the top two vote receivers of the first balloting, or top three vote receivers should there be a tie for second place. Balloting shall continue on those names which were on the second ballot until one receives the required vote. Nominations from the floor will be allowed if there is still a deadlock after five ballots.

The senate shall then proceed to nominate and elect first a vice president who has served on the senate at least one year and then a secretary who has served on the senate for at least one year. In both cases the procedure for election and the required vote as described in Item 2 and Item 3 of this section shall be the same as that given for the election of the senate president.

Following the election of all officers, the retiring president shall present the new officers to the senate.

### **Order of Business**

The regular order of business of the senate shall be:

1. Adoption of minutes.
2. Recognition of new members and guests of the senate (when appropriate).
3. Report of president of the senate. This shall include a report of the disposition of previous senate recommendations and resolutions and the report of communication to the senate.
4. Report of vice president.
5. Report from faculty senate designates on university committees.
6. Business to be sent to committee.
7. Standing committee reports.
8. Special committee reports.
9. Old business.
10. New business. Those proposed recommendations, studies, and resolutions that have been submitted to the president in writing shall be considered first, and then items that might be brought up from the floor shall be considered.

Note: At the April meeting, election of officers is to occur just prior to new business. Outgoing senators' terms are over at the conclusion of old business of the April agenda, and outgoing senators are not eligible to vote in officer elections. Newly elected senators are not able to vote on old business during the April meeting, but they are eligible to vote on the officer elections and new business.

### **Standing Committees**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate shall have standing committees through which it can systematically and continually keep itself informed. These committees and their jurisdictions, until the Senate otherwise directs by a majority of senators, shall be:

- *Academic Affairs* – those matters that are directly concerned with the university achievement of its primary purpose;
- *Ancillary Affairs* – those matters that are subservient and subordinate to and adjuncts of the primary purpose of the university, but do not fall within the areas of student or faculty affairs;
- *Faculty Affairs* – those ancillary matters that exclusively or primarily affect the General Faculty;
- *Student Affairs* – those ancillary matters that exclusively or primarily affect the students;
- *Charter and Bylaws* – for regular review and recommendation concerning the operating procedure, structure, size, representation, and other internal matters of the Senate; to report the number of general faculty in each unit represented on the faculty senate at the February meeting of each year; to report at the February meeting of every odd-numbered year the number of senators each unit is to have on the faculty senate until the next reapportionment. The chair of the Charter and

Bylaws Committee will serve as the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee, and as editor of the Faculty Handbook.

- *University Resources* – study the allocation of resources within the university and acquaint the faculty senate with such allocations.

All senators (apart from the president and vice president) will be appointed to a standing committee by the president. Senators shall serve on the committee to which they are appointed throughout their term(s) on the senate, unless they ask for and receive removal by the senate president. The chair of each standing committee shall be appointed yearly by the newly elected senate president.

Each standing committee shall receive, inform itself concerning, and report to the senate through one of its members on any proposed recommendation, study, or other matter referred to it by a vote of the senate. In the discharge of its responsibility, it shall seek collectively, and its members shall seek individually, such factual information and the opinion of such interested parties as will provide the senate with a firm and complete basis for sound and responsible decisions.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall be chaired by the senate president and shall consist of the vice president, secretary, and all chairs of the standing committees of the senate. This committee shall act as an advisory committee to the senate president on all matters brought to the attention of the senate by any of its members and on any items affecting the faculty brought to the attention of the senate president by university administration, the general faculty, or individuals of the general faculty.

### **Special Committees**

By a vote of the senate, or on the initiative of the senate president, special committees can be created temporarily to handle such matters as do not readily fall within the jurisdiction of one of the standing committees, or to handle such matters as might require intensive work or special handling. The majority of the members of a special committee shall be from the faculty senate.

### **Terms**

- The terms of office of the senate's officers shall begin July 1 and end June 30 for the following year. These officers retain full voting rights in the faculty senate until the completion of their terms as officers.
- Each senator shall serve a period of three years.
- Election of senators is to be completed by March 15<sup>th</sup> for membership that will be confirmed during the April meeting.
- The term of an outgoing senator ends upon completion of unfinished/old business during the April meeting.
- The term of an incoming senator begins with election of officers during the April meeting.
- The terms of persons elected to fill unexpired terms of senators who resign or otherwise relinquish their membership are limited to the unexpired terms of the

senators being replaced. Election and active membership of these replacements shall take place immediately following the occurrence of the vacancy.

- After serving two consecutive terms, a senator is ineligible for membership for one year. A senator elected to serve out more than half of an unexpired full term shall be considered, for this purpose, to have served a full term.
- During reapportionment years, when a unit loses one or more senators and either none of the senators' terms expire that year, or more than one of the senators' terms expire that year, the faculty of the affected unit must determine which individual(s) will continue to represent them.
- When units represented on the faculty senate are deleted by a vote of the general faculty, the terms of the affected senators will expire upon completion of unfinished/old business during the April meeting of that year.

### **Meetings**

- The faculty senate shall hold regular meetings in August, September, October, and November during the fall semester and in January, February, March, and April during the spring semester. All meetings shall be held in the second week of each month, except when there is a conflict with scheduled holidays or other significant university events, such as graduation, in which case the meetings shall be scheduled on the Friday before or after the conflict. The August meeting will be held on the first Friday in August after classes have begun (i.e., normally the third Friday in August). If extraordinary circumstances cause a meeting to be cancelled (e.g., inability to meet because of natural disaster), the meeting should be rescheduled. Any changes to the regular senate meeting schedule should be communicated to the members as early as possible.
- All meetings shall be open unless by a two-thirds vote of the senators present the senate should otherwise direct for any meeting or part thereof.
- The senate, by a specific vote and for a specific purpose, may allow itself to be addressed by a non-member. The vote must be a majority of those present.
- While the senate has authority to make rules and regulations concerning the orderly manner and the time limitations thereof, no part of these bylaws or of such rules and regulations as shall be made by the senate shall ever prevent, obstruct, or inhibit the right of a senator or a member of the general faculty from personally bringing a matter to the attention of the senate during that portion of the meeting devoted to new business.
- Urgent meetings of the senate can be called to consider a matter that is felt to warrant immediate attention without the usual three-day notice of the meeting being given and the urgent matter shall be the agenda of the meeting; but such a meeting shall be null and void unless its purpose shall have been clearly stated to each senator available for notification of the meeting.
- In such cases as the university goes to emergency operating procedures, meetings may be convened in a remote or hybrid format as determined by a vote of the executive committee.
- For elected senators to be counted as present, they must be physically present for all regularly scheduled faculty senate meetings, except for hybrid or remotely convened meetings during emergencies as stated above, unless granted an

excused absence. When a senator has three consecutive unexcused absences at regular meetings of the senate, the appropriate dean shall be notified by the president of the senate, and a new election will be held to replace the recalled member.

### **Voting**

- Voting on the adoption of recommendations, external resolutions, amendments to the bylaws, and the appeal of rulings of the president shall be by a show of hands. The charter requires secret voting for the election of senate officers. In any other matter another method of voting may be used except that if one-third of the senators present request it, the vote must be by show of hands. In the case of hybrid or remotely convened meetings as mentioned above, voting may be carried out using secure electronic means.
- The affirmative vote of two-thirds of the senators present shall be sufficient to suspend provisions of the senate's bylaws in order to expedite the handling of a particular matter, but the provisions of the bylaws on vote and voting shall not be suspended.
- Only senators may vote, and the vote of a majority of successive members voting "aye" or "nay" shall be sufficient in all instances not otherwise provided for by the senate charter or its bylaws.

