ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE AGENDA

November 8, 2024

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Minutes, October 4, 2024 ..... (p.2)
3. Introduction of Guests
   a. Dr. Brent Fountain, Faculty Athletic Representative
   b. Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President
4. Report of the Faculty Senate President ..... (p.8)
5. Report of the Faculty Senate Vice President ..... (p.9)
6. Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees
7. Business sent to Committee
   7.1. AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement (University Resources)
   7.2. AOP 13.03 Responsibilities in Instruction and Curriculum, and Attendance at Classes (Student Affairs)
   7.3. AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures (Faculty Affairs)
8. Business to be sent to Committee
9. Standing Committee Reports
   9.1. Academic Affairs
      9.1.1. AOP 12.12 Credit and Grades ..... (p.11)
      9.1.2. Letter re: Contact Hours ..... (p.19)
   9.2. Ancillary Affairs
   9.3. Charter & Bylaws
   9.4. Faculty Affairs
      9.4.1. AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures ..... (p.21)
   9.5. Student Affairs
   9.6. University Resources
      9.6.1. AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement ..... (p.28)
10. Old Business
   10.1. Letter re: Academic Freedom ..... (p.32)
11. New Business
   11.1. Letter re: Graduate School Faculty ..... (p.34)
   11.2. Letter re: Student Voting ..... (p.35)
12. Adjourn

Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Uncorrected Minutes of October 4, 2024

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in the Grisham Room of the Library at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, October 4, 2024.

Members absent and excused were Christine Coker, Alexis Gregory, Andrew Jarosz, Fred Musser, and Rosanne Nunnery.

Members on Sabbatical: Peter Messer and Tara Sutton

Faculty Senate President Robert Banik called the meeting to order. President Banik requested corrections for the September 13, 2024 Faculty Senate meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Banik accepted the minutes as presented.

Guests

Dr. Mark Keenum, MSU President

Dr. Keenum discussed his recent trip to Washington D.C. He said he has the honor of serving on a national foundation board for food and agriculture research that was created by Congress in 2014 as part of the 2014 Farm Bill signed into law by President Obama. The focus of the board is to invest money that was appropriated for agriculture research and for every dollar that we allocate in a grant, it has to be matched with at least $1 of nonfederal funds. When Congress created this foundation, they provided $200 million. Dr. Keenum said the statute called for the board to have 15 members. Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack appointed him to this board and now he serves as its chairman. Dr. Keenum said Congress gave us another $185 million last year and a farm bill extension gave us another $37 million. He said they have allocated nearly $800 million in agriculture research funds and have 400 grants with 550 partners to make the grants possible.

Dr. Keenum said today we have about a billion people that we share this world with who are severely malnourished and we can't feed everyone on the planet adequately. He said we are going to have several billion more people in the future and how we as a global society are going to be able to feed the world is a challenge that we all face. It is incumbent on us and the work that we're doing here at this leading land grant research university to address the issues of tomorrow and to feed the world. Dr. Keenum said he had just met with Roger Thoreau, a leading author on the issue of global hunger, who was on campus to speak. He was honored to be in Washington representing our university at this level, meeting with members of Congress, and talking about this university and what we're doing, but also what we can all do collectively to address this critical issue.

Dr. Keenum gave a legislative update and spoke about how this past session didn't wrap up until early May of this year. He said we received the last round of funding of $30 million for infrastructure improvements for the College of Architecture, Art, and Design and the last round of funding of $40 million for Dorman Hall renovations. We were given $18 million for the College of Veterinary Medicine for a new, large animal facility. The hope is to bring an expanded equine center and then funding to enhance our small animal hospital as well and have more commitments for expansion.

Dr. Keenum said we received additional operational funds for the campus that allowed us to provide a merit pay raise this year which is always and will continue to be our top priority. The legislature stepped up and provided the funding needed for PERS and that was one of his biggest concerns for this session. Another area that the legislature stepped up in is health insurance premiums, which went up substantially this year.

Dr. Keenum said the state continues to do very well as the September numbers just came out and state revenues were up $14.3 million over the estimate. Since the 1st of July, revenues are $46 million over what was estimated through September. He said there are a lot of discussions about our tax system in Mississippi, and in 2022 the legislature passed the largest tax cut bill in the history of our state, the purpose of which was to phase-down of our state income tax to get us down to a flat 4%. But this is still a big political issue for our leaders in the legislature. At the end of last month, there was a tax policy summit that was led by our speaker of the House, Jason White, to talk about how we can eliminate the state income tax.

