

# Faculty Handbook

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## **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, complied 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

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## 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. Bettersworth'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

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### 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 (<https://www.mississippi.edu/sites/default/files/ihl/files/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 (VPAOS)**

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 and Executive Councils**

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

### **Administrative 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.

## **Executive Council**

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/>.

## **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/>

## III. The Faculty

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### 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 based on 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, including minutes from any previous meeting being proposed for adoption;
- ensure that a summary 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;
- work with the administrative assistant of the faculty senate office to perform all elections for faculty senate vacancies, including regularly scheduled elections and special elections;
- 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 (<https://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu/>)

## **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 state the number of vacancies being filled and that describes each of their terms (three-year term, completion of three-year term, or an extended leave of absence (e.g., sabbatical, medical leave) with a defined period);
- a special election with a two-week nomination period must be held for any vacancy not filled during a regular election, and previous regular election results cannot be used for future vacancies;
- any faculty senate position that has been vacated due to extended leave of absence will remain vacant until a successful election has been performed, including when no eligible replacement is willing to stand for election;
- 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. 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 with 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 sent to committee.
7. Business to be sent to committee.
8. Standing committee reports.
9. Special committee reports.
10. Old business.
11. 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 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**

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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

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Revised and Approved by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, March 7, 2025

Signed by Provost and Executive Vice President, David Shaw,

Signed by President Mark Keenum,

### 3 A. Scope

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

11 Section V of the Faculty Handbook applies to faculty members in tenure-track positions  
12 and professional-track positions hereto referred to as general faculty. The appointment  
13 and termination of faculty members is governed by IHL Board Policy, and their  
14 promotion is governed by IHL Board Policy, university, college, school, and department  
15 policies. Any academic unit of the university bearing the name of "school" shall be  
16 considered equivalent to a College when such school is led by a Dean. Otherwise, a  
17 school is considered equivalent to a department. Professional-track faculty members  
18 are eligible for promotion, but not tenure. Professional-track faculty may apply for open  
19 tenure-track positions or vice versa.

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

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

39 The policies and procedures in effect during any academic year must have been fully  
40 approved by the Faculty Senate and signed by the provost and the university president.  
41 If the changes to Section V are approved between May 16 and October 1 of a given  
42 year (calendar year 1), then changes will go into effect May 16 of the following year  
43 (calendar year 2). If the changes are approved after October 1 (calendar year 1) and  
44 before May 16 of the subsequent year (calendar year 2), then changes will go into effect  
45 on May 16 of the following year (calendar year 3). In both cases, all college and  
46 department documents must be revised as necessary no later than the effective date of  
47 the revised Section V of the Faculty Handbook. Copies of all officially approved  
48 promotion and tenure policies and procedures, including subsequent revisions, together  
49 with their dates of approval, will be kept in the Faculty Senate Office and the Office of  
50 the Provost. In addition, an electronic copy of the current policies and procedures will be  
51 posted on the Mississippi State University website (at [www.facultysenate.msstate.edu](http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu)).  
52

## 53 **B. Academic Rank**

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

60 Faculty tracks at Mississippi State University include tenure-track positions and  
61 professional-track positions.

### 62 **Tenure-Track Positions**

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

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 *Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate  
76 professor, who has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory  
77 level in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, and who  
78 excels in at least two of these areas. Based upon the criteria established in the

83 department promotion and tenure documents, a professor must have a national  
84 and/or international reputation within their profession, area of expertise, or discipline.  
85

## 86 **Professional-Track Positions**

### 88 **Teaching Professor Ranks:**

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

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

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

### 106 **Professor of Practice Ranks:**

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

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

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

### 124 **Clinical/Extension/Research Professor Ranks:**

125 \*Some Extension and Research positions are tenure-track. Faculty holding a tenure-  
126 track Extension or Research position should refer to the tenure-track guidance above.  
127

128     *Assistant Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a  
129     terminal degree in the discipline, who possesses the potential for successful  
130     performance in clinical/extension/research activities or creative achievement in a  
131     university environment, and who should contribute to the service of the unit,  
132     university, and/or profession.

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

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

144  
145     ***Instructor Ranks:***

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

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

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

160  
161     ***Clinical/Extension Instructor Ranks:***

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

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

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

177

## 178        **C. Faculty Advancement**

179        The university recognizes that its support of innovation and entrepreneurship positively  
180        impacts society. Accordingly, it is appropriate for contribution in these areas to be  
181        considered when developing performance standards and when evaluating a faculty  
182        member's professional activities in relation to faculty advancement. Therefore, each  
183        unit within the university has latitude to include measures of a faculty member's  
184        contribution to innovation and entrepreneurship in its performance standards related to  
185        any area of professional activity (e.g., teaching, research, and/or service) and to  
186        evaluate a faculty member's activities related to these areas. This latitude is offered to  
187        allow additional opportunities for faculty members to demonstrate excellence but does  
188        not indicate that units within the university are required to include measures of  
189        innovation and entrepreneurship in their performance standards or evaluation of  
190        professional activities.

191

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

199

200

### 201        Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-Track Faculty

202

#### **203        *Promotion***

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

214

215

216

217 **Tenure**

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

221  
222 *Definition:* Tenure is defined by IHL Board Policy 403.01 as "Continuing employment  
223 that may be granted to a faculty member after a probationary period upon nomination by  
224 the Institutional Executive Officer for election by the Board."

225  
226 IHL Board Policy 403.0104 further provides that a tenured faculty member is protected  
227 from dismissal except under the extraordinary circumstances stated in section *L*.  
228 *Dismissal of Tenured Faculty* of this document.