## **E. The Graduate Faculty**

The Graduate Faculty are those Mississippi State University faculty whose expertise and professional accomplishments qualify them to participate in graduate education at MSU. The qualifications for Graduate Faculty are developed and approved by the Graduate Council and can be found at

<http://www.catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/faculty/#appointmentlevelstext> .

## **IV. Faculty Responsibilities and Academic Operating Policies**

---

Important issues of an academic nature are established as Academic Operating Policies (AOPs) by the Provost and Executive Vice President. An alphabetized list of the AOPs is provided with links to the current AOPs. These policies are periodically reviewed and revised by the Associate Deans Council, Deans Council, and the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. All policies must be reviewed, maintained, and followed. To ensure the ease and accuracy of compliance, all AOPs are available at [https://www.policies.msstate.edu/?field\\_volume\\_target\\_id=2](https://www.policies.msstate.edu/?field_volume_target_id=2)

# V. Promotion and Tenure Procedures

---

Revised and Approved by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, 4-14-2023  
Signed by Provost and Executive Vice President, David Shaw,  
Signed by President Mark Keenum,

## A. Scope

Section V of the Faculty Handbook records Mississippi State University's policies and procedures governing academic tenure and promotion in rank. These policies and procedures were drawn up by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate in accordance with the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) (sections 402, 403, and 404) and have been approved by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, the provost, and the university president.

Section V of the Faculty Handbook applies to faculty members in tenure-track positions and professional-track positions hereto referred to as general faculty. The appointment and termination of faculty members is governed by IHL Board Policy, and their promotion is governed by IHL Board Policy, university, college, and school and department policies. Professional-track faculty members are eligible for promotion, but not tenure. Professional-track faculty may apply for open tenure-track positions or vice versa.

Suggested changes and recommendations to Section V can originate with the university president, the provost, the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Faculty Senate, and/or the general faculty. The President of the Faculty Senate will distribute copies of the suggested change(s) and recommendation(s) to all senate members and the Faculty Senate will prepare its own recommendation(s). The Faculty Senate's report on the recommended changes to Section V of the Faculty Handbook will be reviewed at two regularly scheduled senate meetings before a vote on the recommendations will be held. A copy of the Faculty Senate's decision will be sent to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. Final action on the recommendation(s) will be taken by the university president and announced through all appropriate channels.

The procedure outlined in the previous paragraph will be followed, unless some extraordinary occasion should demand a more immediate change. In all cases, however, the Faculty Senate must vote to approve all changes to Section V and the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure will be a part of the process of consideration as described below.

The policies and procedures in effect during any academic year must have been fully approved by the Faculty Senate and signed by the provost and the university president. If the changes to Section V are approved between May 16 and October 1 of a given

39 year (calendar year 1), then changes will go into effect May 16 of the following year  
40 (calendar year 2). If the changes are approved after October 1 (calendar year 1) and  
41 before May 16 of the subsequent year (calendar year 2), then changes will go into effect  
42 on May 16 of the following year (calendar year 3). In both cases, all college and  
43 department documents must be revised as necessary no later than the effective date of  
44 the revised Section V of the Faculty Handbook. Copies of all officially approved  
45 promotion and tenure policies and procedures, including subsequent revisions, together  
46 with their dates of approval, will be kept in the Faculty Senate Office and the Office of  
47 the Provost. In addition, an electronic copy of the current policies and procedures will be  
48 posted on the Mississippi State University website (at [www.facultysenate.msstate.edu](http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu)).  
49

## 50 **B. Academic Rank**

51  
52 A faculty member of professorial rank must have a professional or terminal degree  
53 appropriate to the discipline (or the equivalent in training and experience), a strong  
54 commitment to higher education and to the mission of Mississippi State University, and  
55 a willingness to assume the responsibilities and obligations appropriate to a university  
56 faculty member.

57  
58 Faculty tracks at Mississippi State University include tenure-track positions and  
59 professional-track positions.

### 60 **Tenure-Track Positions**

61  
62 *Assistant Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member who has met the requirements in  
63 the first paragraph of section B. Academic Rank and has the potential to be  
64 successful in the areas of teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and  
65 service.

66  
67 *Associate Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for  
68 assistant professor, who has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a  
69 satisfactory level in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service,  
70 and who excels in at least one of these areas. Based upon the criteria established in  
71 the department promotion and tenure documents, an associate professor is  
72 developing a national and/or international reputation and is showing a potential for  
73 making sustained contributions to the university and to their profession, field, or  
74 discipline.

75  
76 *Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate  
77 professor, who has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory  
78 level in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, and who  
79 excels in at least two of these areas. Based upon the criteria established in the  
80 department promotion and tenure documents, a professor must have a national  
81 and/or international reputation within their profession, area of expertise, or discipline.  
82



83 **Professional-Track Positions**

84  
85 **Teaching Professor Ranks:**

86 *Assistant Teaching Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a terminal degree in a  
87 discipline appropriate for the position, who possesses the potential for successful  
88 performance in instructional activities in a university environment, and who should  
89 contribute to the service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or  
90 profession.

91  
92 *Associate Teaching Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria  
93 for assistant teaching professor, has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of  
94 excellence appropriate for the rank in instructional activities, and who significantly  
95 contributes to the service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university,  
96 and/or profession.

97  
98 *Teaching Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for  
99 associate teaching professor, has consistently demonstrated excellence in  
100 instructional activities, and who is consistently contributing at a high level to the  
101 service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.  
102

103 **Professor of Practice Ranks:**

104 *Assistant Professor of Practice (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a terminal degree in  
105 a discipline appropriate for the position or its equivalent in professional achievement,  
106 who possesses the potential for successful performance in instructional activities in  
107 a university environment, and who should contribute to the service and/or other  
108 scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.  
109

110 *Associate Professor of Practice (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria  
111 for assistant professor of practice, has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level  
112 of excellence appropriate for the rank in instructional activities, and who significantly  
113 contributes to the service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university,  
114 and/or profession.  
115

116 *Professor of Practice (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for  
117 associate professor of practice, has consistently demonstrated excellence in  
118 instructional activities, and who is consistently contributing at a high level to the  
119 service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.  
120

121 **Clinical/Extension/Research Professor Ranks:**

122 *\*Some Extension and Research positions are tenure-track. Faculty holding a tenure-*  
123 *track Extension or Research position should refer to the tenure-track guidance above.*  
124

125 *Assistant Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a  
126 terminal degree in the discipline, who possesses the potential for successful  
127 performance in clinical/extension/research activities or creative achievement in a

128 university environment, and who should contribute to the service of the unit,  
129 university, and/or profession.

130  
131 *Associate Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who  
132 has met the criteria for assistant clinical/extension/research professor, has  
133 demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence appropriate for the rank in  
134 clinical/extension/research activities or creative achievement, and who significantly  
135 contributes to the service of the unit, university, and/or professions.

136  
137 *Clinical//Extension/Research Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has  
138 consistently demonstrated excellence in clinical/extension/research activities or  
139 creative endeavors, and who is consistently contributing at a high level to the service  
140 of the unit, university, and/or profession.

141  
142 **Instructor Ranks:**

143 *Instructor I (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a minimum of a Master's degree or  
144 higher, who possesses teaching credentials appropriate for the position and the  
145 potential for successful performance in instructional activities in a university  
146 environment, and who should contribute to the service of the unit, university, and/or  
147 profession.

148  
149 *Instructor II (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for Instructor I, has  
150 demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence appropriate for the rank in  
151 instructional activities, and who significantly contributes to the service of the unit,  
152 university, and/or profession.

