

# Faculty Handbook

## PREFACE

The purpose of the Faculty Handbook is to provide information, as well as sources of information, which faculty find beneficial. The Handbook describes the 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 with the document. Where appropriate, this document links to original source material to ensure current and accurate information. This handbook is the result of the work of many people, compiled by the Faculty Handbook Committee, jointly appointed by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President of the Faculty Senate. Changes and corrections should be sent to the Faculty Senate office. Corrections and additions to the Faculty Handbook may be made to the online version as needed by the Faculty Senate Bylaws Committee. Substantive changes to the Faculty Handbook require senate, provost, and presidential approval.

## I. General Information

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### A. History of the University

The University began as The Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi, one of the national land-grant colleges established after Congress had 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, in 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 which 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 had received its first accreditation 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.msstate.edu/web/mission.html>.

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*

## **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 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 of the university. 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 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 necessitates 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 impact 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, 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 Budget and Planning, Campus Services, Development and Alumni, and Student Affairs, search committees will be appointed by the president in consultation with the Robert Holland Faculty Senate president. The 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 constitution and to see that the IHL System mission is accomplished. To do so, the board operates a coordinated system of higher education, establishes prudent governance policies, employs capable chief executives, and requires legal, fiscal and programmatic accountability. The board annually reports to the legislature and the citizenry on the needs and accomplishments of the IHL System. The mission and structure of the board is outlined in the *IHL Policies and Bylaws* which is continually revised (<http://www.mississippi.edu/board/downloads/policiesandbylaws.pdf>). The mission statements are listed in section 102 and the Constitutional Organization is described in section 201. The board office is located in the Education and Research Center, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39211, phone 601-432-6198.

### B. The President

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

### C. Other Senior Administrative Positions

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

The Provost and Executive Vice President is responsible for leading and administering the academic programs of the university. The provost prepares, allocates, and administers the academic budgets; administers all academic personnel procedures, including affirmative action, recruitment, appointment, retention, and promotion and tenure; provides leadership for vice presidents, deans, directors, faculty, and staff to



meet stated goals; encourages faculty research and scholarly activities; ensures that academic procedures preserve academic freedom; 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, 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 of other professionals, the areas of emphasis, for programs and services to be provided for students.

### **Vice President for Campus Services**

The Vice President for Campus Services is responsible for providing administrative leadership and coordination of all campus operations units including Facilities Management, Transportation Services, Parking, Shuttle, and Laundry Operations. Facilities Management encompasses Maintenance, Faculty Housing, Custodial, Landscape, Utilities, Sustainability, Campus Master Planner, and University Architect. The Vice President for Campus Services is responsible for coordination and planning of these units including fiscal planning and the development of budgets.

### **Vice President for Budget and Planning**

The Vice President for Budget and Planning of the University is responsible for providing financial leadership and coordination of the units making up the Division of Budget and Planning. The business and financial functions of the university are centralized in the Division of Budget and Planning, which is responsible for receiving, managing, and disbursing funds from all sources and for fiscal planning and the development of budgets for the university. The Vice President for Budget and Planning is also responsible for fiscal planning and the development of budgets for the Office of the Controller and Treasurer, Procurement and Contracts, and Mail Services.

## **D. Administrative Councils**

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

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

The Executive Council is chaired by the president and proffers advice to the president on matters brought before it which include revision and creation of university policies. The council consists of the provost and executive vice president, the vice presidents, the chief information officer, the director of diversity and equity programs, 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 university counsel, the director of internal audit, and the assistants to the president. Minutes of the council are online <http://www.msstate.edu/president/executive/> .

The Administrative Council advises the president and serves as the board of directors of the MSU Educational Building Corporation. Its membership includes the president (chair), provost and executive vice president, the vice presidents, general counsel, the athletic director, and director of diversity and equity programs.

## **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 Meridian campus, 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 faculty senate and attorney general of the Student Association. Other persons may be invited to attend as resource persons.

### **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 manner in which 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 graduate school, 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 courses and curriculum committee, 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 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 the 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 of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, and the Vice President of Research and Economic Development.

### **The Academic Department Heads Council**

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 (<http://www.msstate.edu/web/standing/report.php>) 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 president.

## **H. Organizational Chart**

The organizational chart of the university is updated and posted online at (<http://www.hrm.msstate.edu/orgchart/University%20Org%20Chart.htm>)

# **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

Assistant Professor

#### **Extension**

Extension Instructor

Assistant Extension Professor

Associate Professor  
Professor

Associate Extension Professor  
Extension Professor

**Clinical**

Clinical Instructor  
Assistant Clinical Professor  
Associate Clinical Professor  
Clinical Professor

**Research**

Assistant Research Professor  
Associate Research Professor  
Research 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 or his/her 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 vote.

**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 which 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 president or the administration.

The general faculty shall consider all matters referred to it by the president or 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 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 which 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 of 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 can be submitted in advance to the Office of the President.

If time does not allow answers to be given to all of the 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 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. The Robert Holland Faculty Senate advises the president on matters referred to it.

### **Composition**

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

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

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

- College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and associated personnel of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station



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

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

Each senator shall serve a period of three years, with elections to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> for membership to be assumed April 1<sup>st</sup> and to participate in meeting thereafter. A senator may serve two consecutive terms, after which he/she is ineligible for membership for a 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 meet once a month during the regular school year, except

December, 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 his/her representative on the Athletic Council, Board of Directors of the Alumni Association, Executive Council, Planning Committee, and University Faculty Senates Association and other committees are requested by the senate and/or university administration.
- The faculty senate shall be represented by its vice president or his/her representative on the Academic Deans Council, and University Faculty Senates Association, and other committees as requested by the senate, the president of the senate and/or university administration.