229  
230 According to IHL Board Policy 403.01, tenure is granted in a department, unless  
231 otherwise designated by the IHL Board.

232  
233 Attainment of tenure at Mississippi State University is by no means automatic, based on  
234 years of service, but is the result of a thorough evaluation of a faculty member's  
235 performance in the following core areas: teaching, research and/or creative  
236 achievement, and service.

237  
238 Tenure is granted with the university's expectation that the faculty member will continue  
239 to perform at or above the minimum standards set by the department or school, college,  
240 and university.

241  
242 The proportions of these activities may vary by discipline. Excellence in at least one  
243 area and satisfactory performance in the other two are needed to qualify a faculty  
244 member for tenure, but a department and/or college may require more rigorous  
245 standards. Along with the core areas, a faculty member also needs to be certified  
246 satisfactory by the president of the university in the following four areas:

- 247 • Professional training and experience;
- 248 • Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;
- 249 • Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
250 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;
- 251 • The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the  
252 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university.

253  
254 Performance will be assumed satisfactory in each of these four areas unless clear and  
255 consistent evidence has been documented to the contrary.

256  
257 Collegiality. For purposes of this document, collegiality is defined as the sharing of  
258 authority and responsibility among colleagues while avoiding patterns of behavior that  
259 are of such a disruptive nature as to hinder members of academic units from fulfilling  
260 their core duties or that hinder academic units from their academic mission. Inherent in  
261 that definition is the understanding that academic units and their members undertake

262 the core duties of teaching, research, and service that are associated with the  
263 university's mission and seek to preserve the well-being of the institution.

264

265 Further, collegiality:

- 266 • will not be associated with ensuring homogeneity and hence with practices that  
267 exclude persons based on their difference from a perceived norm.
- 268 • will not threaten academic freedom.
- 269 • will not be confused with the expectation that a faculty member display  
270 "enthusiasm" or "dedication," evince "a constructive attitude" that will "foster  
271 harmony," or display an excessive deference to administrative or faculty  
272 decisions where these may require reasoned discussion.
- 273 • will not be confused with participation in social gatherings outside of the normal  
274 scope of the faculty member's roles related to research, teaching, and service.
- 275 • will not necessarily be in conflict with criticism and opposition.

276

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

283

284 **Probationary Period**

285 A tenure-track faculty member must apply for and be granted tenure by the university  
286 president during the sixth full contract year of employment in a tenure-track position.  
287 Failure to earn tenure at the end of the sixth full contract year will result in a terminal  
288 contract in the seventh full contract year. The probationary period for tenure-track  
289 faculty begins at the start of the faculty member's first full contract year. A full contract  
290 year is defined as one that starts on August 16 for 9-month employees and on July 1 for  
291 12-month employees and continues until the next contract period. If the initial contract is  
292 for a partial year, e.g., starts after August 16 for a 9-month employee or after July 1 for a  
293 12-month employee, that time is not included in the probationary period.

294

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

299

300 For clearly stated personal reasons (e.g., emergencies related to health, activation of  
301 military service, pregnancy, adoption, childcare, care of parents), a tenure-track faculty  
302 member may request an extension of up to two years from the first five years of this  
303 probationary period for an approved leave of absence or a modified assignment.

304 Specific aspects of such an extension must be established by the department head or  
305 director, the dean, the provost, and the faculty member. Such an agreement must be in  
306 writing. The department promotion and tenure committee shall be notified in writing of  
307 the extension and the revised probationary period.

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

312  
313 For tenure-track faculty members with a shortened probationary period as specified in  
314 an offer letter or an approved extended probationary period, the "third-year review"  
315 should be held at the midpoint of the individual's probationary period.

316  
317 ***Relationship Between Promotion and Tenure***

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

322  
323 ***Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities for Tenure-  
324 Track Faculty***

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

329  
330 1. Professional training and experience;  
331 2. Effectiveness of teaching;  
332 3. Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;  
333 4. Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
334 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;  
335 5. The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency, and contumacious conduct in the  
336 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university;  
337 6. Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities; and  
338 7. Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the  
339 institution.

340  
341 In addition, a tenure-track faculty member's performance will be judged based on  
342 criteria in written policy statements developed by the appropriate academic units.  
343 In evaluating a tenure-track faculty member being considered for tenure and/or  
344 promotion, the appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give  
345 adequate consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function  
346 of their relative academic workload assignments within the seven categories required by  
347 the IHL Board. Adequate consideration of a tenure case consists of a conscientious  
348 review, which seeks out and considers all available evidence bearing on the relevant  
349 performance of the faculty member and assumes that the various academic units follow  
350 their approved procedural guidelines during the tenure and promotion review process.  
351 Such consideration should be based upon adequate deliberation over the evidence  
352 considering relevant standards and exclusive of improper standards (i.e., any criterion

353 not related to the professional performance of the faculty member). The evaluation of a  
354 tenure case should constitute a bona fide exercise of professional academic judgment.  
355

356 All criteria should be based on the application of the highest professional standards and  
357 are to be in harmony with the following IHL Board defined criteria:  
358