153  
154 *Instructor III (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for Instructor II,  
155 has consistently demonstrated excellence, and who is consistently contributing at a  
156 high level to the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

157  
158 **Clinical/Extension Instructor Ranks:**

159 *Clinical/Extension Instructor I (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a minimum of a  
160 Master's degree or higher as appropriate to the profession, in a discipline  
161 appropriate for the position, who possesses the potential for successful performance  
162 in clinical/extension activities or creative achievement in a university environment,  
163 and who should contribute to the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

164  
165 *Clinical/Extension Instructor II (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria  
166 for Clinical/Extension Instructor I, has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of  
167 excellence appropriate for the rank in clinical/extension activities, and who  
168 significantly contributes to the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

169  
170 *Clinical/Extension Instructor III (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria  
171 for Clinical/Extension Instructor II, has demonstrated excellence in clinical/extension  
172 activities, and who is consistently contributing at a high level to the service of the  
173 unit, university, and/or profession.

174

## 175 **C. Faculty Advancement**

176

### 177 **Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-Track Faculty**

#### 178 ***Promotion***

179 Promotion is never granted simply for satisfactory performance or for length of service  
180 but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment.  
181 Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, or from Associate Professor  
182 to Professor, will normally only be considered after a faculty member has served at least  
183 five years in rank so that sustained productivity at Mississippi State University can be  
184 demonstrated. Applications for promotion prior to that time will be regarded as early  
185 action and considered only for exceptionally strong and well documented cases. Rank  
186 should reflect comparable stature with others in similar disciplines in other university  
187 settings. Professional achievement at another academic institution may be considered  
188 for promotion.

189

#### 190 ***Tenure***

191 The granting of tenure is a faculty-driven process and is the academic community's  
192 chief guarantee of academic freedom for the faculty member to perform their academic  
193 duties without undue or inappropriate external pressures.

194

195 *Definition:* Tenure is defined by IHL Board Policy 403.01 as "Continuing employment  
196 that may be granted to a faculty member after a probationary period upon nomination by  
197 the Institutional Executive Officer for election by the Board."

198

199 IHL Board Policy 403.0104 further provides that a tenured faculty member is protected  
200 from dismissal except under the extraordinary circumstances stated in section L.

201 *Dismissal of Tenured Faculty* of this document.

202

203 According to IHL Board Policy 403.01, tenure is granted in a department, unless  
204 otherwise designated by the IHL Board.

205

206 Attainment of tenure at Mississippi State University is by no means automatic, based on  
207 years of service, but is the result of a thorough evaluation of a faculty member's  
208 performance in the following core areas: teaching, research and/or creative  
209 achievement, and service.

210

211 Tenure is granted with the university's expectation that the faculty member will continue  
212 to perform at or above the minimum standards set by the department or school, college,  
213 and university.

214

215 The proportions of these activities may vary by discipline. Excellence in at least one  
216 area and satisfactory performance in the other two are needed to qualify a faculty  
217 member for tenure, but a department and/or college may require more rigorous

218 standards. Along with the core areas, a faculty member also needs to be certified  
219 satisfactory by the president of the university in the following four areas:

- 220 • Professional training and experience;
- 221 • Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;
- 222 • Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
223 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;
- 224 • The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the  
225 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university.

226  
227 Performance will be assumed satisfactory in each of these four areas unless clear and  
228 consistent evidence has been documented to the contrary.

229  
230 Collegiality. For purposes of this document, collegiality is defined as the sharing of  
231 authority and responsibility among colleagues while avoiding patterns of behavior that  
232 are of such a disruptive nature as to hinder members of academic units from fulfilling  
233 their core duties or that hinder academic units from their academic mission. Inherent in  
234 that definition is the understanding that academic units and their members undertake  
235 the core duties of teaching, research, and service that are associated with the  
236 university's mission and seek to preserve the well-being of the institution.

237  
238 Further, collegiality:

- 239 • will not be associated with ensuring homogeneity and hence with practices that  
240 exclude persons on the basis of their difference from a perceived norm.
- 241 • will not threaten academic freedom.
- 242 • will not be confused with the expectation that a faculty member display  
243 "enthusiasm" or "dedication," evince "a constructive attitude" that will "foster  
244 harmony," or display an excessive deference to administrative or faculty  
245 decisions where these may require reasoned discussion.
- 246 • will not be confused with participation in social gatherings outside of the normal  
247 scope of the faculty member's roles related to research, teaching, and service.
- 248 • will not necessarily be in conflict with criticism and opposition.

249  
250 Eligibility. Tenure may be granted to professors, associate professors, and  
251 simultaneously to assistant professors upon promotion to Associate Professor. Faculty  
252 members of all professorial ranks in specifically designated tenure-track positions may  
253 work toward tenure. An employee cannot be promoted into a professorial position  
254 unless specified in the original offer letter. Professional-track faculty positions cannot be  
255 converted to tenure track positions (IHL section 404.01).

### 256 ***Probationary Period***

257 A tenure-track faculty member must apply for and be granted tenure by the university  
258 president during the sixth full contract year of employment in a tenure-track position.  
259 Failure to earn tenure at the end of the sixth full contract year will result in a terminal  
260 contract in the seventh full contract year. The probationary period for tenure-track  
261 faculty begins at the start of the faculty member's first full contract year. A full contract  
262 year is defined as one that starts on August 16 for 9-month employees and on July 1 for  
263

264 12-month employees and continues until the next contract period. If the initial contract is  
265 for a partial year, e.g., starts after August 16 for a 9-month employee or after July 1 for a  
266 12-month employee, that time is not included in the probationary period.

267  
268 Up to five years of professorial experience at other universities may be counted in this  
269 probationary period, as determined and agreed upon by the department promotion and  
270 tenure committee, the department head or director, the dean, and the faculty member in  
271 the letter of offer at the time of initial appointment.

272  
273 For clearly stated personal reasons (e.g., emergencies related to health, activation of  
274 military service, pregnancy, adoption, childcare, care of parents), a tenure-track faculty  
275 member may request an extension of up to two years from the first five years of this  
276 probationary period for an approved leave of absence or a modified assignment.  
277 Specific aspects of such an extension must be established by the department head or  
278 director, the dean, the provost, and the faculty member. Such an agreement must be in  
279 writing. The department promotion and tenure committee shall be notified in writing of  
280 the extension and the revised probationary period.

281  
282 IHL Board Policy 403.0101 allows a faculty member or an administrative employee who  
283 held faculty rank at the level of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor  
284 and tenure at another institution to be awarded tenure at the time of initial appointment if  
285 approved by the university president.

286  
287 For tenure-track faculty members with a shortened probationary period as specified in  
288 an offer letter or an approved extended probationary period, the "third-year review"  
289 should be held at the midpoint of the individual's probationary period.

290  
291 ***Relationship Between Promotion and Tenure***

292 Tenure-track faculty members who have met the requirements for promotion, but who  
293 have not fulfilled the probationary period for tenure, may be promoted without tenure.  
294 Tenure-track faculty members who are granted tenure as assistant professors  
295 automatically meet the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor.

296  
297 ***Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities***

298 Every faculty member is expected to meet high standards of professional competence  
299 and integrity and to further the goals of their department or unit. In every case, a tenure-  
300 track faculty member's performance in the following criteria will be judged by all  
301 participants in promotion and/or tenure decisions:

- 302  
303 1. Professional training and experience;  
304 2. Effectiveness of teaching;  
305 3. Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;  
306 4. Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
307 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;  
308 5. The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency, and contumacious conduct in the  
309 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university;

- 310 6. Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities; and  
311 7. Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the  
312 institution.