### **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. He/she has the powers and responsibilities commensurate with such functions. Specifically, he/she 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 of subjects that he/she knows to be on the agenda for the coming meeting;
- ensure a record of the actions of each meeting be available to members of the general faculty within two weeks following each meeting;
- appoint the members and the chair of each committee;
- transmit to the president of the university, or to such other person to whom a senate recommendation may be directed, the recommendation of the senate;
- keep the senate informed of the disposition of each recommendation that is made;
- state clearly each issue that is being voted on before the vote is taken and announce the results of the vote immediately thereafter;

- notify newly elected senators of their right to participate in the nomination of candidates for the position of president of the senate;
- notify the dean or head of each college or division when any vacancy occurs that an election should be held to fill such vacancy on the senate;
- appoint members of other committees as specified by university policy;
- represent faculty senate on the Athletic Council, Board of Directors of the Alumni Association, Executive Council, Planning Committee, and 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. When the senate is to be represented by the president and he/she is unable to represent it, the vice president shall be designated to represent it.

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 his/her 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, 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;
- maintains records posted on the faculty senate website ([www.facultysenate.msstate.edu](http://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 proposed recommendation, for adoption, except that if such a proposed resolution shall have been presented to the senate president so as to have been included by him/her 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 upon 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 by the colleges/units to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> for membership to be assumed in April 1<sup>st</sup>. Colleges/units may elect senators by any procedure provided that:

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

*Election of Officers:* Nominations for the position of president of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate shall be a written note 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 she/he is still on the senate and not a candidate for office. The elections officer will be appointed at the March meeting of the senate.

Duties of the elections officer will be to:

- A. Conduct the elections of officers
  - B. Call on candidates for speeches prior to election using alphabetical order
  - C. Develop questions for candidates to answer prior to the third round of balloting if necessary.
  - D. Send out and receive absentee ballots for the first round of balloting
2. All candidates nominated and willing to stand for election will submit electronically a one page statement indicating qualifications and reasons for seeking election to the specific senate office and a vita for distribution to the senate members no later than 5 p.m. one week prior to the date of elections. Statements and vitas will then be electronically forwarded to all senators no later than 5 p.m. the Monday prior to the election.
  3. In the event there are not two candidates for an office, candidates running from the floor should bring a statement indicating reasons for seeking election to the specific senate office for distribution at the senate meeting, and will distribute such statement to all senators present.
  4. All candidates shall have a maximum of five (5) minutes to speak prior to the first ballot for their position. After the second ballot candidates will respond to a question formulated by the elections officer, and again will have a maximum of five (5) minutes to respond to the question.
  5. Absentee ballots will be permitted on the first ballot only. In order to receive an absentee ballot the senator must request an absentee ballot from the elections officer, and must provide an excuse for senate absence. Ballots must be requested no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday prior to the elections. Absentee ballots must be returned to the elections officer no later than 5 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the elections. Absentee ballots may be submitted to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate or emailed directly to the elections officer.
  6. After the March elections of new senators from their respective colleges, a detailed description of the “Nominations and Elections Operating Procedures” will be provided to all senators eligible to vote in the April election of senate officers.

This will include instructions for requesting and submitting absentee ballots from and to the appointed "elections officer".

The president's notice of the agenda for the election meeting shall contain an alphabetical list of the names that have been placed in nomination. If no more than one name has been received in nomination, then additional names can be placed in nomination from the floor. No person shall be considered a nominee unless he/she shall have served on this Senate at least one year.

At the election meeting, secret balloting for the office of president, from among those nominated, shall be conducted immediately following the president's report.

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

The senate shall then proceed to nominate and elect first a vice president who has served on the senate at least one year and then a secretary. 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. This shall include a report of the disposition of previous senate recommendations and resolutions and the report of communication to the senate.
4. Report of vice president.
5. Report from faculty senate designates on university committees.
6. Business to be sent to committee.
7. Standing committee reports.
8. Special committee reports.
9. Old business.
10. New business. Those proposed recommendations, studies, and resolutions that have been submitted to the president in writing shall be considered first, and then items that might be brought up from the floor shall be considered.

## **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 which do not fall within the areas of student or faculty affairs;
- *Faculty Affairs*--those ancillary matters which exclusively or primarily affect the General Faculty;
- *Student Affairs*--those ancillary matters which 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 (with the exception of the president and vice president) will be appointed to a standing committee by the president. Each senator shall serve on that committee to which he/she is appointed throughout his/her term on the senate, unless he/she asks for and receives 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 which shall have been 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.

## **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.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall be a special committee chaired by the senate president and shall consist of the vice president, secretary, and all the chairs of 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 senate by any of its members or any items affecting the faculty brought to the attention of the senate president by members of the administration.

### **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.
- The terms of senators shall begin with the first day of April following their elections and shall end on March 31<sup>st</sup> of the last year of their term, except that the term of any of the senate's officers is considered to be extended until his/her successor is chosen if it would otherwise expire.
- 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.
- Each senator shall serve a period of three years, with elections completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> for membership to be assumed April 1<sup>st</sup>. A senator may serve two consecutive terms, after which he/she 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 in March of that year.

### **Meetings**

- The faculty senate shall meet once a month during the regular school year, except December. 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. 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 which 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.
- For elected senators to be counted as present, they must be physically present for all regularly scheduled faculty senate meetings unless granted an excused absence.
- When a senator misses three consecutive regular meetings of the senate without sufficient justification, his/her dean shall be notified by the president of the senate and requested to hold a new election 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.
- The affirmative vote of two-thirds of the senators present shall be sufficient to suspend provisions of the senate's bylaws in order to expedite the handling of a particular matter, but the provisions of the bylaws on vote and voting shall not be suspended.
- Only senators may vote, and the vote of a majority of successive members voting "aye" or "nay" shall be sufficient in all instances not otherwise provided for by the senate charter or its bylaws.