Dr. Keenum stated there was not a DEI bill that made it out of committee in this session, but he does believe there will be one this year that will make it out of the committee. He said if the bill comes to both floors, it will pass. Our surrounding states and our region, most have passed such bills. Mississippi's an anomaly because we have not, but the pressure for a DEI bill continues to mount.

Dr. Keenum said we have politicians who criticize us for the areas that we work in and in our scholarship or the speakers who come to our campus. He said we are one of the top universities in the nation when it comes to free speech. The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, the nationally recognized organization for free speech, has Mississippi State ranked in the top ten in the nation among all colleges and universities when it comes to free speech.

Dr. Keenum said yesterday our state auditor posted a message calling for the creation of a study committee to outline which university programs are needed for our economy and redirect taxpayer funds to those programs instead of wasteful degrees that don't lead to good-paying jobs in our state. Dr. Keenum said the state auditor has made some comments about this in the past and used the term that we need to eliminate "garbage" programs on our university campuses. Dr. Keenum said we have good leaders and good friends who respect what we do and will fight for us to continue doing our great job.

Senator Vivier asked about the university administration's lack of support publicly or privately for faculty members and academic freedom as distinct from free speech regarding the state auditor’s recent comments. He asked if the faculty should assume that if their research becomes unpopular for whatever reason, they are then on their own to some degree.

Dr. Keenum said the state auditor did criticize a faculty member about a book she had written but the university posted the announcement about it being published and the award she received.

Dr. Keenum stated he was not going to engage in the social media back and forth but will take the high ground and promote the scholarly work of our faculty. He added when faculty do their work, we are going to post it and make people aware of it.

Dr. Keenum stated there are some issues on certain topics in our society that not everyone agrees with and that the legislature has the power to go in and say the universities shall not do scholarly work or teaching in these fields or these programs or these disciplines. He said how we communicate and when we choose to communicate helps us to continue to have the programs and be as broad and diverse as we are. He agreed there are things we could advocate for that could be extremely detrimental to the programs we're advocating for from a funding standpoint. He said he knows that we have people who want us to be strong advocates for certain areas but we have to choose our time. Dr. Keenum said freedom of speech on campuses is a conservative initiative and conservatives across the country want to see universities have free speech and expression. He finished by stating he may not or the university may not make statements the way you would like for them to make but they are being made.

Senator Zuckerman stated she remembered a recent meeting in which the question was asked why there isn't a DEI bill in this state and why doesn't there seem to be momentum towards it and Dr. Keenum replied that of course there was momentum towards that.

Senator Zuckerman said she is concerned about the university's ability to provide high-quality education that, for example, state auditor Shad White got for himself as an economics major, a Rhodes Scholar, and as a Mississippian and who is now hard at work to deprive other low-income, first-generation, working-class kids of that ability to have that education at our finest public university. She stated she was concerned the auditor would accomplish his goal because the faculty worry their employer does not have their back and would leave the university making it impossible to be able to give the poor and working-class kids of Mississippi a fine education in the social sciences, liberal arts, and humanities.

Dr. Keenum said Dr. Zuckerman was correct. He said he hosted a group of senators recently and spent most of the time talking about our operating budget and funding. He asked Rasheda Forbes to come and share with them what we do in our Access, Opportunity, and Success division. She went through all of the programs that we do for all of our students, and every senator was blown away.

Dr. Keenum said if we are going to be ranked in the top ten universities we could not go down the pathway of what our state auditor is asking us to do as far as free speech and that we couldn't even be ranked in the top thousand if that was the case.

Dr. Keenum said what we are doing across our arts, sciences, and humanities, and all the things that we do, is vital for a well-rounded, educated student, regardless of whether they are an engineer, architect, or whatever. They have got to have the finer arts of education and humanities. We are a higher-knowledge institute, not a vocational or a trade school. But I will say that because of who we are, the work that you all do, and the impact that you have on our state that people can readily see and experience, we get the benefit of the doubt.

Report of the Faculty Senate President

Wow! We are already at our third meeting of the semester. Time is flying by very fast this semester. Be sure to go out and take a stroll around campus with the nicer temperatures lately. Hopefully, we have left behind the 90+ temperatures of summer as we move into a more fall-like season.