313  
314 In addition, a tenure-track faculty member's performance will be judged based on  
315 criteria in written policy statements developed by the appropriate academic units.  
316 In evaluating a tenure-track faculty member being considered for tenure and/or  
317 promotion, the appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give  
318 adequate consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function  
319 of their relative academic workload assignments within the seven categories required by  
320 the IHL Board. Adequate consideration of a tenure case consists of a conscientious  
321 review, which seeks out and considers all available evidence bearing on the relevant  
322 performance of the faculty member and assumes that the various academic units follow  
323 their approved procedural guidelines during the tenure and promotion review process.  
324 Such consideration should be based upon adequate deliberation over the evidence in  
325 light of relevant standards and exclusive of improper standards (i.e., any criterion not  
326 related to the professional performance of the faculty member). The evaluation of a  
327 tenure case should constitute a bona fide exercise of professional academic judgment.  
328

329 All criteria should be based on the application of the highest professional standards and  
330 are to be in harmony with the following IHL Board defined criteria:

- 331  
332 1. *Professional training and experience*;
- 333  
334 2. *Effectiveness of teaching*. Criteria for assessing instructional activities may  
335 include regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work,  
336 internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations;  
337 development of educational materials; conduct of other academic programs that  
338 confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit and off-campus  
339 lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as defined by the  
340 academic units. Excellence in teaching, as defined by the current academic  
341 operating policy/policies, includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods,  
342 and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with  
343 students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students  
344 in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and  
345 fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline.  
346
- 347 3. *Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications*; The IHL Board  
348 endorses the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement  
349 of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states in part: "When they  
350 speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or  
351 discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations.  
352 As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may  
353 judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they  
354 should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should

355 show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate  
356 that they are not speaking for the institution.”

357

358 4. *Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional*  
359 *ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;*

360

361 5. *The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the*  
362 *faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university;*

363

364 6. *Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities.*

365 Criteria for assessing research and/or creative achievement activities may  
366 include systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement or  
367 validation of human knowledge, the solution of contemporary problems, or the  
368 exploration of creative forms that bring greater meaning to life. Excellence in  
369 research and/or creative achievement must be established by critical peer  
370 evaluation, using standards prevailing in the discipline. Excellence may be  
371 documented by books, articles, or reviews published by commercial or university  
372 presses or in refereed journals of international, national, or regional prestige;  
373 research grants, leading to high quality research, intellectual property;  
374 presentation of papers before professional groups; invited participation in  
375 scholarly conferences; editorial work for professional journals or publishers; or  
376 artistic or humanistic performances, presentations, or shows. Evidence of  
377 substantive progress on long-term projects that meet the criteria above may be  
378 considered as specified by the academic units.

379

380 7. *Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the*  
381 *institution.* Criteria for assessing service activities may include activities which  
382 enhance the scholarly life of the university or the discipline, improve the quality of  
383 life or society, or promote the general welfare of the institution, the community,  
384 the state, the nation, or international community. Thus it includes outreach and  
385 extension of academic knowledge to the public, participation on department,  
386 college, or university committees, or on regional, national, or international  
387 scholarly committees, boards, or review panels, or on public boards as a  
388 representative of the scholarly community. Membership or participation in such  
389 bodies may constitute satisfactory service, but excellence requires leadership or  
390 initiative leading to substantial improvements or progress.

391

### 392 ***Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review***

393 At the time of initial appointment, each faculty member will be informed in writing by the  
394 department head or unit administrator whether the appointment is tenure-track or  
395 professional-track and referred to the Promotion and Tenure Procedures section of the  
396 Faculty Handbook (Section V), as well as college and department promotion and tenure  
397 policies (e.g. appropriate websites with online versions of these documents). The new  
398 faculty member will agree by signature to the understood and agreed upon terms of  
399 employment.

400

401 During the probationary period, the department head will counsel each tenure-track  
402 faculty member annually about progress toward promotion and tenure. This annual  
403 evaluation will be in writing and will include at least: (1) a review of the previous year's  
404 progress; (2) the faculty member's objectives, responsibilities, and expectations for the  
405 coming year; and (3) the department head's or director's assessment of progress  
406 toward promotion and tenure.

407  
408 The evaluation criteria must be consistent with the promotion and tenure criteria of the  
409 department, the school or college, and the university. If the department head or director  
410 and the faculty member cannot agree on any part of the evaluation, the matter will be  
411 referred to the dean.

412  
413 The annual evaluation, signed by both parties, will be sent to the dean. A copy will be  
414 placed in the faculty member's personnel file. The faculty member has the right to attach  
415 a dissenting statement to all copies of this evaluation.

416  
417 No record in personnel files relating to promotion or tenure is to be added, changed, or  
418 withdrawn without the knowledge of the faculty member and the unit administrator.  
419 Personnel files are confidential and are available only to the faculty member and  
420 university officials. Appropriate administrators will make all pertinent information  
421 available to elected promotion and tenure committees and administrators when the  
422 faculty member is a candidate for promotion and tenure. If material from a personnel file  
423 (or other material that is not in the candidate's promotion or tenure application) is  
424 provided to a committee or administrator, then the candidate will be provided a copy of  
425 the material and an opportunity to submit their written comments regarding the material  
426 before the material is considered by the committee or administrator. Otherwise, no  
427 additions will be made.

## 428 429 **Promotion of Professional-Track Faculty**

### 430 431 ***Promotion***

432 Promotion is never granted simply for satisfactory performance or for length of service,  
433 but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment.  
434 Promotion from one level to the next will normally only be considered after a  
435 professional-track faculty member has served at least five years in rank so that  
436 sustained productivity at Mississippi State University can be demonstrated. Applications  
437 for promotion prior to that time will be regarded as early action and considered only for  
438 exceptionally strong and well documented cases. Rank should reflect comparable  
439 stature with others in similar disciplines in other university settings. Professional  
440 achievement at another academic institution may be considered for promotion.

### 441 442 ***Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities***

443 Every faculty member is expected to meet high standards of professional competence  
444 and integrity and to further the goals of their department or unit. In every case, the  
445 performance of professional-track faculty members will be judged by all parties involved  
446 in promotion decisions on the basis of written promotion policies, and criteria specified



447 therein. Those documents shall be developed by the faculty and shall apply to the  
448 faculty in specific units which may be departments or divisions.

449  
450 In evaluating a professional-track faculty member being considered for promotion, the  
451 appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give adequate  
452 consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function of their  
453 relative academic workload assignments within the seven IHL defined criteria included  
454 below as stated in the faculty member's offer letter. Adequate consideration for  
455 promotion consists of a conscientious review, which seeks out and considers all  
456 available evidence bearing on the relevant performance of the faculty member, and  
457 assumes that the various academic units follow their approved procedural guidelines  
458 during the promotion review process. Such consideration should be based upon  
459 adequate deliberation over the evidence in light of relevant standards and exclusive of  
460 improper standards (i.e. any criterion not related to the professional performance of the  
461 faculty member). The evaluation of a promotion case should constitute a bona fide  
462 exercise of professional academic judgement.

463  
464 All criteria should be based on the application of the highest professional standards and  
465 are to be in harmony with the following IHL Board criteria:

- 466  
467 1. *Professional training and experience;*  
468  
469 2. *Effectiveness of teaching:* Criteria for assessing instructional activities may  
470 include regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work,  
471 internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations;  
472 development of educational materials; conduct of other academic programs that  
473 confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit and off-campus  
474 lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as defined by the  
475 academic units. Excellence in teaching as defined by the current academic  
476 operating policy/policies includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods,  
477 and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with  
478 students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students  
479 in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and  
480 fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline. Excellence in  
481 teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student awards, student  
482 evaluations, student successes, faculty teaching awards, recognition of teaching  
483 excellence, sample course materials, recordings of teaching sessions, graduate  
484 student theses and dissertations, and any other documentary materials that  
485 demonstrate teaching effectiveness on the university campus or at the national or  
486 international level.  
487  
488 3. *Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;* The IHL Board  
489 endorses the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement  
490 of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states in part: "When they  
491 speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or  
492 discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations.