## **D. 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 [www.grad.msstate.edu/faculty/](http://www.grad.msstate.edu/faculty/).

# **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 policies are available at the Office of Internal Audit at [http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html#VOLUME\\_II](http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html#VOLUME_II)

## V. Promotion and Tenure Procedures

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# FACULTY HANDBOOK

## V. Promotion and Tenure Procedures

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Revised and Approved by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, 6-14-2013  
Signed by Provost and Executive Vice President, Jerome Gilbert, 6-17-2013  
Signed by President Mark Keenum, 6-17-2013

### 1 **A. Scope**

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

8 This document (Section V.) applies only to faculty members in tenure-track positions.  
9 The appointment and termination of non-tenure-track faculty members is governed by  
10 IHL Board Policy 404.01-404.02, and their promotion is governed by university, college,  
11 school and departmental policies. Such faculty members are not eligible for tenure, but  
12 may apply for open tenure-track positions.

13 Suggested changes and recommendations to this document can originate with the  
14 president, the provost, the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Faculty  
15 Senate, and/or tenured and tenure-track faculty. The president of the Faculty Senate  
16 will distribute copies of the suggested change(s) and recommendation(s) to all senate  
17 members and the Faculty Senate will prepare its own recommendation(s). The Faculty  
18 Senate's report on the recommended changes in the promotion and tenure document  
19 will be reviewed at two regularly scheduled senate meetings before a vote on the  
20 recommendations will be held. A copy of the Faculty Senate's decision will be sent to  
21 the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. Final action on the

22 recommendation(s) will be taken by the president and announced through all  
23 appropriate channels.

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

28 The policies and procedures in effect in any academic year must have been fully  
29 approved by the Faculty Senate and signed by the provost and the president. If the  
30 changes to the university document are approved between May 16 and October 1 of a  
31 given year (calendar year 1), then the changes to the university document will go into  
32 effect May 16 of the following year (calendar year 2). If the changes are approved after  
33 October 1 (calendar year 1) and before May 16 of the subsequent year (calendar year  
34 2), then changes in the university document will go into effect on May 16 of the following  
35 year (calendar year 3). In both cases, all college and department documents must be  
36 revised as necessary no later than the effective date of the revised university document.  
37 Copies of all officially-approved, university promotion and tenure policies and  
38 procedures, including subsequent revisions, together with their dates of approval, will be  
39 kept in the Faculty Senate Office and the Office of the Provost. In addition, an electronic  
40 copy of the current policies and procedures will be posted on the MSU website (at  
41 [www.facultysenate.msstate.edu](http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu)).

## 42 **B. Academic Rank**

43 A faculty member of professorial rank must have a professional or terminal degree  
44 appropriate to the discipline (or the equivalent in training and experience), a strong  
45 commitment to higher education and to the mission of Mississippi State University, and  
46 a willingness to assume the responsibilities and obligations appropriate to a university  
47 faculty member.

48 Academic ranks at Mississippi State University include:

49 *Assistant Professor:* A faculty member who has met the requirements in the first  
50 paragraph of this section and has the potential to be successful in the areas of  
51 teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service.

52 *Associate Professor:* A faculty member who has met the criteria for assistant  
53 professor, who has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory  
54 level in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, and who  
55 excels in at least one of these areas. Based upon the criteria established in the  
56 departmental promotion and tenure documents, an associate professor is  
57 developing a national and/or international reputation, and is showing a potential for  
58 making sustained contributions to the university and to his/her profession, field, or  
59 discipline.

60 *Professor:* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate professor, who  
61 has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory level in  
62 teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, and who excels in at  
63 least two of these areas. Based upon the criteria established in the departmental  
64 promotion and tenure documents, a professor must have a national and/or  
65 international reputation within his/her profession, area of expertise, or discipline.

### 66 **C. Promotion**

67 Promotion is never granted simply for satisfactory performance or for length of service,  
68 but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment.  
69 Promotion from assistant professor to associate professor, or from associate professor  
70 to professor, will normally only be considered after a faculty member has served at least  
71 five years in rank so that sustained productivity at MSU can be demonstrated.  
72 Applications for promotion prior to that time will be regarded as early action and  
73 considered only for exceptionally strong and well documented cases. Rank should  
74 reflect comparable stature with others in similar disciplines in other university settings.  
75 Professional achievement at another academic institution may be considered for  
76 promotion.

### 77 **D. Tenure**

78 The granting of tenure is a faculty-driven process and is the academic community's  
79 chief guarantee of academic freedom for the faculty member to perform his/her  
80 academic duties without undue or inappropriate external pressures.

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

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

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

89 Attainment of tenure at Mississippi State University is by no means automatic, based on  
90 years of service, but is the result of a thorough evaluation of a faculty member's  
91 performance in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service. The  
92 proportions of these activities may vary by discipline. Excellence in one area and  
93 satisfactory performance in the others are needed to qualify a faculty member for  
94 tenure.

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

98 Eligibility. Tenure may be granted to professors, associate professors, and  
99 simultaneously to assistant professors upon promotion to associate professor. Faculty  
100 members of all professorial ranks in specifically designated tenure-track positions may  
101 work toward tenure. An employee cannot be promoted into a professorial position  
102 unless specified in the original offer letter. Non-tenure track faculty positions cannot be  
103 converted to tenure track positions (IHL section 404.01).

#### 104 **Probationary Period**

105 A faculty member must apply for and be recommended for tenure by the president  
106 during the sixth full contract year of employment in a tenure-track position. Failure to  
107 earn tenure at the end of the sixth full contract year will result in a terminal contract in  
108 the seventh full contract year. The probationary period for tenure-track faculty begins at  
109 the start of the faculty member's first full contract year. A full contract year is defined as  
110 one that starts on August 16 for 9-month employees and on July 1 for 12-month  
111 employees and continues until the next contract period. If the initial contract is for a  
112 partial year, e.g., starts after August 16 for a 9-month employee and after July 1 for a  
113 12-month employee, that time is not included in the probationary period.