- 359 1. *Professional training and experience;*
- 360 2. *Effectiveness of teaching.* Criteria for assessing instructional activities may  
361 include regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work,  
362 internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations;  
363 development of educational materials; conduct of other academic programs that  
364 confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit and off-campus  
365 lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as defined by the  
366 academic units. Excellence in teaching, as defined by the current academic  
367 operating policy/policies, includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods,  
368 and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with  
369 students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students  
370 in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and  
371 fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline.  
372
- 373 3. *Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;* The IHL Board  
374 endorses the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement  
375 of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states in part: "When they  
376 speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or  
377 discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations.  
378 As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may  
379 judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they  
380 should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should  
381 show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate  
382 that they are not speaking for the institution."  
383
- 384 4. *Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
385 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;*
- 386 5. *The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the  
387 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university;*
- 388 6. *Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities.*  
389 Criteria for assessing research and/or creative achievement activities may  
390 include systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement or  
391 validation of human knowledge, the solution of contemporary problems, or the  
392 exploration of creative forms that bring greater meaning to life. Excellence in  
393 research and/or creative achievement must be established by critical peer  
394 evaluation, using standards prevailing in the discipline. Excellence may be  
395 documented by books, articles, or reviews published by commercial or university  
396

399       presses or in refereed journals of international, national, or regional prestige;  
400       research grants, leading to high quality research, intellectual property;  
401       presentation of papers before professional groups; invited participation in  
402       scholarly conferences; editorial work for professional journals or publishers; or  
403       artistic or humanistic performances, presentations, or shows. Evidence of  
404       substantive progress on long-term projects that meet the criteria above may be  
405       considered as specified by the academic units.

406

407       7. *Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the*  
408       *institution.* Criteria for assessing service activities may include activities which  
409       enhance the scholarly life of the university or the discipline, improve the quality of  
410       life or society, or promote the general welfare of the institution, the community,  
411       the state, the nation, or international community. Thus, it includes outreach and  
412       extension of academic knowledge to the public, participation on department,  
413       college, or university committees, or on regional, national, or international  
414       scholarly committees, boards, or review panels, or on public boards as a  
415       representative of the scholarly community. Membership or participation in such  
416       bodies may constitute satisfactory service, but excellence requires leadership or  
417       initiative leading to substantial improvements or progress.

418

419

420       ***Annual Evaluation and Review of Tenure-Track Faculty***

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

427

428       The evaluation criteria must be consistent with the promotion and tenure criteria of the  
429       department, the school or college, and the university. If the department head or director  
430       and the faculty member cannot agree on any part of the evaluation, the matter will be  
431       referred to the dean.

432

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

436

437       No record in personnel files relating to promotion or tenure is to be added, changed, or  
438       withdrawn without the knowledge of the faculty member and the unit administrator. With  
439       respect to promotion and/or tenure, personnel files are confidential and are available  
440       only to the faculty member and the following individuals: department head (or  
441       equivalent), dean/director (or equivalent), university provost and executive vice-  
442       president, and university president. If any information from a faculty member's  
443       personnel file is used to reflect negatively upon a candidate for promotion and/or tenure,  
444       the individual providing the negative reflection must transparently state the fact and

445 make the information available to elected promotion and tenure committee(s) and  
446 administrator(s) who are part of the continuing review of the candidate's application for  
447 promotion and/or tenure, or when the information is needed in a related appeals or  
448 grievance case. If material from a personnel file (or other material that is not in the  
449 candidate's promotion or tenure application) is provided to a committee or administrator,  
450 then the candidate will be provided a copy of the material and an opportunity to submit  
451 their written comments regarding the material before the material is considered by the  
452 committee or administrator. Otherwise, no additions will be made.

453

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

455

#### ***Promotion***

456 Promotion is never granted simply for satisfactory performance or for length of service  
457 but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment.  
458 Promotion from one level to the next will normally only be considered after a  
459 professional-track faculty member has served at least five years in rank so that  
460 sustained productivity at Mississippi State University can be demonstrated. Applications  
461 for promotion prior to that time will be regarded as early action and considered only for  
462 exceptionally strong and well documented cases. Rank should reflect comparable  
463 stature with others in similar disciplines in other university settings. Professional  
464 achievement at another academic institution may be considered for promotion.  
465

466

#### ***Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities for Professional-Track Faculty***

467 Every faculty member is expected to meet high standards of professional competence  
468 and integrity and to further the goals of their department or unit. In every case, the  
469 performance of professional-track faculty members will be judged by all parties involved  
470 in promotion decisions based on written promotion policies, and criteria specified  
471 therein. Those documents shall be developed by the faculty and shall apply to the  
472 faculty in specific units which may be departments or divisions.  
473

474

475 In evaluating a professional-track faculty member being considered for promotion, the  
476 appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give adequate  
477 consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function of their  
478 relative academic workload assignments within the seven IHL defined criteria included  
479 below as stated in the faculty member's offer letter. Adequate consideration for  
480 promotion consists of a conscientious review, which seeks out and considers all  
481 available evidence bearing on the relevant performance of the faculty member and  
482 assumes that the various academic units follow their approved procedural guidelines  
483 during the promotion review process. Such consideration should be based upon  
484 adequate deliberation over the evidence considering relevant standards and exclusive  
485 of improper standards (i.e. any criterion not related to the professional performance of  
486 the faculty member). The evaluation of a promotion case should constitute a bona fide  
487 exercise of professional academic judgement.  
488