I met with Emily Shaw, Emily Owen, Tommy Parker, James Herzog, Chelsea Cockburn, Cheryl Bowen, and Andi Burck to discuss book adoptions on September 17th. I asked that Barnes & Noble not send emails out to faculty until at least October 1st to request book adoptions. Originally, Barnes & Noble representatives wanted to have access to the SIS report from the Registrar's office as early as September 1st. Since the spring semester course offerings were not due to the Registrar's office until September 25th, we all agreed on October 1st as the date to request adoptions from faculty.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – This committee met on September 11th. Athletic Director Zac Selmon spoke and gave athletic updates and a "state of the state" update. He talked about having tools for student success and that means more than the scoreboard. Student athletes need transformational experiences to win at life. He also gave an update on the NIL backpay case and additional funding for student athletes. He stated MSU had 9 students and 1 coach in the Olympics this past summer. A few updating projects were mentioned, such as lighting and sound at Davis Wade Stadium and the updates to Humphrey Coliseum.

There will be a guest coach program for faculty based on student input and nominations of past instructors. The faculty must be from the previous semester or earlier, not the current semester. Seven faculty were chosen for this year for football. These faculty, plus one guest, will get to participate in Friday/Saturday meals, the Dawg Walk and receive sideline passes and tickets. This is a different program than the faculty recognition and invite held in the spring.

Dean's Council – This committee has not met since our last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for October 14th.

Design Review Committee – This committee has not met since our last meeting and the October 3rd meeting is cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for November 7th.

Executive Council – This committee has not met since our last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for October 28th.

Game Day and Special Events – This committee has not met since our last meeting.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This committee has not met since our last meeting. This committee is scheduled to meet on October 2nd.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee has not met since our last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for October 10th.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee met with Walker Consultants to do a campus wide Parking and Transit Demand Study on September 19th. Consultants came to campus to do their initial survey work and met with this committee as we represented key groups on campus. Walker Consultants will be taking the next several months to create a parking master plan for changes and updates throughout campus.

Sustainability Committee – This committee met on September 26th. Nicole Thomas shared that she has initiated some of the ideas brought up at Faculty Senate in September. She has reached out to the Meridian Campus to see what steps could be taken for recycling at that campus. She also has put one of the interns in charge of starting a composting of pizza boxes and what steps should be taken to have this set up.

Beyond these updates, it was mentioned that over the next two years, the outdoor space around campus will be enhanced to provide more outdoor enjoyment. Also, to cut the grass from around and under the new solar farm, DAFVM has moved sheep to the area to "mow" the grass. The final week of testing for the new C.A.B. autonomous buses was last week. The hours for the buses will be from 12pm – 8pm this week. The Glass Recycling drive will be October 22nd from 1pm – 5pm at the Sanderson Center/Chadwick Lake boat ramp. MSU Green Week will be October 16th – 20th. The next meeting is scheduled for December 5th.

United Faculty Senate Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – This committee met on September 17th. The termination hearing for JSU Faculty Senate President Dawn McLin on September 20th was not held. The chair of that hearing had a family emergency, so that will be rescheduled. Beginning in October, at least one member of the UFSAM will attend the monthly IHL board meeting in Jackson, MS. I was nominated to attend the October 17th meeting.

Report of the Faculty Senate Vice President

Committee on Campus Access
This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Calendar Committee
As I mentioned last month, we are preparing the 2025-2026 Academic Calendar. I was able to ensure that grades are never due less than 48 hours after final exams, and they will not be due on a weekend day.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee
This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee
There were several relevant topics in this month's meeting:

- Reminder to check out the URCD website - comprehensive resource https://urcd.msstate.edu (Subscribe to the Research Connections e-mail there.)
- Sandra Orozco-Altman will be teaching a Research Discovery course in Spring 2025 to help students explore research opportunities in the early years of their college careers (Freshmen/Sophomores)
- Introducing Endeavors Undergraduate Research Journal to create an opportunity for MSU undergrads to publish (1) original student research, (2) review articles, and (3) undergraduate theses. Shooting for Spring 2025. This is a student-led initiative.
- Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium will be April 9-10, 2025. Look for the call.

Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees

Business Sent to Committee

Business to be Sent to Committee

Standing Committee Reports

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

1. AOP 12.04 Final Examination (Academic Affairs)

Senator Perkins, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, provided the committee report on AOP 12.04 Final Examination.

The motion to accept AOP 12.04 Final Examination, as presented, passed by majority hand vote.