493 As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may  
494 judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they  
495 should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should  
496 show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate  
497 that they are not speaking for the institution.”  
498

499 4. *Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional*  
500 *ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;*

501 5. *The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the*  
502 *faculty member’s performance of their faculty position at the university;*  
503

504 6. *Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities.*

505 Research is not an expectation of instructional faculty (i.e. Teaching Professors,  
506 Professors of Practice, and Instructors) and should not be a requirement for  
507 promotion. Research that allows the instructional faculty member to remain  
508 active in their discipline or that contributes to their excellence in instruction or  
509 service may be included in the evaluation.  
510

511 Professional-track faculty who are not in instructional tracks may be required to  
512 perform research and/or creative achievement activities. Criteria for assessing  
513 research and/or creative activities may include systematic, original investigation  
514 directed toward the enlargement or validation of human knowledge, the solution  
515 of contemporary problems, or the exploration of creative forms that bring greater  
516 meaning to life. Excellence in research and/or creative achievement must be  
517 established by critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the  
518 discipline. Excellence may be documented by books, articles, or reviews  
519 published by commercial or university presses or in refereed journals of  
520 international, national, or regional prestige; research grants, leading to high  
521 quality research, intellectual property; presentation of papers before professional  
522 groups; invited participation in scholarly conferences; editorial work for  
523 professional journals or publishers; or artistic or humanistic performances,  
524 presentations, or shows. Evidence of substantive progress on long-term projects  
525 that meet the criteria above may be considered as specified by the academic  
526 units.  
527

528 7. *Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the*  
529 *institution.* Criteria for assessing service activities may include activities which  
530 enhance the scholarly life of the university or the discipline, improve the quality of  
531 life or society, or promote the general welfare of the institution, the community,  
532 the state, the nation, or international community. Thus, it includes outreach and  
533 extension of academic knowledge to the public, participation on department,  
534 college, or university committees, or on regional, national, or international  
535 scholarly committees, boards, or review panels, or on public boards as a  
536 representative of the scholarly community. Membership or participation in such  
537 bodies may constitute satisfactory service, but excellence requires leadership or  
538 initiative leading to substantial improvements or progress.

539  
540  
541  
542  
543  
544  
545  
546  
547  
548  
549  
550  
551  
552  
553  
554  
555  
556  
557  
558  
559  
560  
561  
562  
563  
564  
565  
566  
567  
568  
569  
570  
571  
572  
573

## ***Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review***

At the time of initial appointment, each faculty member will be informed in writing by the department head or unit administrator whether the appointment is tenure-track or professional-track and referred to the Promotion Procedures section of the Faculty Handbook (Section V) as well as college and department promotion policies (e.g. appropriate websites with online versions of these documents). The new faculty member will agree by signature to the understood and agreed upon terms of employment.

An annual performance review, based on the previous year's goals and objectives and consistent with AOP 13.24 (Annual Faculty Review Process), will be conducted by the department head/unit administrator or appropriate officer for each professional-track faculty member in the department. This annual evaluation will be in writing and will include at least: (1) a review of the previous year's progress; (2) the faculty member's objectives, responsibilities, and expectations for the coming year; and (3) the department head's or director's assessment of progress toward promotion. The evaluation criteria must be consistent with the promotion criteria of the department, the school or college, and the university. If the department head or director and the faculty member cannot agree on any part of the evaluation, the matter will be referred to the dean.

A copy of this review will be signed by both the head/director and the faculty member. It will also be reviewed and signed by the next appropriate administrator and placed in the faculty member's personnel file. The faculty member may attach a dissenting statement to all copies of this review.

The department head/unit administrator shall maintain a personnel file for each faculty member. No record in the file is to be added, changed, or withdrawn without the knowledge of both parties. The responsible administrative officer will make all pertinent information available to the appropriate individuals when the faculty member is a candidate for promotion, or when the information is needed in an appeals or grievance case.

## **E. Promotion and Tenure Committees**

### **University Committee on Promotion and Tenure**

The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure serves five functions:

- To advise the provost on promotion and tenure matters, including the review of criteria, policies, and procedures for promotion and tenure used by schools or colleges;
- To review suggested changes in this document;
- To review and approve appropriate requests related to variations made during the review process;

- 583
- 584
- 585
- 586
- 587
- To hear appeals from faculty members whose nominations for promotion or tenure have been denied; and
  - To hear appeals from tenured faculty members who have been recommended for termination.

588 The committee consists of one member elected from each academic unit with an  
589 administrative head. Members elected by each academic unit must be full-time, tenured  
590 professors, who hold Rank 2 or above. In addition to academic unit representatives, one  
591 member will be elected to represent each of the professional-tracks. Members elected  
592 for each professional track must be full-time faculty and hold a rank above the minimum  
593 for their professional-track. No faculty member functioning as an administrator,  
594 department head, or director of an academic unit will be a member of the committee.  
595 Academic unit representatives are elected in the fall by a majority vote of the unit's full-  
596 time general faculty. Each professional-track representative is elected in the fall by a  
597 majority vote of the full-time faculty members within the respective professional-track.  
598 Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation. Members may serve for  
599 two consecutive three-year terms, excluding partial terms. A partial term will be filled by  
600 election, as needed. Annually the committee members will elect a chair who reports  
601 directly to the provost. The chair is a full voting member of the committee.

602

603 **College Promotion and Tenure Committees**

604 Every college will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure committee. Each  
605 college will develop its own criteria for membership on the committee, and the  
606 procedures for electing members to that committee. These criteria and procedures  
607 must be approved by both a majority vote of the college's full-time faculty and the  
608 college dean, consistent with the following:

- 609
- 610
- 611
- 612
- 613
- 614
- 615
- 616
- 617
- 618
- 619
- 620
- 621
- 622
- 623
- 624
- 625
- 626
- 627
- The membership of the committee should reflect the composition of the full-time faculty in the college;
  - The length of terms will be determined by the unit;
  - Committee members must hold a rank (i.e., 2, 3) at or above the candidate's aspirant rank to vote on each case. For example, a Rank 2 faculty member cannot vote on a candidate's promotion to Rank 3;
  - Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation;
  - No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative. Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided;
  - No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director of an academic unit will be a member of the committee;
  - A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may observe but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure review at the department level.
  - The committee will annually elect its chair;
  - The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and
  - An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being considered.

628 The responsibilities of a college promotion and tenure committee will be the  
629 following:

- 630 • To write the college's promotion and tenure policies and procedures which must  
631 be consistent with the IHL Board and the university's promotion and tenure  
632 policies, include the mechanism for their adoption and revision, describe the  
633 procedures that will be followed if sufficient numbers of members are not  
634 available because of absences, recusal or insufficient rank, and identify the  
635 participation of the different categories of faculty in the college promotion and  
636 tenure process;
- 637 • To approve the promotion and tenure documents of department committees  
638 within the college and to ensure that such documents are consistent with the  
639 mission of the university and the college, and both the IHL Board and the  
640 university's promotion and tenure document;
- 641 • To assist departments in developing procedures for a third-year review of all non-  
642 tenured, tenure-track faculty;
- 643 • To assist departments in developing criteria for external peer reviews, including  
644 the identification of peer departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- 645 • To assist departments in developing definitions of excellence, satisfactory, and  
646 unsatisfactory as it pertains to the evaluation of candidates for promotion and  
647 tenure;
- 648 • To assist departments in developing definitions of teaching, research and/or  
649 creative achievement, and service consistent with the mission of the department  
650 or school;
- 651 • To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure, ensuring department  
652 standards are fairly applied and university standards are maintained; and
- 653 • To approve the department promotion and tenure document and policies and all  
654 subsequent changes.