489

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

- 493 1. *Professional training and experience;*
- 494 2. *Effectiveness of teaching:* Criteria for assessing instructional activities may  
495 include regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work,  
496 internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations;  
497 development of educational materials; conduct of other academic programs that  
498 confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit and off-campus  
500 lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as defined by the  
501 academic units. Excellence in teaching as defined by the current academic  
502 operating policy/policies includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods,  
503 and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with  
504 students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students  
505 in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and  
506 fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline. Excellence in  
507 teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student awards, student  
508 evaluations, student successes, faculty teaching awards, recognition of teaching  
509 excellence, sample course materials, recordings of teaching sessions, graduate  
510 student theses and dissertations, and any other documentary materials that  
511 demonstrate teaching effectiveness on the university campus or at the national or  
512 international level.
- 513 3. *Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications:* The IHL Board  
514 endorses the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement  
515 of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states in part: "When they  
516 speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or  
517 discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations.  
518 As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may  
519 judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they  
520 should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should  
521 show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate  
522 that they are not speaking for the institution."
- 524 4. *Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional  
525 ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;*
- 527 5. *The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the  
528 faculty member's performance of their faculty position at the university;*
- 530 6. *Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities.*  
531 Research is not an expectation of instructional faculty (i.e. Teaching Professors,  
532 Professors of Practice, and Instructors) and should not be a requirement for  
533 promotion. Research that allows the instructional faculty member to remain

535 active in their discipline or that contributes to their excellence in instruction or  
536 service may be included in the evaluation.

537  
538 Professional-track faculty who are not in instructional tracks may be required to  
539 perform research and/or creative achievement activities. Criteria for assessing  
540 research and/or creative activities may include systematic, original investigation  
541 directed toward the enlargement or validation of human knowledge, the solution  
542 of contemporary problems, or the exploration of creative forms that bring greater  
543 meaning to life. Excellence in research and/or creative achievement must be  
544 established by critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the  
545 discipline. Excellence may be documented by books, articles, or reviews  
546 published by commercial or university presses or in refereed journals of  
547 international, national, or regional prestige; research grants, leading to high  
548 quality research, intellectual property; presentation of papers before professional  
549 groups; invited participation in scholarly conferences; editorial work for  
550 professional journals or publishers; or artistic or humanistic performances,  
551 presentations, or shows. Evidence of substantive progress on long-term projects  
552 that meet the criteria above may be considered as specified by the academic  
553 units.

554

555 7. *Service and other non-teaching activities that reflect favorably upon the*  
556 *institution.* Criteria for assessing service activities may include activities which  
557 enhance the scholarly life of the university or the discipline, improve the quality of  
558 life or society, or promote the general welfare of the institution, the community,  
559 the state, the nation, or international community. Thus, it includes outreach and  
560 extension of academic knowledge to the public, participation on department,  
561 college, or university committees, or on regional, national, or international  
562 scholarly committees, boards, or review panels, or on public boards as a  
563 representative of the scholarly community. Membership or participation in such  
564 bodies may constitute satisfactory service, but excellence requires leadership or  
565 initiative leading to substantial improvements or progress.

566

567 ***Annual Evaluation and Review of Professional-Track Faculty***

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

579

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

584

585 The department head/unit administrator shall maintain a personnel file for each faculty  
586 member. No record in the file is to be added, changed, or withdrawn without the  
587 knowledge of both parties. Only the faculty member and the following individuals may  
588 view the personnel file relative to promotion decisions: department head (or equivalent),  
589 dean/director (or equivalent), university provost and executive vice-president, and  
590 university president. If any information from a faculty member's personnel file is used to  
591 reflect negatively upon a candidate for promotion, the individual providing the negative  
592 reflection must transparently state that it is based on information from the personnel file  
593 and make the information available to the appropriate individuals when the faculty  
594 member is a candidate for promotion, or when the information is needed in a related  
595 appeals or grievance case.

596 **D. Promotion and Tenure Committees**

597 **University Committee on Promotion and Tenure**

598 The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure serves five functions:

- 599 • To advise the provost on promotion and tenure matters, including the review of  
600 criteria, policies, and procedures for promotion and tenure used by schools or  
601 colleges;
- 602 • To review suggested changes in this document;
- 603 • To review and approve appropriate requests related to variations made during  
604 the review process;
- 605 • To hear appeals from faculty members whose nominations for promotion or  
606 tenure have been denied; and
- 607 • To hear appeals from tenured faculty members who have been recommended for  
608 termination.

610 The committee consists of one member elected from each academic unit with an  
611 administrative head. Members elected by each academic unit must be full-time, tenured  
612 professors, who hold Rank 2 or above. In addition to academic unit representatives, one  
613 member will be elected to represent each of the professional tracks. Members elected  
614 for each professional track must be full-time faculty and hold a rank above the minimum  
615 for their professional track. No faculty member functioning as an administrator,  
616 department head, or director of an academic unit will be a member of the committee.  
617 Academic unit representatives are elected in the fall by a majority vote of the unit's full-  
618 time general faculty. Each professional-track representative is elected in the fall by a  
619 majority vote of the full-time faculty members within the respective professional-track.  
620 Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation. Members may serve for  
621 two consecutive three-year terms, excluding partial terms. A partial term will be filled by  
622 election, as needed. Annually the committee members will elect a chair who reports  
623 directly to the provost. The chair is a full voting member of the committee.

624 **College Promotion and Tenure Committees**

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

- 630 • The membership of the committee should reflect the composition of the full-time  
631 faculty in the college;
- 632 • The length of terms will be determined by the unit;
- 633 • Committee members must hold a rank (i.e., 2, 3) at or above the candidate's  
634 aspirant rank to vote on each case. For example, a Rank 2 faculty member  
635 cannot vote on a candidate's promotion to Rank 3;
- 636 • Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation;
- 637 • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative.  
638 Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided;
- 639 • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director  
640 of an academic unit will be a member of the committee;
- 641 • A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may  
642 observe but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure  
643 review at the department level.
- 644 • The committee will annually elect its chair;
- 645 • The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and
- 646 • An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being  
647 considered.