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS – **No Report**
CHARTER & BYLAWS – **No Report**
FACULTY AFFAIRS– **No Report**
STUDENT AFFAIRS – **No Report**
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES – **No Report**

Old Business.

New Business

1. Academic Freedom Resolution

President Banik presented the Academic Freedom Resolution as sent to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate by Senator Walters.

Senator Tschume made a motion to accept the resolution. Senator Vivier gave the second.

The motion passed by unanimous hand vote.

Senator Breazeale made a motion to adjourn. Secretary Haynes seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:13 pm.

Submitted for correction and approval.

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Stacy Haynes, Secretary

Dinah Jenkins, Administrative Assistant

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Dr. Brent Fountain, Faculty Athletic Representative
Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

This is the last Senate meeting of the semester! Where did the time go? It seems like time is always slipping into the future. I hope this semester has been productive and not too hectic.

A call and email went out for the Southeastern Conference Faculty Achievement Award, with nominations due by November 1st. The list of candidates looks very strong. Also, nominations for the Ombuds were due November 1st. I'm looking forward to reviewing these Ombuds nominations.

I also had the honor to represent the Robert Holland Faculty Senate at the Alumni Association National Board meeting on November 1st and at the Medallion Ceremony honoring our endowed faculty on November 4th. It was exciting to see our faculty receiving honors and alumni who support our university in our mission. I also attended the monthly IHL meeting in Jackson on October 17th, and I took the opportunity to meet in person with the faculty senate presidents from Jackson State and the University of Mississippi. As of this report, the JSU president's termination hearing has not been concluded to my knowledge.

I also want you to know that the Faculty Senate is always open and wants to hear from and work with faculty. Please bring forward any concerns you may have so that we can work on these issues together.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – This council did not meet in October. The next scheduled meeting will be held on November 6th, with Dr. Brent Fountain attending the Faculty Senate meeting on November 8th to give updates as the Faculty Athletic Representative.

Dean's Council – The council met on October 14th. AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement was discussed and passed. This AOP was the only agenda item, and Faculty Senate received it the same day. I then sent this AOP to the University Resources Committee for discussion.

Design Review Committee – This committee did not meet due to a lack of agenda items in October. The next scheduled meeting is November 7th.

Executive Council – This council met on October 28th. Three policies were discussed. These included AOP 12.03 Awarding of Degrees Posthumously and AOP 12.04 Final Examination. Both passed. OP 91.205 Fraternity and Sorority – On-campus Residential Housing was also updated to include language to certify finances and clean up language throughout the policy.

Game Day and Special Events – This committee has not met since my previous report.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This committee met on October 2nd. The committee discussed updates concerning DEI legislation throughout various states. There were 85 DEI bills introduced in 28 states, and 13 of these became law, restricting DEI in those states. This committee is discussing creative ways to continue given possible constraints, improving communication and counter misconceptions about DEI. The committee wants to put the focus on student success and academics.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee has not met since my previous report.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – No in-person meeting was held in October, but an email discussion occurred concerning electronic mobility devices, such as scooters, and their usage on campus. The policy in place states that such devices may be permitted in certain areas utilizing dismount areas, but the primary issue is there is not a clear method of enforcement. The committee discussed various ideas and came back with the big idea to ban all private scooters and adopt a third-party system. Smaller ideas include having dismount areas, like the bike racks, so students may ride from downtown or other places, but once on campus, walk from that dismount area. The committee sent a list of ideas to Dr. Regina Hyatt and Mr. Les Potts. I have not heard back from this as of this report.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since my previous report. The next scheduled meeting is December 5th.

United Faculty Senate Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – The committee met on October 18th via Zoom. I brought up the letter request from the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, and a letter was drafted and approved. The committee stated that two-thirds of all the IHL Faculty Senates (6 out of 9) need to approve the letter before the UFSAM will send the letter to the presidents and chancellors of the universities. The letter is on our agenda today to be voted upon.

Also discussed was a survey to send to all IHL institutions about sports betting on campus. Mississippi does not allow betting online at the moment, but there is concern that a bill may come up in the spring allowing online sports betting, which would be allowed on campuses throughout the state. The UFSAM would like to survey the institutions to get feedback on this issue. I have not seen a survey for this as of this report.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Committee on Campus Access

This committee has met once since the last Vice President's report. The committee is reviewing plans to renovate the bathrooms in Allen Hall on the fifth and sixth floors. Both sets of bathrooms will be brought up to code and to ADA compliance. Only a janitor's closet on each floor will be sacrificed to provide the available space.