655  
656 **Department and School Promotion and Tenure**

657 Every department and school will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure  
658 committee. The department committee may include any faculty track. The promotion  
659 and tenure procedures must specify the inclusiveness of the committee composition  
660 and clearly establish the eligibility for voting and participation within the department  
661 promotion and tenure process. In departments where there may be professional-track  
662 faculty of rank serving on department committees along with tenured faculty, it is  
663 permissible for all faculty members on the committee of appropriate rank to vote on  
664 promotion to Rank 2 or to Rank 3. Only tenured faculty members on the committee can  
665 vote on the tenure decision. When a candidate is being considered for promotion to  
666 associate professor or to professor and for tenure at the same time, any non-agreement  
667 of the promotion vote and the tenure vote will be resolved by vote of only the tenured  
668 faculty members on the committee.

669  
670 The faculty of each school or department will determine the structure of its promotion  
671 and tenure committee, subject to the conditions that:

- 672 • A minimum of three tenured faculty must be available to vote on tenure  
673 decisions. If three tenured faculty are not available within the department, the

- 674 Dean of the College will select the required number of tenured faculty members  
675 from within the College to bring the total number to three;
- 676 • Committee members must hold a rank (i.e., 2, 3) at or above the candidate's  
677 aspirant rank to vote on each case. For example, a Rank 2 faculty member  
678 cannot vote on a candidate's promotion to Rank 3. The department promotion  
679 and tenure policies shall describe the procedures that will be followed if sufficient  
680 numbers of members are not available because of absence, recusal or  
681 insufficient rank. Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation;
  - 682 • Unless a unit uses a committee-of-the-whole, the members of the committee  
683 must be elected. The length of terms will be determined by the unit;
  - 684 • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative.  
685 Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided;
  - 686 • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director  
687 of an academic unit will be a member of the committee;
  - 688 • A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may  
689 observe but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure  
690 review at the department level. The committee will annually elect its chair;
  - 691 • The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and
  - 692 • An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being  
693 considered.

694  
695 Among the responsibilities of the department and school promotion and tenure  
696 committee are the following:

- 697 • To establish procedures for a third-year review of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
698 faculty;
- 699 • To specify a mandatory date by which candidates must notify the department  
700 head of their intent to submit an application for tenure and/or promotion;
- 701 • To specify criteria for external peer reviews, including the identification of peer  
702 departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- 703 • To facilitate all votes related to the promotion and tenure process, including the  
704 vote to approve the original promotion and tenure document and policies and all  
705 subsequent changes;
- 706 • To conduct a review by the end of the third year of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
707 faculty; and
- 708 • To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure.

709  
710 College, school or department promotion and tenure committees will consider, if  
711 submitted, but are not bound by, the department head's annual review of a candidate's  
712 progress toward tenure or promotion.

713  
714 Prior to the offer of hire, the appropriate promotion and tenure committee will make a  
715 formal recommendation about:

- 716 • The initial appointment of a faculty member or administrator at the level of Rank  
717 2 or Rank 3;
- 718 • The acceptance of experience as the equivalent of a terminal degree; and

- 719       • The acceptance of years of credit at another institution of higher education  
720       toward fulfillment of the minimum probationary period for tenure.

721  
722 Every department and school will write a promotion and tenure document, which is  
723 approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty. In comprehensive departments with  
724 both tenured/tenure-track and professional-track faculty, the promotion section of the  
725 document will be approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty, while the tenure  
726 section of the document will be approved by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure-  
727 track faculty. The department document must:

- 728       • Contain the criteria and procedures for promotion and tenure;  
729       • Define teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, consistent  
730       with the mission of the department or school, including criteria for developing a  
731       national reputation and an established national reputation;  
732       • Specify criteria for excellence, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory as it pertains to  
733       the evaluation of candidates for promotion and/or tenure;  
734       • Determine the structure of the department promotion and tenure committee;  
735       • Specify the criteria for eligibility of full-time faculty to serve on the department  
736       promotion and tenure committee; and  
737       • Describe any specifics, including any uniqueness, of the department or school in  
738       which the individual is to be tenured.

739

## 740 **F. Procedures for Faculty Promotion and Tenure**

### 741 **Notification of Application for Promotion and/or Tenure**

742 A candidate for tenure and/or promotion must notify the department head of their intent  
743 to submit their application for review on or prior to a date that must be specified in the  
744 department promotion and tenure document. Department heads must inform tenure-  
745 track assistant professors of this date during the annual faculty review for the fifth year  
746 of their employment contract.

747  
748 The date by which candidates must notify their department head of their intent can vary  
749 between departments and colleges, but it must provide sufficient time to notify external  
750 reviewers and receive their letters of evaluation prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> or any official stage  
751 of application review. The solicitation process for external evaluators will be initiated  
752 when the candidate notifies the appropriate department head or unit director of their  
753 intent to be considered for tenure and/or promotion.

754

### 755 **External Letters**

756 External letters will be solicited from professionals in the field who can provide an  
757 impartial evaluation of the candidate's work and accomplishments.

758

759 In the case of professorial tracks, external reviewers should be faculty at peer to peer-  
760 plus institutions, or peer to peer-plus departments. In the case of instructor tracks,  
761 external reviewers must be external to the department, but may be internal or external  
762 to the university. External faculty reviewers should not include individuals who have a

763 professional or personal conflict-of-interest with the candidate. Conflicts-of-interest in  
764 general would include but not necessarily be restricted to previous mentors, previous  
765 graduate students, collaborating co-authors, collaborating co-investigators, or  
766 relatives/past-relatives. In disciplines or fields where the general conflict-of-interest  
767 definition commonly does not apply, external reviewers normally excluded from the  
768 process can be utilized if complete and adequate justification is provided. Definition of  
769 what constitutes a conflict-of-interest may be further defined in the department  
770 promotion and tenure document and be in accord with the Policy and Procedures  
771 Document for Conflict-of-Interest and Ethics (Department of Human Resources and  
772 Management: Employee Relations Section Mississippi Code of 1972 Sections 25-4-101  
773 through 25-4-105). The candidate, the department promotion and tenure committee,  
774 and department head will each provide a list of names that will be used to create a  
775 master list of potential external reviewers.

776  
777 The department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair will jointly  
778 select the final list of external reviewers from whom letters of evaluation will be  
779 requested and should include faculty names provided by all three sources. Both the  
780 department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair are  
781 responsible for eliminating, to the best of their knowledge, all external reviewers that  
782 have a conflict-of-interest.

783  
784 Dossiers must contain an explanation of the credentials and qualifications of each  
785 external reviewer regarding their training/background in addition to the extent of their  
786 contact, interaction or relationship with the candidate. External letters of evaluation must  
787 be received from a minimum of four external reviewers for inclusion in the dossier of the  
788 candidate. It is the responsibility of the chair of the department committee or the  
789 department head to obtain at least the minimum number of letters of evaluation from  
790 external reviewers who have agreed to function in this capacity. Should extraordinary  
791 circumstances exist which render it impractical for the minimum number of letters to be  
792 included, the dossier may proceed with the number of letters that can be obtained. All  
793 letters received from external reviewers must be included in the dossier of the candidate  
794 unless the department head and department promotion and tenure committee  
795 collectively decide to withdraw a letter from the review process if it contains information  
796 that refers to or describes a conflict-of-interest. In instances when substantial  
797 modifications of the application have occurred (e.g. official notifications of accepted  
798 publications or awarded grants) after documentation has been forwarded to the external  
799 reviewers, these achievements can be communicated in a letter written by the  
800 candidate and forwarded to the department head. The letter should be included in the  
801 section of the dossier containing the external letters of review.