648 The responsibilities of a college promotion and tenure committee will be the  
649 following:

- 650 • To write the college's promotion and tenure policies and procedures which must  
651 be consistent with the IHL Board and the university's promotion and tenure  
652 policies, include the mechanism for their adoption and revision, describe the  
653 procedures that will be followed if sufficient numbers of members are not  
654 available because of absences, recusal or insufficient rank, and identify the  
655 participation of the different categories of faculty in the college promotion and  
656 tenure process;
- 657 • To approve the promotion and tenure documents of department committees  
658 within the college and to ensure that such documents are consistent with the  
659 mission of the university and the college, and both the IHL Board and the  
660 university's promotion and tenure document;
- 661 • To assist departments in developing procedures for a third-year review of all non-  
662 tenured, tenure-track faculty;
- 663 • To assist departments in developing criteria for external peer reviews, including  
664 the identification of peer departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- 665 • To assist departments in developing definitions of excellence, satisfactory, and  
666 unsatisfactory as it pertains to the evaluation of candidates for promotion and  
667 tenure;

669     • To assist departments in developing definitions of teaching, research and/or  
670       creative achievement, and service consistent with the mission of the department  
671       or school;  
672     • To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure, ensuring department  
673       standards are fairly applied and university standards are maintained; and  
674     • To approve the department promotion and tenure document and policies and all  
675       subsequent changes.

676

### **Department and School Promotion and Tenure**

677 Every department and school will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure  
678 committee. The department committee may include any faculty track. The promotion  
679 and tenure procedures must specify the inclusiveness of the committee composition  
680 and clearly establish the eligibility for voting and participation within the department  
681 promotion and tenure process. In departments where there may be professional-track  
682 faculty of rank serving on department committees along with tenured faculty, it is  
683 permissible for all faculty members on the committee of appropriate rank to vote on  
684 promotion to Rank 2 or to Rank 3. Only tenured faculty members on the committee can  
685 vote on the tenure decision. When a candidate is being considered for promotion to  
686 associate professor or to professor and for tenure at the same time, any non-agreement  
687 of the promotion vote and the tenure vote will be resolved by vote of only the tenured  
688 faculty members on the committee.

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

691     • A minimum of three tenured faculty must be available to vote on tenure  
692       decisions. If three tenured faculty are not available within the department, the  
693       Dean of the College will select the required number of tenured faculty members  
694       from within the College to bring the total number to three;

695     • Committee members must hold a rank (i.e., 2, 3) at or above the candidate's  
696       aspirant rank to vote on each case. For example, a Rank 2 faculty member  
697       cannot vote on a candidate's promotion to Rank 3. The department promotion  
698       and tenure policies shall describe the procedures that will be followed if sufficient  
699       numbers of members are not available because of absence, recusal or  
700       insufficient rank. Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation;

701     • Unless a unit uses a committee-of-the-whole, the members of the committee  
702       must be elected. The length of terms will be determined by the unit;

703     • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative.  
704       Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided;

705     • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director  
706       of an academic unit will be a member of the committee;

707     • A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may  
708       observe but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure  
709       review at the department level. The committee will annually elect its chair;

710     • The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and

711     • An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being  
712       considered.

715 Among the responsibilities of the department and school promotion and tenure  
716 committee are the following:

- 717 • To establish procedures for a third-year review of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
718 faculty;
- 719 • To specify a mandatory date by which candidates must notify the department  
720 head of their intent to apply for tenure and/or promotion;
- 721 • To specify criteria for external peer reviews, including the identification of peer  
722 departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- 723 • To facilitate all votes related to the promotion and tenure process, including the  
724 vote to approve the original promotion and tenure document and policies and all  
725 subsequent changes;
- 726 • To conduct a review by the end of the third year of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
727 faculty; and
- 728 • To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure.

729  
730 College, school or department promotion and tenure committees will consider, if  
731 submitted, but are not bound by, the department head's annual review of a candidate's  
732 progress toward tenure or promotion.

733  
734 Prior to the offer of hire, the appropriate promotion and tenure committee will make a  
735 formal recommendation about:

- 736 • The initial appointment of a faculty member or administrator at the level of Rank  
737 2 or Rank 3;
- 738 • The acceptance of experience as the equivalent of a terminal degree; and
- 739 • The acceptance of years of credit at another institution of higher education  
740 toward fulfillment of the minimum probationary period for tenure.

741  
742 Every department and school will write a promotion and tenure document, which is  
743 approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty. In comprehensive departments with  
744 both tenured/tenure-track and professional-track faculty, the promotion section of the  
745 document will be approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty, while the tenure  
746 section of the document will be approved by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure-  
747 track faculty. The department document must:

- 748 • Contain the criteria and procedures for promotion and tenure;
- 749 • Define teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, consistent  
750 with the mission of the department or school, including criteria for developing a  
751 national reputation and an established national reputation;
- 752 • Specify criteria for excellence, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory as it pertains to  
753 the evaluation of candidates for promotion and/or tenure;
- 754 • Determine the structure of the department promotion and tenure committee;
- 755 • Specify the criteria for eligibility of full-time faculty to serve on the department  
756 promotion and tenure committee; and
- 757 • Describe any specifics, including any uniqueness, of the department or school in  
758 which the individual is to be tenured.

760 **E. Procedures for Faculty Promotion and Tenure**

761 **Notification of Application for Promotion and/or Tenure**

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

767  
768 The date by which candidates must notify their department head of their intent can vary  
769 between departments and colleges, but it must provide sufficient time to notify external  
770 reviewers and receive their letters of evaluation prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> or any official stage  
771 of application review. The solicitation process for external evaluators will be initiated  
772 when the candidate notifies the appropriate department head or unit director of their  
773 intent to be considered for tenure and/or promotion.