114 Up to five years at other universities may be counted in this probationary period, as  
115 determined and agreed upon by the departmental promotion and tenure committee, the  
116 department head or director, the dean, and the faculty member in the letter of offer at  
117 the time of initial appointment.

118 For clearly stated personal reasons (e.g., emergencies related to health, activation of  
119 military service, pregnancy, adoption, childcare, care of parents), a faculty member may  
120 request an extension of up to two years from the first five years of this probationary  
121 period for an approved leave of absence or a modified assignment. Specific aspects of  
122 such an extension must be established by the department head or director, the dean,  
123 the provost, and the faculty member. Such an agreement must be in writing. The  
124 departmental promotion and tenure committee shall be notified in writing of the  
125 extension and the revised probationary period.

126 IHL Board Policy 403.0101 allows a faculty member or an administrative employee who  
127 held faculty rank at the level of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor  
128 and tenure at another institution to be awarded tenure at the time of initial appointment if  
129 recommended by the faculty of the tenuring department, the dean, the provost, and the  
130 president, and awarded by the IHL Board.

131 For faculty members with a shortened probationary period as specified in an offer letter  
132 or an approved extended probationary period, the "third-year review" should be held at  
133 the midpoint of the individual's probationary period.

134 **E. Relationship Between Promotion and Tenure**

135 Faculty members who have met the requirements for promotion, but who have not  
136 fulfilled the probationary period for tenure, may be promoted without tenure.

137 Faculty members who are granted tenure as assistant professors automatically meet  
138 the criteria for promotion to associate professor.

139 **F. Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities**

140 Every faculty member is expected to meet high standards of professional competence  
141 and integrity and to further the goals of his/her department or unit. In every case, a  
142 faculty member's performance in teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and  
143 service will be judged by all participants in promotion and/or tenure decisions on the  
144 basis of specific criteria in written policy statements, developed by the appropriate  
145 academic units. All criteria should be based on the application of the highest  
146 professional standards and are to be in harmony with the following university criteria:

147 *Teaching.* Criteria may include regular classroom and laboratory instruction;  
148 supervision of field work, internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of  
149 theses and dissertations; development of educational materials; conduct of other  
150 academic programs that confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit  
151 and off-campus lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as  
152 defined by the academic units. Excellence in teaching includes the ability to impart  
153 the knowledge, methods, and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate  
154 effectively with students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to  
155 direct students in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work  
156 accurately and fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline.  
157 Excellence in teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student awards,  
158 student evaluations, student successes, faculty teaching awards, recognition of  
159 teaching excellence, sample course materials, recordings of teaching sessions,  
160 graduate student theses and dissertations, and any other documentary materials  
161 that demonstrate teaching effectiveness on the university campus or at the national  
162 or international level.

163 *Research and/or Creative Achievement.* Criteria may include systematic, original  
164 investigation directed toward the enlargement or validation of human knowledge, the  
165 solution of contemporary problems, or the exploration of creative forms that bring  
166 greater meaning to life. Excellence in research and/or creative achievement must be  
167 established by critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the discipline.  
168 Excellence may be documented by books, articles, or reviews published by  
169 commercial or university presses or in refereed journals of international, national, or  
170 regional prestige; research grants, leading to high quality research, intellectual  
171 property; presentation of papers before professional groups; invited participation in  
172 scholarly conferences; editorial work for professional journals or publishers; or  
173 artistic or humanistic performances, presentations, or shows. Evidence of

174 substantive progress on long-term projects that meet the criteria above may be  
175 considered as specified by the academic units.

176 *Service.* Criteria may include activities which enhance the scholarly life of the  
177 university or the discipline, improve the quality of life or society, or promote the  
178 general welfare of the institution, the community, the state, the nation, or  
179 international community. Thus it includes outreach and extension of academic  
180 knowledge to the public, participation on departmental, college, or university  
181 committees, or on regional, national, or international scholarly committees, boards,  
182 or review panels, or on public boards as a representative of the scholarly  
183 community. Membership or participation in such bodies may constitute satisfactory  
184 service, but excellence requires leadership or initiative leading to substantial  
185 improvements or progress.

186 In evaluating a faculty member being considered for tenure, the appropriate faculty  
187 committees and academic administrators will give adequate consideration to the faculty  
188 member's professional performance as a function of his/her relative academic workload  
189 assignments within the three academic missions of service, teaching/instruction, and  
190 research/creative activities. Adequate consideration of a tenure case consists of a  
191 conscientious review, which seeks out and considers all available evidence bearing on  
192 the relevant performance of the faculty member, and assumes that the various  
193 academic units follow their approved procedural guidelines during the tenure and  
194 promotion review process. Such consideration should be based upon adequate  
195 deliberation over the evidence in light of relevant standards and exclusive of improper  
196 standards (i.e., any criterion not related to the professional performance of the faculty  
197 member). The evaluation of a tenure case should constitute a bona fide exercise of  
198 professional academic judgment.

## 199 **G. Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review**

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

207 During the probationary period, the department head will counsel each faculty member  
208 annually about progress toward promotion and tenure. This annual evaluation will  
209 comprise a written review of the previous year's progress and a written agreement  
210 about the faculty member's objectives, responsibilities, and expectations for the coming  
211 year, and the department head's or director's assessment of progress toward tenure.

212 The written agreement about the coming year must be consistent with the promotion  
213 and tenure criteria of the department, the school or college, and the university. If the

214 department head or director and the faculty member cannot reach agreement, the  
215 matter will be referred to the dean.