Calendar Committee

This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee
This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee
There were several relevant topics in this month's meeting:

- Reminder to check out the URCD website - comprehensive resource https://urcd.msstate.edu (Subscribe to the Research Connections e-mail there.)
- Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium will be April 9-10, 2025. Look for the call.

REPORTS FROM FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEE

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Academic Affairs Committee

Report on AOP 12.12 Credit and Grades

October 31, 2024

Background

On August 16, 2024 Robert Holland Faculty Senate President Robert Banik assigned AOP 12.12 Credit and Grades to the Academic Affairs Committee for review. Subsequently, President Banik received a letter of request from a faculty member who was concerned about a lack of class meeting time in the academic calendar and the composition of the calendar committee. As AOP 12.12 is concerned with the contact hours required to earn credit under various methods of instruction, the letter was forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee to consider alongside AOP 12.12.

Recommendation

The Academic Affairs Committee recommends that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve AOP 12.12: Credit and Grades with the edits made by the members of the committee. The committee also recommends requesting the addition of 1-2 additional instructional faculty to the Calendar Committee, with at least one of these being an instructor or teaching professor.

Discussion

The policy received contained a suggestion from the Associate Deans Council that courses with a method of instruction of Internship be combined with Clinical Rotation, requiring a total of 150 minutes of direct instruction rather than the current 200 minutes of indirect instruction. Added to this is Practicum, Directed Experiential Study, Co-op, Student Teaching, and Field Experience. The committee agreed with this recommendation, and so removed the Internship row from the contact hour table. In addition, the Deans Council recommended removing the contact hour table and moving it to the UCCC Guide & Format. This committee thought it was appropriate to leave this table in the policy, and so have not deleted it here.

October 25, 2024 the committee met with Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services Dr. John Dickerson, Associate Vice President for Institutional Strategy Dr. Tracey Baham, and University Registrar Ms. Emily Shaw regarding the academic calendar concern. Dr. Dickerson and Ms. Shaw indicated that the calendar committee ensures that the academic calendar accommodates the minimum number of class meetings (42 MWF and 28 TR) to accommodate the 2,250 minutes per three-hour course required by AOP 12.12, except under extenuating circumstances. This 2,250 minutes includes 3 hours allotted for the final examination. Dr. Baham confirmed that this is in agreement with SACSCOC requirements.

The committee expressed that some faculty have requested the AOP require the full 2,250 minutes of class time to be included in the academic calendar, exclusive of final exams. Ms. Shaw and Dr. Dickerson indicated that there is not enough time available in the academic calendar for this without interfering with Maymester, Winter term, etc., and that this would limit any flexibility in the case of extenuating circumstances. Dr. Baham confirmed that the required class time (2,250 minutes for a three-hour lecture course) may be met with alternate forms of direct instruction.

Ms. Shaw, chair of the Calendar Committee, indicated that there is one other person holding a non-administrative faculty appointment on the calendar committee in addition to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate Vice-President. Ms. Shaw also indicated that she would support the addition of instructional faculty to the committee. After discussion, the committee recommended 1-2 additional faculty members, ensuring at least one is from the instructor or teaching professor ranks.

Committee Members: Andy Perkins (Chair), Frank Adams, Alison Lee, Jesse Morrison, Julie Parker, James Sobaskie, Kim Walters, Molly Zuckerman

AOP 12.12 CREDIT AND GRADES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to provide a further understanding of the policies and procedures dealing with credit and grades at Mississippi State University.

DEFINITIONS

Credit hour = "The amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement."[1] All student work should align to intended student learning outcomes.

Contact hour = Time allotted for student engagement with course content and instruction

Clock time = Number of minutes or hours allotted for contact hours

Method of Instruction = format of instruction for the class (described in the *UCCC Guide & Format*)

POLICY/PROCEDURE

Section A Credits and Grades

All credits earned at Mississippi State University are in semester hours. Credit hours must be awarded in the semester during which they were earned. ~~A~~ One semester hour is defined as requiring at least the number of contact minutes as shown in a 15-week semester below. All instruction should align to intended learning outcomes. ~~:~~

Method of Instruction	Direct Instruction	Indirect Instruction	Total Contact Hours per Week	Total Time Involved in Credit
Lecture/Seminar	1 contact hour (50 minutes)	2 contact hours (100 minutes)	3 contact hours (150 minutes or 2.5 clock hours per week)	45 contact hours (750 minutes direct + 1,500 minutes indirect)

[1] SACSCOC policy based on the federal definitions: https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Credit-Hours.pdf

Commented [TB1]: Added this sentence at ADC.