774  
775 **External Letters**

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

778  
779 In the case of professorial tracks, external reviewers should be faculty at peer to peer-  
780 plus institutions, or peer to peer-plus departments. In the case of instructor tracks,  
781 external reviewers must be external to the department but may be internal or external to  
782 the university. External faculty reviewers should not include individuals who have a  
783 professional or personal conflict-of-interest with the candidate. Conflicts-of-interest in  
784 general would include but not necessarily be restricted to previous mentors, previous  
785 graduate students, collaborating co-authors, collaborating co-investigators, or  
786 relatives/past-relatives. In disciplines or fields where the general conflict-of-interest  
787 definition commonly does not apply, external reviewers normally excluded from the  
788 process can be utilized if complete and adequate justification is provided. Definition of  
789 what constitutes a conflict-of-interest may be further defined in the department  
790 promotion and tenure document and be in accord with the Policy and Procedures  
791 Document for Conflict-of-Interest and Ethics (Department of Human Resources and  
792 Management: Employee Relations Section Mississippi Code of 1972 Sections 25-4-101  
793 through 25-4-105). The candidate, the department promotion and tenure committee,  
794 and department head will each provide a list of names that will be used to create a  
795 master list of potential external reviewers.

796  
797 The department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair will jointly  
798 select the final list of external reviewers from whom letters of evaluation will be  
799 requested and should include faculty names provided by all three sources. Both the  
800 department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair are  
801 responsible for eliminating, to the best of their knowledge, all external reviewers that  
802 have a conflict-of-interest.

804 Dossiers must contain an explanation of the credentials and qualifications of each  
805 external reviewer regarding their training/background in addition to the extent of their  
806 contact, interaction or relationship with the candidate. External letters of evaluation must  
807 be received from a minimum of four external reviewers for inclusion in the dossier of the  
808 candidate. It is the responsibility of the chair of the department committee or the  
809 department head to obtain at least the minimum number of letters of evaluation from  
810 external reviewers who have agreed to function in this capacity. Should extraordinary  
811 circumstances exist which render it impractical for the minimum number of letters to be  
812 included, the dossier may proceed with the number of letters that can be obtained. All  
813 letters received from external reviewers must be included in the dossier of the candidate  
814 unless the department head and department promotion and tenure committee  
815 collectively decide to withdraw a letter from the review process if it contains information  
816 that refers to or describes a conflict-of-interest. In instances when substantial  
817 modifications of the application have occurred (e.g. official notifications of accepted  
818 publications or awarded grants) after documentation has been forwarded to the external  
819 reviewers, these achievements can be communicated in a letter written by the  
820 candidate and forwarded to the department head. The letter should be included in the  
821 section of the dossier containing the external letters of review.

822  
823 The identity of the external reviewers will not be revealed to the candidate and  
824 communications must not include any information that might indicate the identity or  
825 location of any external reviewer. Exceptions may include situations as may be required  
826 by law or ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. The specific procedures  
827 regarding solicitation and use of external letters of evaluation are to be detailed in  
828 school and department policies.

829  
830 **Candidate Application**  
831 The candidate makes a formal application for promotion and/or tenure by completing  
832 the Mississippi State University Application for Promotion and Tenure form and  
833 attaching supporting documentation. Each unit will specify the format and the level of  
834 detail for the supporting documentation. No additional support material may be added or  
835 removed from this file after a decision has been made at the department level, unless  
836 the candidate, department head and the department committee mutually agree. The  
837 request will be made in writing, define what is being added or removed, state the  
838 purpose for the change in the application, be signed by all parties, and be included as  
839 part of the formal application. Letters of recommendation will be added to the dossier at  
840 each level of review. If the candidate submits letters of factual correction for any level of  
841 review, those letters and any review-level response (described below) will also be  
842 included in the dossier.

843  
844 A complete dossier for promotion and tenure for the official review process will include  
845 the application submitted by the candidate and at least the minimum of four external  
846 letters of review. Only complete dossiers for promotion and tenure that contain the  
847 application for the candidate and the minimum number of external letters will be  
848 evaluated at the level of the department promotion and tenure committee, department  
849 head, college committee, college dean, and university provost.

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

855

### **Dossier Review**

856 The department promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
857 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation  
858 on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the  
859 seven criteria required by the IHL Board as a whole. The committee's recommendation  
860 will be based on a simple majority vote conducted by secret ballot. The committee chair  
861 will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale to be included in the candidate's  
862 dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the committee's letter of recommendation  
863 and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of  
864 external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that  
865 informed the committee's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the  
866 committee will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The  
867 chair will notify the department head of the committee's recommendation.

868

869 The department head or director will review the dossier and make a recommendation  
870 based on pertinent evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure  
871 dossier and information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's  
872 performance in professional activities. The department head must provide written  
873 justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and service have been met. Written  
874 justification must also be provided if it is believed the faculty member does not meet any  
875 of the four remaining criteria. The candidate will receive a copy of the department  
876 head's or director's letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar  
877 as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall  
878 characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the department head's or  
879 director's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the department head  
880 or director will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

881

882 The candidate may respond to the department promotion and tenure committee's  
883 and/or the department head's or director's letters to correct any factual errors  
884 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of each letter. The  
885 candidate's letter(s) of factual corrections must be sent to the review level to which the  
886 response was made. That level may address the concerns in a new letter to be included  
887 in the application within 5 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual  
888 correction. All letters shall be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review  
889 process.