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

219 No record in personnel files relating to promotion or tenure is to be added, changed, or  
220 withdrawn without the knowledge of the faculty member and the unit administrator.  
221 Personnel files are confidential and are available only to the faculty member and  
222 university officials. Appropriate administrators will make all pertinent information  
223 available to elected promotion and tenure committees and administrators when the  
224 faculty member is a candidate for promotion and tenure. If material from a personnel file  
225 (or other material that is not in the candidate's promotion or tenure application) is  
226 provided to a committee or administrator, then the candidate will be provided a copy of  
227 the material and an opportunity to submit his/her written comments regarding the  
228 material before the material is considered by the committee or administrator. Otherwise,  
229 no additions will be made.

## 230 **H. Promotion and Tenure Committees**

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

232 The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure serves four functions:

233 to advise the provost on promotion and tenure matters, including the review of  
234 criteria, policies, and procedures for promotion and tenure used by schools or  
235 colleges;

236 to hear appeals from faculty members whose nominations for promotion or tenure  
237 have been denied;

238 to review suggested changes in this document; and

239 to hear appeals from tenured faculty members who have been recommended for  
240 termination.

241 The committee consists of one member elected from each academic unit with an  
242 administrative head. Committee members will elect a chair who reports directly to the  
243 provost. Members must be full-time, tenured professors, rank of associate professor or  
244 above. No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head, or director  
245 of an academic unit will be a member of the committee. Committee members are  
246 elected in the fall by a majority vote of the unit's full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty  
247 members with the rank of assistant professor and above. Members may serve for two  
248 consecutive three-year terms, excluding partial terms. A partial term will be filled by



249 election, as needed. The committee will annually elect its chair, who will be a full voting  
250 member of the committee.

## 251 **College Promotion and Tenure Committees**

252 Every college will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure committee. Each  
253 college will develop its own criteria for membership on the committee, and the  
254 procedures for electing members to that committee. These criteria and procedures  
255 must be approved by both a majority vote of the college's full-time tenured and tenure-  
256 track faculty and the college dean.

- 257 • Committee members must hold a rank at least as high as the candidate's  
258 aspirant rank to review and vote on each case. For example, an associate  
259 professor can participate in the review of dossiers for tenure and promotion to  
260 associate professor but not on the committee reviewing dossiers for promotion to  
261 professor. Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation.
- 262 • The length of terms will be determined by the unit.
- 263 • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative.  
264 Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided.
- 265 • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director  
266 of an academic unit will be a member of the committee.
- 267 • No faculty member may participate in a candidate's promotion or tenure review at  
268 more than one level.
- 269 • The committee will annually elect its chair.
- 270 • The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty.
- 271 • An individual will not serve in a year that his/her promotion application is being  
272 considered.

273 The responsibilities of a college promotion and tenure committee will be the  
274 following:

- 275 1. To write the college's promotion and tenure policies and procedures which must  
276 be consistent with university promotion and tenure policies, include the  
277 mechanism for their adoption and revision, describe the procedures that will be  
278 followed if sufficient numbers of members are not available because of  
279 absences, recusal or insufficient rank, and identify the participation of the  
280 different categories of faculty in the college promotion and tenure process.
- 281 2. To approve the promotion and tenure documents of departmental committees  
282 within the college and to ensure that such documents are consistent with the  
283 mission of the university and the college, and the university promotion and tenure  
284 document;
- 285 3. To assist departments in developing procedures for a third-year review of all non-  
286 tenured, tenure-track faculty;

- 287 4. To assist departments in developing criteria for external peer reviews, including  
288 the identification of peer departments or schools at other colleges or universities;  
289 5. To assist departments in developing definitions of excellence, satisfactory, and  
290 unsatisfactory as it pertains to the evaluation of candidates for promotion and  
291 tenure;  
292 6. To assist departments in developing definitions of teaching, research and/or  
293 creative achievement, and service consistent with the mission of the department  
294 or school;  
295 7. To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure, ensuring department  
296 standards are fairly applied and university standards are maintained; and  
297 8. To approve the departmental promotion and tenure document and policies and  
298 all subsequent changes.

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

300 Every department and school will write a promotion and tenure document, which is  
301 approved by a majority vote of the professorial faculty. In comprehensive departments  
302 with both tenured/tenure-track and non-tenured/tenure-track faculty, the promotion-only  
303 portions of the document will be approved by a majority vote of the professorial faculty  
304 while the promotion and tenure portions of the document will be approved by a majority  
305 vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty. The department document must:

- 306 1. contain the criteria and procedures for promotion and tenure,  
307 2. define teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service,  
308 consistent with the mission of the department or school, including criteria for  
309 developing a national reputation and an established national reputation,  
310 3. specify criteria for excellence, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory as it pertains to  
311 the evaluation of candidates for promotion and tenure,  
312 4. determine the structure of the department promotion and tenure committee,  
313 5. specify the criteria for eligibility of professorial faculty to serve on the  
314 department promotion and tenure committee, and  
315 6. describe any specifics, including any uniqueness, of the department or school  
316 in which the individual is to be tenured.

317 Every department and school will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure  
318 committee. The department committee may include any category of faculty with  
319 professorial rank. The promotion and tenure procedures must specify the inclusiveness  
320 of the committee composition and clearly establish the eligibility for voting and  
321 participation within the department promotion and tenure process; however, only  
322 tenured faculty can vote on the promotion of untenured, tenure-track faculty.

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

- 325 • The committee consists of at least three tenured members.