Commented [BT2]: Deans Council wants the table to come out and go into UCCC G&F.

Commented [ML3]: ADC added this sentence on 6/12/24.

Commented [TB4]: Lecture hours are specified in the federal definition of the credit hour. MSU must then indicate how credit for other instructional methods are defined to arrive at equivalent contact hours. What is in this chart is a first attempt to keep the minutes from the previous version of this policy within the equivalent contact hours.

Commented [ML5R4]: The ADC subcommittee recommends treating internship as equivalent to clinical rotation, meaning that internship would require 3 contact hours of direct instruction per week, rather than 4 contact hours of indirect instruction. Our rationale is that internships are professional on-site work under the direction of a supervisor, for the purpose of gaining professional experience and vocational skills. They are not self-guided, nor is it clear that they should require a greater number of contact hours of experiential learning on site in a given profession than clinical rotation requires.

Commented [ML6]: The UCCC Guide & Format outlines more possible methods of instruction than are currently incorporated in this AOP. The ADC subcommittee recommends including the other methods of instruction currently used as inserted in this draft.

Method of Instruction	Direct Instruction	Indirect Instruction	Total Contact Hours per Week	Total Time Involved in Credit
Lab/Studio/ Recitation	2 contact hours (100 minutes)	1 contact hour (50 minutes)	3 contact hours (150 minutes or 2.5 clock hours per week)	45 contact hours (1,500 minutes direct + 750 indirect)
Clinical Rotation/Internship/Practicum/Directed Experiential Study/Co-op/Student Teaching/Field Experience	3 contact hours (150 minutes)		3 contact hours (150 minutes or 2.5 clock hours per week)	45 contact hours (2,250 minutes direct)
~~Internship~~		~~4 contact hours (200 min)~~	~~4 contact hours (200 minutes or 3.33 clock hours per week)~~	~~60 contact hours (3,000 minutes indirect)~~

Courses offered in shortened formats must increase weekly instructional time to keep the same total number of contact hours as in the traditional 15-week term. Any department offering a shortened-format course for the first time must submit a course modification proposal through departmental and college/school course and curricula committees and the University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC) for approval. The UCCC is responsible for the guidelines for approval of shortened-format courses.

Departments may elect to teach shortened-format courses. These can be part of a faculty member's regular teaching assignment and will not be subject to additional compensation in this instance. In cases where the inclusion of a shortened-format course is above the normal workload, the faculty member may be eligible for additional compensation. Appropriate faculty salary for teaching a shortened-format course is described in AOP 13.12 Intersession Teaching.

~~a. Lecture – 750 contact minutes~~

Commented [ML7]: Since "recitation" is not defined in the UCCC Guide & Format, the ADC subcommittee recommends that UCCC consider adding a definition to the Guide & Format. The Registrar notes that some existing courses using recitation require 50 contact minutes per week, while others require 100. If the UCCC determines recitation is similar to lab and studio hours, it can stay here; if it determines recitation is more akin to lecture or seminar hours, it should be moved to the row above.

Commented [ML8]: Delete this row if suggestion to add internship to row above is accepted.

Commented [TB9]: Recommend removing here and leaving it with dean.

Commented [TB10]: These two paragraphs are the same as what's in AOP 11.05. I recommend combining them here and rescinding AOP 11.05.

~~b. Laboratory/Studio – 1500 contact minutes~~

~~c. Nursing Clinical – 2250 contact minutes~~

~~d. Internship – 3000 minutes~~

Year or quarter hours transferred from another institution are converted into semester hours for purposes of uniformity in determining graduation requirements.

Transfer credits are readily accepted from institutions accredited by or in candidate status with a U.S. Department of Education recognized agency, such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. It is the responsibility of colleges (and schools) to set the standards for ~~transferring~~ using "D" grades to meet program of study requirements.

Credit from non-U.S. institutions may be accepted once reviewed by the appropriate academic department, but is not articulated directly to MSU courses. ~~The n~~Non-U.S. institution courses may be approved to substitute for degree requirements.

Credit by examination and evaluated military service credit are accepted for academic credit as defined in *AOP 12.11 Degree Requirements - Undergraduate*.