890

891 The college promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
892 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation  
893 on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the  
894 three areas (teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service) as a whole.

896 The committee's recommendation will be based on a simple majority vote, conducted by  
897 secret ballot. The committee chair will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale  
898 to be included in the candidate's dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the  
899 college promotion and tenure committee's letter of recommendation and rationale that is  
900 redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The  
901 rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the committee's  
902 decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the committee will be included  
903 in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The candidate may respond to  
904 the college promotion and tenure committee's letter to correct any factual errors  
905 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The  
906 committee may address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within  
907 5 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall  
908 be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.  
909

910 The dean will review the dossier and make a recommendation based on pertinent  
911 evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier and  
912 information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in  
913 professional activities. The dean must provide written justification that the criteria of  
914 teaching, research, and service have been met. Written justification must also be  
915 provided if it is believed the faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining  
916 criteria. The candidate will receive a copy of the dean's letter of recommendation and  
917 rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external  
918 reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed  
919 the dean's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the dean will be  
920 included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.  
921

922 The candidate may respond to the dean's letter to correct any factual errors represented  
923 therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The dean may  
924 address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within 5 working days  
925 of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be included in the  
926 dossier as it proceeds through the review process.  
927

928 If any information from a faculty member's personnel file is used by a department head,  
929 director, or dean to reflect negatively upon a candidate for promotion and/or tenure, the  
930 individual providing the negative reflection must transparently state that it is based on  
931 information from the personnel file and make the information available to promotion and  
932 tenure committee(s) and administrator(s) who are part of the continuing dossier review,  
933 or when the information is needed in a related appeals or grievance case.  
934

935 The faculty member has the right to discontinue the review process for tenure or  
936 promotion at any point before a decision has been made. Their request must be made  
937 in writing to the department head or director before a final decision has been rendered.  
938 Department and college committees on promotion and tenure will assist their  
939 department head or director and dean, respectively, in reviewing the eligibility of all  
940 faculty members who have met the minimum requirements for advancement in rank or  
941 tenure.

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

948

### **Chronology**

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

956

957 On a date specified in the department promotion and tenure guidelines but no later than  
958 August 16, the candidate for tenure and/or promotion will notify the department head  
959 and the chair of the department promotion and tenure committee of their intent to submit  
960 their application for tenure and/or promotion. The department head has the  
961 responsibility to assist, where appropriate, the faculty member in preparing the  
962 application for tenure and promotion review.

963

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

968

969 By November 15 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified by the college  
970 promotion and tenure document, each faculty member's complete dossier will be  
971 provided to the college promotion and tenure committee. This will include letters of  
972 recommendation and rationale from both the department promotion and tenure  
973 committee and the department head. Each of these letters of recommendation and  
974 rationale will be copied to the candidate. The letters will be redacted only insofar as  
975 necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. These letters must include a  
976 summary of the procedures followed by the academic unit in evaluating the candidate  
977 and the committee's and head's independent evaluation of the candidate's teaching  
978 effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and service to the profession and  
979 university. The chair of the college promotion and tenure committee is responsible for  
980 inserting letters of recommendation and rationale from the department head and the  
981 department promotion and tenure committee, along with any letters related to correction  
982 of factual errors at the department level, into the dossier of each candidate reviewed by  
983 the college promotion and tenure committee.

984

985 By December 15 (or first working day thereafter) or earlier if specified by the college  
986 promotion and tenure document, the college promotion and tenure committee's letter of  
987 recommendation and rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the college dean.

988 Letters of recommendation and rationale shall be copied to the candidate. The letters  
989 will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers.  
990 The letter concerning each candidate must include the committee's summary of the  
991 procedures followed by the college committee in evaluating the candidate and the  
992 committee's evaluation of the candidate regarding the seven criteria required by the IHL  
993 Board. The college promotion and tenure committee chair is responsible to provide the  
994 dean with each candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of review. For  
995 each candidate, the dean is responsible for collection and inclusion of any letters related  
996 to correction of factual errors at the college level.

997  
998 By January 15 (or first working day thereafter), the dean's letter of recommendation and  
999 rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the provost and copied to the candidate.  
1000 The letter concerning each candidate must include the dean's evaluation of the  
1001 candidate with regards to the seven criteria required by the IHL Board. The dean is  
1002 responsible to provide the provost with each candidate's dossier including letters from  
1003 previous stages of review. Copies of publications, works of art, etc., will be included only  
1004 if specifically requested by the provost.

1005  
1006 By March 10 (or first working day thereafter), the provost will have reviewed each  
1007 candidate's dossier and will make a recommendation to the university president. The  
1008 provost must provide written justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and  
1009 service have been met. Written justification must also be provided if it is believed the  
1010 faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining criteria. Copies of the  
1011 provost's recommendation will be sent to the candidate with copies to the dean,  
1012 department head, and chairs of college and department promotion and tenure  
1013 committees.

1014  
1015 The university president will review the recommendation of the provost and will decide  
1016 to accept or reject that recommendation. To grant tenure to a faculty member, the  
1017 president must sign a written certification that the faculty member has satisfactorily met  
1018 all seven of the IHL required criteria.

1019  
1020 The university president will transmit that decision, together with reasons for a negative  
1021 decision, to the faculty member directly, with copies to the dean, department head, and  
1022 chairs of college and department promotion and tenure committees.