802  
803 The identity of the external reviewers will not be revealed to the candidate and  
804 communications must not include any information that might indicate the identity or  
805 location of any external reviewer. Exceptions may include situations as may be required  
806 by law or ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. The specific procedures  
807 regarding solicitation and use of external letters of evaluation are to be detailed in  
808 school and department policies.



809

810 **Candidate Application**

811 The candidate makes a formal application for promotion and/or tenure by completing  
812 the Mississippi State University Application for Promotion and Tenure form and  
813 attaching supporting documentation. Each unit will specify the format and the level of  
814 detail for the supporting documentation. No additional support material may be added or  
815 removed from this file after a decision has been made at the department level, unless  
816 the candidate, department head and the department committee mutually agree. The  
817 request will be made in writing, define what is being added or removed, state the  
818 purpose for the change in the application, be signed by all parties, and be included as  
819 part of the formal application. Letters of recommendation will be added to the dossier at  
820 each level of review. If the candidate submits letters of factual correction for any level of  
821 review, those letters and any review-level response (described below) will also be  
822 included in the dossier.

823

824 A complete dossier for promotion and tenure for the official review process will include  
825 the application submitted by the candidate and at least the minimum of four external  
826 letters of review. Only complete dossiers for promotion and tenure that contain the  
827 application for the candidate and the minimum number of external letters will be  
828 evaluated at the level of the department promotion and tenure committee, department  
829 head, college committee, college dean, and university provost.

830 Except for the candidate's optional letters of factual correction (described below), the  
831 candidate takes no part in the process after submission of the application, unless  
832 requested to do so by those considering the dossier. No discussion of correspondence  
833 relating to the dossier is to be initiated by the candidate with the reviewing authorities.  
834 Deliberation at all levels will be confidential.

835

836 **Dossier Review**

837 The department promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
838 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation  
839 on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the  
840 seven criteria required by the IHL Board as a whole. The committee's recommendation  
841 will be based on a simple majority vote conducted by secret ballot. The committee chair  
842 will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale to be included in the candidate's  
843 dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the committee's letter of recommendation  
844 and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of  
845 external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that  
846 informed the committee's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the  
847 committee will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The  
848 chair will notify the department head of the committee's recommendation.

849

850 The department head or director will review the dossier and make a recommendation  
851 based on pertinent evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure  
852 dossier and information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's  
853 performance in professional activities. The department head must provide written  
854 justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and service have been met. Written

855 justification must also be provided if it is believed the faculty member does not meet any  
856 of the four remaining criteria. The candidate will receive a copy of the department  
857 head's or director's letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar  
858 as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall  
859 characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the department head's or  
860 director's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the department head  
861 or director will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.  
862

863 The candidate may respond to the department promotion and tenure committee's  
864 and/or the department head's or director's letters to correct any factual errors  
865 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of each letter. The  
866 candidate's letter(s) of factual corrections must be sent to the review level to which the  
867 response was made. That level may address the concerns in a new letter to be included  
868 in the application within 5 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual  
869 correction. All letters shall be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review  
870 process.  
871

872 The college promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
873 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation  
874 on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the  
875 three areas (teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service) as a whole.  
876 The committee's recommendation will be based on a simple majority vote, conducted by  
877 secret ballot. The committee chair will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale  
878 to be included in the candidate's dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the  
879 college promotion and tenure committee's letter of recommendation and rationale that is  
880 redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The  
881 rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the committee's  
882 decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the committee will be included  
883 in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The candidate may respond to  
884 the college promotion and tenure committee's letter to correct any factual errors  
885 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The  
886 committee may address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within  
887 5 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall  
888 be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.  
889

890 The dean will review the dossier and make a recommendation based on pertinent  
891 evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier and  
892 information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in  
893 professional activities. The dean must provide written justification that the criteria of  
894 teaching, research, and service have been met. Written justification must also be  
895 provided if it is believed the faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining  
896 criteria. The candidate will receive a copy of the dean's letter of recommendation and  
897 rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external  
898 reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed  
899 the dean's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the dean will be  
900 included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

901  
902 The candidate may respond to the dean's letter to correct any factual errors represented  
903 therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The dean may  
904 address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within 5 working days  
905 of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be included in the  
906 dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

907  
908 The faculty member has the right to discontinue the review process for tenure or  
909 promotion at any point before a decision has been made. Their request must be made  
910 in writing to the department head or director before a final decision has been rendered.  
911 Department and college committees on promotion and tenure will assist their  
912 department head or director and dean, respectively, in reviewing the eligibility of all  
913 faculty members who have met the minimum requirements for advancement in rank or  
914 tenure.

915  
916 On rare occasions and in exceptional circumstances when a variation of the process  
917 described in this document needs to be initiated in order to be fair to the faculty member  
918 while still ensuring a rigorous review of the candidate's dossier, the University  
919 Promotion and Tenure Committee will review and approve any such appropriate  
920 requests during the review process. These approved variations of the process  
921 described by this paragraph cannot be the sole basis for an appeal.

### 922 **Chronology**

923 The receipt dates listed below for the department and college represent suggested  
924 guidelines intended to facilitate an organized and efficient review of candidates'  
925 dossiers during each official phase of the evaluation process. Minor chronological  
926 delays that may occur beyond these dates do not represent a significant procedural  
927 error. Departments and colleges may specify deadlines that are earlier, but not later,  
928 than those cited below.

929  
930  
931 On a date specified in the department promotion and tenure guidelines but no later than  
932 August 16, the candidate for tenure and/or promotion will notify the department head  
933 and the chair of the department promotion and tenure committee of their intent to submit  
934 their application for tenure and/or promotion. The department head has the  
935 responsibility to assist, where appropriate, the faculty member in preparing the  
936 application for tenure and promotion review.

937  
938 By October 1 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified in the department  
939 promotion and tenure document, a faculty member eligible for consideration for  
940 promotion and/or tenure must have provided the department head with all pertinent and  
941 available information to apply for consideration.

942  
943 By November 15 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified by the college  
944 promotion and tenure document, each faculty member's complete dossier will be  
945 provided to the college promotion and tenure committee. This will include letters of  
946 recommendation and rationale from both the department promotion and tenure

947 committee and the department head. Each of these letters of recommendation and  
948 rationale will be copied to the candidate. The letters will be redacted only insofar as  
949 necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. These letters must include a  
950 summary of the procedures followed by the academic unit in evaluating the candidate  
951 and the committee's and head's independent evaluation of the candidate's teaching  
952 effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and service to the profession and  
953 university. The chair of the college promotion and tenure committee is responsible for  
954 inserting letters of recommendation and rationale from the department head and the  
955 department promotion and tenure committee, along with any letters related to correction  
956 of factual errors at the department level, into the dossier of each candidate reviewed by  
957 the college promotion and tenure committee.

958  
959 By December 15 (or first working day thereafter) or earlier if specified by the college  
960 promotion and tenure document, the college promotion and tenure committee's letter of  
961 recommendation and rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the college dean.  
962 Letters of recommendation and rationale shall be copied to the candidate. The letters  
963 will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers.  
964 The letter concerning each candidate must include the committee's summary of the  
965 procedures followed by the college committee in evaluating the candidate and the  
966 committee's evaluation of the candidate in regards to the seven criteria required by the  
967 IHL Board. The college promotion and tenure committee chair is responsible to provide  
968 the dean with each candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of review.  
969 For each candidate, the dean is responsible for collection and inclusion of any letters  
970 related to correction of factual errors at the college level.