- 326 • Committee members must hold a rank at least as high as the candidate's  
327 aspirant rank in order to review and vote on each case. For example, an  
328 associate professor can participate in the review of dossiers for tenure and  
329 promotion to associate professor but not on the committee reviewing dossiers for  
330 promotion to professor.
- 331 • The department promotion and tenure policies shall describe the procedures that  
332 will be followed if sufficient numbers of members are not available because of  
333 absence, recusal or insufficient rank. Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure  
334 recommendation.
- 335 • Unless a unit uses a committee-of-the-whole, the members of the committee  
336 must be elected. The length of terms will be determined by the unit.
- 337 • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative.  
338 Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided.
- 339 • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director  
340 of an academic unit will be a member of the committee.
- 341 • No faculty member may participate in a candidate's promotion or tenure review at  
342 more than one level.
- 343 • The committee will annually elect its chair.
- 344 • The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty.
- 345 • An individual will not serve in a year that his/her promotion application is being  
346 considered.

347 Among the responsibilities of the department and school promotion and tenure  
348 committee are the following:

- 349 1. To establish procedures for a third-year review of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
350 faculty;
- 351 2. To specify a mandatory date by which candidates must notify the department  
352 head of their intent to submit an application for tenure and/or promotion;
- 353 3. To specify criteria for external peer reviews, including the identification of peer  
354 departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- 355 4. To facilitate all votes related to the promotion and tenure process, including the  
356 vote to approve the original promotion and tenure document and policies and all  
357 subsequent changes;
- 358 5. To conduct a review by the end of the third year of all non-tenured, tenure-track  
359 faculty; and
- 360 6. To conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure.

361 College, school or departmental promotion and tenure committees will consider, if  
362 submitted, but are not bound by, the department head's annual review of a candidate's  
363 progress toward tenure or promotion.

364 Prior to the offer of hire, the appropriate promotion and tenure committee will make a  
365 formal recommendation about the initial appointment of a faculty member or  
366 administrator at the rank of associate professor or professor, about the acceptance of  
367 experience as the equivalent of a terminal degree, and about the award of years of  
368 credit at another institution of higher education toward fulfillment of the minimum  
369 probationary period for tenure.

## 370 **I. Procedures for Faculty Promotion and Tenure**

### 371 **The process**

372 The decision to recommend tenure to the IHL Board of Trustees is made by the  
373 president. All judgments made at lower levels of the university are recommendations to  
374 the president.

375 A candidate for tenure and/or promotion must notify the department head of his/her  
376 intent to submit his/her application for review on or prior to a date that must be specified  
377 in the department promotion and tenure document. Department heads must inform  
378 assistant professors of this date during the annual faculty review for the fifth year of their  
379 employment contract.

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

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

388 The external reviewers will generally be tenured faculty at peer to peer-plus institutions,  
389 or peer to peer-plus departments. External faculty reviewers should not include  
390 individuals who have a professional or personal conflict-of-interest with the candidate.  
391 Conflicts-of-interest in general would include but not necessarily be restricted to  
392 previous mentors, previous graduate students, collaborating co-authors, collaborating  
393 co-investigators, or relatives/past-relatives. In disciplines or fields where the general  
394 conflict-of-interest definition commonly does not apply, external reviewers normally  
395 excluded from the process can be utilized if complete and adequate justification is  
396 provided. Definition of what constitutes a conflict-of-interest may be further defined in  
397 the department promotion and tenure document and be in accord with the Policy and  
398 Procedures Document for Conflict-of-Interest and Ethics (Department of Human  
399 Resources and Management: Employee Relations Section Mississippi Code of 1972  
400 Sections 25-4-101 through 25-4-105). The candidate, the department promotion and  
401 tenure committee, and department head will each provide a list of names that will be  
402 used to create a master list of potential external reviewers.

403 The department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair will jointly  
404 select the final list of external reviewers from whom letters of evaluation will be  
405 requested and should include faculty names provided by all three sources. Both the  
406 department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair are  
407 responsible for eliminating, to the best of their knowledge, all external reviewers that  
408 have a conflict-of-interest.

409 Dossiers must contain an explanation of the credentials and qualifications of each  
410 external reviewer regarding his/her training/background in addition to the extent of  
411 his/her contact, interaction or relationship with the candidate. External letters of  
412 evaluation must be received from a minimum of four external reviewers for inclusion in  
413 the dossier of the candidate. It is the responsibility of the chair of the departmental  
414 committee or the department head to obtain at least the minimum number of letters of  
415 evaluation from external reviewers who have agreed to function in this capacity. All  
416 letters received from external reviewers must be included in the dossier of the candidate  
417 unless the department head and department promotion and tenure committee  
418 collectively decide to withdraw a letter from the review process if it contains information  
419 that refers to or describes a conflict-of-interest. In instances when substantial  
420 modifications of the application have occurred (e.g. official notifications of accepted  
421 publications or awarded grants) after documentation has been forwarded to the external  
422 reviewers, these achievements can be communicated in a letter written by the  
423 candidate and forwarded to the department head. The letter should be included in the  
424 section of the dossier containing the external letters of review.

425 The identity of the external reviewers will not be revealed to the candidate and  
426 communications must not include any information that might indicate the identity or  
427 location of any external reviewer. Exceptions may include situations as may be required  
428 by law or ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. The specific procedures  
429 regarding solicitation and use of external letters of evaluation are to be detailed in  
430 school and departmental policies.

431 The candidate makes a formal application for promotion and/or tenure by completing  
432 the MSU Application for Promotion and Tenure form and attaching supporting  
433 documentation. Each unit will specify the format and the level of detail for the supporting  
434 documentation. No additional support material may be added or removed from this file  
435 after a decision has been made at the department level, unless the candidate,  
436 department head and the departmental committee mutually agree. The request will be  
437 made in writing, define what is being added or removed, state the purpose for the  
438 change in the application, be signed by all parties, and be included as part of the formal  
439 application. Letters of recommendation will be added to the dossier at each level of  
440 review. If the candidate submits letters of factual correction for any level of review,  
441 those letters and any review-level response (described below) will also be included in  
442 the dossier.