1023  
1024 The decision to award tenure is made by the university president. All judgments made  
1025 at lower levels of the university are recommendations to the university president.  
1026

## 1027 **F. Appeals**

1028 Faculty members who have been denied promotion or tenure may, within ten working  
1029 days of the date on the university president's decision letter, request an appeals hearing  
1030 before the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. The request must be made

1031 through the provost who will forward the request to the University Committee on  
1032 Promotion and Tenure. Grounds for requesting an appeal are:

- 1033 • That the decision was prejudiced, arbitrary, or capricious; or
- 1034 • That the procedures contained in the promotion and tenure policies of the IHL,  
1035 Mississippi State University, or those in the candidate's college or unit promotion  
1036 and tenure policies were not properly followed.

1037  
1038 The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure, upon request of the provost, will  
1039 review the entire case. The appeal will be heard by at least five members. Members  
1040 should recuse themselves from appeals by candidates who are relatives or with whom  
1041 they have some conflict-of-interest, if the committee member has served in the previous  
1042 levels of evaluation of the appellant or if for any reason the committee member feels  
1043 unable to be objective. A committee member who has not heard all hearings pertaining  
1044 to a case shall not vote concerning an appeal. If five members are not available  
1045 because of absence or recusal, the chair may, with the concurrence of the committee,  
1046 appoint substitutes from among the professors of the general faculty. In special  
1047 circumstances potentially prejudicial to the appellant, the chair may, with the  
1048 concurrence of the committee, appoint an ad-hoc committee to assist in the resolution  
1049 of the appeal. This ad-hoc committee reports its findings back to the University  
1050 Committee on Promotion and Tenure.

1051  
1052 The committee will review all available pertinent information and will conduct interviews  
1053 with appropriate persons, i.e., appellant, unit head, unit committee chair, dean, college  
1054 committee chair and provost. The committee will render its recommendation, in writing,  
1055 to the provost. The committee will also provide a copy of this written recommendation to  
1056 the candidate.

1057  
1058 The provost will transmit the committee's written recommendation along with their own  
1059 recommendation to the university president, who will make the final decision. This  
1060 decision will end the university appeals process. A copy of each recommendation will be  
1061 provided to the candidate.

1062  
1063 The Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning may grant a further appeal  
1064 as outlined in Board of Trustees Policy 403.0105.

1065 Candidates who are denied tenure and who have no time remaining in their  
1066 probationary periods will receive terminal contracts for the following year.

## 1068 **G. Non-reappointment / Dismissal of Faculty**

1069  
1070 **Professional-Track Faculty** members will be notified in writing of the university's  
1071 intention not to renew their contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 404.02:

- 1072 • Notice of intention not to renew non-tenure track personnel shall be furnished in  
1073 writing thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the contract. Notice of non-

1074        Renewal of employees with written contracts, other than those covered in IHL  
1075        Board Policy 403.0102, is 30 days.  
1076        • Lack of Funds-Notice of termination of non-tenure track personnel prior to  
1077        expiration of the contract due to a lack of funds shall be furnished in writing thirty  
1078        (30) days prior to termination  
1079

1080        **Non-tenured Tenure track Faculty** members will be notified in writing of the  
1081        university's intention not to renew their contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy  
1082        403.0102:

1083        • Not later than March 1 before the date of contract termination during the first year  
1084        of service;  
1085        • Not later than December 1 before the date of contract termination during the  
1086        second year of service; or  
1087        • Not later than September 1 before the date of contract termination after two or  
1088        more years of service.

1089  
1090        This schedule of notification does not apply to persons holding temporary, part-time,  
1091        or adjunct positions

1092  
1093        **Dismissal of Tenured Faculty**

1094        Termination of service of a tenured faculty member is made only under these  
1095        extraordinary circumstances (as outlined in IHL Board Policy 403.0104):

1096        • Financial exigencies as declared by the Board;  
1097        • Termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as  
1098        approved by the Board;  
1099        • Malfeasance, inefficiency or contumacious conduct; or  
1100        • For legitimate and justifiable cause.

1101  
1102        Termination for cause of a tenured faculty member or the dismissal for cause of a  
1103        faculty member prior to the expiration of a term appointment will not be  
1104        recommended by the institutional executive officer until the faculty member has been  
1105        afforded the opportunity for a hearing. In no event will the contract of a tenured  
1106        faculty member be terminated for cause without the faculty member being afforded  
1107        the opportunity for a hearing.

1108  
1109        In all cases, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action  
1110        against them and that they have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense.  
1111        Within ten (10) working days from the date of the university president's decision, the  
1112        faculty member will state in writing their desire to have a hearing. They will be  
1113        permitted to have with them an adviser of their own choosing who may be an  
1114        attorney. The institution is directed to record (suitable for transcription) all hearings.  
1115        In the hearing of charges of incompetence, the testimony will include that of faculty  
1116        and other scholars.

1117  
1118        Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for financial exigencies or termination  
1119        or reduction of program, academic or administrative units will remain employed for a

1120 minimum of 9 to 12 months, consistent with current contract periods of time, from  
1121 date of notification. Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for malfeasance,  
1122 inefficiency, contumacious conduct or for a legitimate and justifiable cause will have  
1123 their contracts terminated at any time subsequent to notice including the right to  
1124 have a hearing with no right to continued employment for any period of time. At the  
1125 discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer, any faculty member's salary may be  
1126 paid, and they may be relieved of all teaching duties, assignments, appointments  
1127 and privileges when they are dismissed for any reasons stated above or pending a  
1128 termination hearing.

1129

APPROVED:

/s/

Robert Banik, Faculty Senate President

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

/s/

David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

/s/ Mark E. Keenum

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>