971  
972 By January 15 (or first working day thereafter), the dean's letter of recommendation and  
973 rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the provost and copied to the candidate.  
974 The letter concerning each candidate must include the dean's evaluation of the  
975 candidate with regards to the seven criteria required by the IHL Board. The dean is  
976 responsible to provide the provost with each candidate's dossier including letters from  
977 previous stages of review. Copies of publications, works of art, etc., will be included only  
978 if specifically requested by the provost.

979  
980 By March 10 (or first working day thereafter), the provost will have reviewed each  
981 candidate's dossier and will make a recommendation to the university president. The  
982 provost must provide written justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and  
983 service have been met. Written justification must also be provided if it is believed the  
984 faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining criteria. Copies of the  
985 provost's recommendation will be sent to the candidate with copies to the dean,  
986 department head, and chairs of college and department promotion and tenure  
987 committees.

988  
989 The university president will review the recommendation of the provost and will decide  
990 to accept or reject that recommendation. To grant tenure to a faculty member, the  
991 president must sign a written certification that the faculty member has satisfactorily met  
992 all seven of the IHL required criteria.

993  
994 The university president will transmit that decision, together with reasons for a negative  
995 decision, to the faculty member directly, with copies to the dean, department head, and  
996 chairs of college and department promotion and tenure committees.

997  
998 The decision to award tenure is made by the university president. All judgments made  
999 at lower levels of the university are recommendations to the university president.

1000

## 1001 **G. Appeals**

1002 Faculty members who have been denied promotion or tenure may, within ten working  
1003 days of the date on the university president's decision letter, request an appeals hearing  
1004 before the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. The request must be made  
1005 through the provost who will forward the request to the University Committee on  
1006 Promotion and Tenure. Grounds for requesting an appeal are:

- 1007 • That the decision was prejudiced, arbitrary, or capricious; or
- 1008 • That the procedures contained in the promotion and tenure policies of the IHL,  
1009 Mississippi State University, or those in the candidate's college or unit promotion  
1010 and tenure policies were not properly followed.

1011  
1012 The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure, upon request of the provost, will  
1013 review the entire case. The appeal will be heard by at least five members. Members  
1014 should recuse themselves from appeals by candidates who are relatives or with whom  
1015 they have some conflict-of-interest, if the committee member has served in the previous  
1016 levels of evaluation of the appellant or if for any reason the committee member feels  
1017 unable to be objective. A committee member who has not heard all hearings pertaining  
1018 to a case shall not vote concerning an appeal. If five members are not available  
1019 because of absence or recusal, the chair may, with the concurrence of the committee,  
1020 appoint substitutes from among the professors of the general faculty. In special  
1021 circumstances potentially prejudicial to the appellant, the chair may, with the  
1022 concurrence of the committee, appoint an ad-hoc committee to assist in the resolution  
1023 of the appeal. This ad-hoc committee reports its findings back to the University  
1024 Committee on Promotion and Tenure.

1025  
1026 The committee will review all available pertinent information and will conduct interviews  
1027 with appropriate persons, i.e., appellant, unit head, unit committee chair, dean, college  
1028 committee chair and provost. The committee will render its recommendation, in writing,  
1029 to the provost. The committee will also provide a copy of this written recommendation to  
1030 the candidate.

1031  
1032 The provost will transmit the committee's written recommendation along with their own  
1033 recommendation to the university president, who will make the final decision. This  
1034 decision will end the university appeals process. A copy of each recommendation will be  
1035 provided to the candidate.

1036

1037 The Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning may grant a further appeal  
1038 as outlined in Board of Trustees Policy 403.0105.  
1039 Candidates who are denied tenure and who have no time remaining in their  
1040 probationary periods will receive terminal contracts for the following year.  
1041

## 1042 **H. Non-reappointment / Dismissal of Faculty**

- 1043
- 1044 ○ **Professional-Track Faculty**  
1045 members will be notified in writing of the university's intention not to renew their  
1046 contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 404.02:
    - 1047 • Notice of intention not to renew non-tenure track personnel shall be furnished in  
1048 writing thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the contract. Notice of non-  
1049 Renewal of employees with written contracts, other than those covered in IHL  
1050 Board Policy 403.0102, is 30 days.
  - 1051 ○ Lack of Funds-Notice of termination of non-tenure track personnel prior to expiration  
1052 of the contract due to a lack of funds shall be furnished in writing thirty (30) days  
1053 prior to termination
  - 1054
  - 1055 ○ **Non-tenured Tenure track Faculty**  
1056 members will be notified in writing of the university's intention not to renew their  
1057 contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 403.0102:
    - 1058 • Not later than March 1 before the date of contract termination during the first year  
1059 of service;
    - 1060 • Not later than December 1 before the date of contract termination during the  
1061 second year of service; or
    - 1062 • Not later than September 1 before the date of contract termination after two or  
1063 more years of service.
  - 1064 This schedule of notification does not apply to persons holding temporary, part-time,  
1065 or adjunct positions
  - 1066
  - 1067 ○ **Dismissal of Tenured Faculty**  
1068 Termination of service of a tenured faculty member is made only under these  
1069 extraordinary circumstances (as outlined in IHL Board Policy 403.0104):
    - 1070 • Financial exigencies as declared by the Board;
    - 1071 • Termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as  
1072 approved by the Board;
    - 1073 • Malfeasance, inefficiency or contumacious conduct; or
    - 1074 • For legitimate and justifiable cause.
  - 1075 Termination for cause of a tenured faculty member or the dismissal for cause of a  
1076 faculty member prior to the expiration of a term appointment will not be  
1077 recommended by the institutional executive officer until the faculty member has been  
1078 afforded the opportunity for a hearing. In no event will the contract of a tenured  
1079 faculty member be terminated for cause without the faculty member being afforded  
1080 the opportunity for a hearing.

1081 In all cases, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action  
1082 against them and that they have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense.  
1083 Within ten (10) working days from the date of the university president's decision, the  
1084 faculty member will state in writing their desire to have a hearing. They will be  
1085 permitted to have with them an adviser of their own choosing who may be an  
1086 attorney. The institution is directed to record (suitable for transcription) all hearings.  
1087 In the hearing of charges of incompetence, the testimony will include that of faculty  
1088 and other scholars.

1090 Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for financial exigencies or termination  
1091 or reduction of program, academic or administrative units will remain employed for a  
1092 minimum of 9 to 12 months, consistent with current contract periods of time, from  
1093 date of notification. Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for malfeasance,  
1094 inefficiency, contumacious conduct or for a legitimate and justifiable cause will have  
1095 their contracts terminated at any time subsequent to notice including the right to  
1096 have a hearing with no right to continued employment for any period of time. At the  
1097 discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer, any faculty member's salary may be  
1098 paid, and they may be relieved of all teaching duties, assignments, appointments  
1099 and privileges when they are dismissed for any reasons stated above or pending a  
1100 termination hearing.  
1101

APPROVED:

/s/ Jason Barrett April 14, 2023  
Jason Barrett, Faculty Senate President Date

/s/ David Shaw June 22, 2023  
David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President Date

/s/ Mark E. Keenum June 22, 2023  
Mark E. Keenum, President Date

## **VI. Department of Human Resources Management Policies and Procedures**

Important personnel issues, including those in state and federal law, are established as Human Resources Management Policies and Procedures by the Department of Human Resources Management in consultation with impacted units. These policies are periodically revised by the Department of Human Resources Management. A record of HRM policies is available at

[https://www.policies.msstate.edu/?field\\_volume\\_target\\_id=5](https://www.policies.msstate.edu/?field_volume_target_id=5)

## **VII. Other University Policies**

It is the obligation of all members of the university community, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students, to adhere to the policies of the university. To ensure the ease and accuracy of compliance, all policies are available at

<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>

## **VIII. Employee Benefits**

Current records of employee benefits are available for the Department of Human Resources Management and are located at <https://www.hrm.msstate.edu/benefits>