443 A complete dossier for promotion and tenure for the official review process will include  
444 the application submitted by the candidate and at least the minimum of four external

445 letters of review. Only complete dossiers for promotion and tenure that contain the  
446 application for the candidate and the minimum number of external letters will be  
447 evaluated at the level of the department promotion and tenure committee, department  
448 head, college committee, college dean, or university provost.

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

454 The department promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
455 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation  
456 on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the  
457 three areas (teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service) as a whole.  
458 The committee's recommendation will be based on a simple majority vote, conducted by  
459 secret ballot. The committee chair will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale  
460 to be included in the candidate's dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the  
461 committee's letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as  
462 necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize  
463 external reviewers' comments that informed the committee's decision. The letter of  
464 recommendation and rationale of the committee will be included in the dossier as it  
465 proceeds through the review process. The chair will notify the department head of the  
466 committee's recommendation.

467 The department head or director will separately and independently review the dossier  
468 His/her recommendations will be based on pertinent evidence documented in the faculty  
469 member's dossier and information in the personnel file that is applicable to the  
470 candidate's performance in professional activities. The candidate will receive a copy of  
471 the department head's or director's letter of recommendation and rationale that is  
472 redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The  
473 rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the department  
474 head's or director's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the  
475 department head or director will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the  
476 review process.

477 The candidate may respond to the department promotion and tenure committee's  
478 and/or the department head's or director's letters to correct any factual errors  
479 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of each letter. The  
480 candidate's letter(s) of factual corrections must be sent to the review level to which the  
481 response was made. That level may address the concerns in a new letter to be  
482 included in the application within 5 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of  
483 factual correction. All letters shall be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the  
484 review process.

485 The college promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the  
486 candidate's promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a  
487 recommendation on the question of promotion or promotion and tenure by a single  
488 vote evaluating the three areas (teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and  
489 service) as a whole. The committee's recommendation will be based on a simple  
490 majority vote, conducted by secret ballot. The committee chair will submit a letter of  
491 recommendation and rationale to be included in the candidate's dossier. The  
492 candidate will receive a copy of the college promotion and tenure committee's letter of  
493 recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal  
494 the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers'  
495 comments that informed the committee's decision. The letter of recommendation and  
496 rationale of the committee will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the  
497 review process. The candidate may respond to the college promotion and tenure  
498 committee's letter to correct any factual errors represented therein within 5 working  
499 days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The committee may address the concerns  
500 in a new letter to be included in the dossier within 5 working days of receipt of the  
501 candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be included in the dossier as it  
502 proceeds through the review process.

503 The dean will review the dossier and make a recommendation based on pertinent  
504 evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier and  
505 information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in  
506 professional activities. The candidate will receive a copy of the dean's letter of  
507 recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal  
508 the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers'  
509 comments that informed the dean's decision. The letter of recommendation and  
510 rationale of the dean will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review  
511 process. The candidate may respond to the dean's letter to correct any factual errors  
512 represented therein within 5 working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The  
513 dean may address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within 5  
514 working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be  
515 included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

516 The faculty member has the right to discontinue the review process for tenure or  
517 promotion at any point before a decision has been made. His/her request must be made  
518 in writing to the department head or director before a final decision has been rendered.

519 Departmental and college committees on promotion and tenure will assist their  
520 department head or director and dean, respectively, in reviewing the eligibility of all  
521 faculty members who have met the minimum requirements for advancement in rank or  
522 tenure.

523 On rare occasions and in exceptional circumstances when a minor variation of the  
524 process described in this document needs to be initiated in order to be fair to the faculty  
525 member while still ensuring a rigorous review of the candidate's dossier, the University  
526 Promotion and Tenure Committee will review and approve any such appropriate

527 requests during the review process. These minor variations of the process described by  
528 this paragraph cannot be the sole basis for an appeal.

## 529 **Chronology**

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

536 On a date specified in the department promotion and tenure guidelines but no later  
537 than October 1, the candidate for tenure and/or promotion will notify the department  
538 head and the chair of the departmental promotion and tenure committee of his/her intent  
539 to submit his/her application for tenure and/or promotion. The department head has the  
540 responsibility to assist, where appropriate, the faculty member in preparing the  
541 application for tenure and promotion review.

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

546 By November 15 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified by the college  
547 promotion and tenure document, each faculty member's complete dossier will be  
548 provided to the college promotion and tenure committee. This will include letters of  
549 recommendation and rationale from both the department promotion and tenure  
550 committee and the department head. Each of these letters of recommendation and  
551 rationale will be copied to the candidate. The letters will be redacted only insofar as  
552 necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. These letters must include a  
553 summary of the procedures followed by the academic unit in evaluating the candidate  
554 and the committee's and head's independent evaluation of the candidate's teaching  
555 effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and service to the profession and  
556 university. The chair of the college promotion and tenure committee is responsible for  
557 inserting letters of recommendation and rationale from the department head and the  
558 department promotion and tenure committee, along with any letters related to correction  
559 of factual errors at the department level, into the dossier of each candidate reviewed by  
560 the college promotion and tenure committee.

561 By December 15 (or first working day thereafter) or earlier if specified by the college  
562 promotion and tenure document, the college promotion and tenure committee's letter of  
563 recommendation and rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the college dean.  
564 Letters of recommendation and rationale shall be copied to the candidate. The letters  
565 will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers.  
566 The letter concerning each candidate must include the committee's summary of the



567 procedures followed by the college committee in evaluating the candidate and the  
568 committee's evaluation of the candidate's teaching effectiveness, research and/or  
569 creative achievement, and service to the profession and university. The college  
570 promotion and tenure committee chair is responsible to provide the dean with each  
571 candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of review. For each  
572 candidate, the dean is responsible for collection and inclusion of any letters related to  
573 correction of factual errors at the college level.

574 By January 15 (or first working day thereafter), the dean's letter of recommendation and  
575 rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the provost and copied to the candidate.  
576 The letter concerning each candidate must include the dean's evaluation of the  
577 candidate's teaching effectiveness, research and/or creating achievement, and service  
578 to the profession and university. The dean is responsible to provide the provost with  
579 each candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of review. Copies of  
580 publications, works of art, etc., will be included only if specifically requested by the  
581 provost.

582 By March 10 (or first working day thereafter), the provost will have reviewed each  
583 candidate's dossier and will make a recommendation to the president. Copies of the  
584 provost's recommendation will be sent to the candidate with copies to the dean,  
585 department head, and chairs of college and departmental promotion and tenure  
586 committees.

587 The president will review the recommendation of the provost and will decide to accept  
588 or reject that recommendation.

589 The president will transmit that decision, together with reasons for a negative decision,  
590 to the faculty member directly, with copies to the dean, department head, and chairs of  
591 college and departmental promotion and tenure committees.

## 592 **J. Appeals**

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

598 that the decision was prejudiced, arbitrary, or capricious; or

599 that the procedures contained in the promotion and tenure policies of the IHL, MSU,  
600 or those in the candidate's college or unit promotion and tenure policies were not  
601 properly followed.

602 The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure, upon request of the provost, will  
603 review the entire case. The appeal will be heard by at least five members. Members

604 should recuse themselves from appeals by candidates who are relatives or with whom  
605 they have some conflict-of-interest, if the committee member has served in the previous  
606 levels of evaluation of the appellant or if for any reason the committee member feels  
607 he/she cannot be objective. A committee member will not vote on an appeal unless  
608 he/she has heard all hearings pertaining to the case. If five members are not available  
609 because of absence or recusal, the chair may, with the concurrence of the committee,  
610 appoint substitutes from among the professors of the general faculty. In special  
611 circumstances potentially prejudicial to the appellant, the chair may, with the  
612 concurrence of the committee, appoint an ad-hoc committee to assist in the resolution  
613 of the appeal. This ad-hoc committee reports its findings back to the University  
614 Committee on Promotion and Tenure.

615 The committee will review all available pertinent information and will conduct interviews  
616 with appropriate persons, i.e., appellant, unit head, unit committee chair, dean, college  
617 committee chair and provost. The committee will render its recommendation, in writing,  
618 to the provost. The committee will also provide a copy of this written recommendation to  
619 the candidate.

620 The provost will transmit the committee's written recommendation along with his/her  
621 own recommendation to the president, who will make the final on-campus decision. This  
622 decision will end the university appeals process. A copy of each recommendation will be  
623 provided to the candidate.

624 The Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning may grant a further appeal  
625 as outlined in Board of Trustees Policy 403.0105.

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

#### 628 **K. Notice of Non-reappointment of Non-tenured, Tenure-track Faculty**

629 Non-tenured, tenure-track faculty members will be notified in writing of the university's  
630 intention not to renew their contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 403.0102:

631 not later than March 1 before the date of contract termination during the first year of  
632 service;

633 not later than December 1 before the date of contract termination during the second  
634 year of service; or

635 not later than September 1 before the date of contract termination after two or more  
636 years of service.

637 This schedule of notification does not apply to persons holding temporary, part-time, or  
638 adjunct positions.

639 **L. Dismissal of Tenured Faculty**

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

642 financial exigencies as declared by the Board;

643 termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as approved  
644 by the Board;

645 malfeasance, inefficiency or contumacious conduct; or

646 for legitimate and justifiable cause.

647 Termination for cause of a tenured faculty member or the dismissal for cause of a  
648 faculty member prior to the expiration of a term appointment will not be recommended  
649 by the institutional executive officer until the faculty member has been afforded the  
650 opportunity for a hearing. In no event will the contract of a tenured faculty member be  
651 terminated for cause without the faculty member being afforded the opportunity for a  
652 hearing.

653 In all cases, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action  
654 against him/her and that he/she has the opportunity to be heard in his/her own defense.  
655 Within ten (10) working days from the date of the president's decision, the faculty  
656 member will state in writing his/her desire to have a hearing. He/she will be permitted to  
657 have with him/her an adviser of his/her own choosing who may be an attorney. The  
658 institution is directed to record (suitable for transcription) all hearings. In the hearing of  
659 charges of incompetence, the testimony will include that of faculty and other scholars.

660 Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for financial exigencies or termination or  
661 reduction of program, academic or administrative units will remain employed for a  
662 minimum of 9 to 12 months, consistent with current contract periods of time, from date  
663 of notification. Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for malfeasance,  
664 inefficiency, contumacious conduct or for a legitimate and justifiable cause will have  
665 their contracts terminated at any time subsequent to notice and hearing with no right to  
666 continued employment for any period of time.

667 At the discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer, any faculty member's salary may  
668 be paid, and he/she may be relieved of all teaching duties, assignments, appointments  
669 and privileges when he/she is dismissed for any reasons stated above or pending a  
670 termination hearing.

APPROVED:

/s/ Meghan Millea  
Meghan Millea, Faculty Senate President

6-14-13  
Date

/s/ Jerome A. Gilbert 6-17-13  
Jerome A. Gilbert, Provost and Executive Vice President Date

/s/ Mark A. Keenum 6-17-13  
Mark A. Keenum, President Date

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

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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 the Office of Internal Audit at [www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html#VOLUME\\_V](http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html#VOLUME_V)

## **VII. Other University Policies**

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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 the Office of Internal Audit at [www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html](http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/mainindex.html)

## **VIII. Employee Benefits**

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