The class work of the student will be evaluated according to the following:

Grade		**Quality Points Per Credit Hour**
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Satisfactory	2
D	Poor	1
F	Failure	0
XF	Failure – Honor Code	0
GDP	Grade Determination Pending – Honor Code	--~~0~~
I	Incomplete	--~~0~~
S	Satisfactory	--
U	~~*~~ Unsatisfactory	--
NG	No Grade (assigned by Registrar)	--
W	Withdrawn without Penalty	--
WI	Permanent Incomplete	--

The quality-point average shall be determined on the basis of semester hours scheduled and rescheduled in which grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," and "F" or the "XF" disciplinary sanction are recorded. However, a student may not earn credits or quality points for a non-repeatable course or its equivalent in which he or she has already earned a grade of "A." Any "I," "GDP," and "NG" grades must be resolved before a student can be awarded an academic credential. Prime grades are assigned for basic and intermediate courses. Credits from these courses count toward the credit hours attempted, but the final grade is not calculated in a student's grade point average. Undergraduate students may elect to have a limited number of course grades

Commented [TB11]: Added these sentences at ADC

excluded from the calculation of their GPA (see AOP 12.20 Undergraduate Course Grade Forgiveness and Repeating a Course).

AOP 13.14 Grade Appeals and Academic Review Board, contains the grade appeal procedure for students.

A grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be submitted in lieu of a final grade when the student, because of illness, death in ~~his or her~~the immediate family, or similar circumstances beyond ~~his or her~~their control, is unable to complete the course requirements or to take final examinations. A grade of "I" will not be submitted for reasons other than previously described. Except for circumstances noted above, an "I" grade will not be given to extend the semester so that a student may complete a required assignment(s).

Undergraduate students who receive an "I" grade must complete all work within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the student's next enrollment. A student who receives an "I" grade may make up only that part of course work not completed because of the emergency. If a grade of "I" is not resolved into a passing grade within the allotted time, the grade becomes an "F." Once a grade of "I" has been converted to an "F" because of the student's failure to complete the necessary course work or a lapse of the allowable time, no additional grade change will be allowed except under extreme circumstance(s) as recommended by the academic D~~d~~eans and approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President.

If an undergraduate student has not enrolled in the university within a year of receiving a grade of "I," the "I" will be converted to a permanent grade of "WI" and the student will not have the opportunity to change that grade.

Graduate students who receive a grade of "I" must complete all work no later than the last day of class of the next semester (excluding summer) whether or not the student is enrolled. Failure of graduate students to remove an "I" grade during the specified time will result in an automatic grade of "F." Once a grade of "I" has been converted to an "F" because of a student's failure to complete the necessary course work or a lapse of the allowable time, no additional grade change will be allowed except under extreme circumstance(s) as recommended by the academic D~~d~~eans and approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President. "I" grades are not permitted for thesis and dissertation research credits.

Section B Minimum Course Competencies

A student may be required to master certain minimum competencies, referred to in some programs such as the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine as "threshold events~~.~~" to allow a student to meet and pass course requirements. For a course that requires minimum competencies the following must be clearly articulated:

i) The syllabus must clearly document the conditions for minimum competencies,

ii) The instructor must explain the minimum competency requirements to the students on the first day the class meets,

iii) Offer a second chance at any attempted failed competencies during the course. In the event that there is only a one-time assessment of a competency given at the end of a course, laboratory exercise or clinical rotation, the final grade may be withheld where the Registrar will assign a no grade (NG) until the next available opportunity to offer a repeat of the failed competency. The repeat opportunity must be provided, and a final grade entered prior to the next semester in which the student enrolls.

iv) Provide catalog description to include appropriate language that minimum competencies must be met,

v) Whenever possible, it is recommended to split apart the competency component into a standalone course,

vi) Courses requiring a minimum competency to pass will be reviewed by the respective College Dean.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years (or whenever circumstances require an earlier review) by the University Registrar with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

REVIEWED:

Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School	Date
Provost and Executive Vice President	Date
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate	Date
Assistant Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness	Date
General Counsel	Date

APPROVED:

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
JAMES WORTH BAGLEY COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

DAVE C. SWALM SCHOOL
OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

Dr. Julie L. P. Jessop
Associate Director and Hunter Henry Chair

jessop@che.msstate.edu

September 6, 2024

Dear Mr. Banik,

I am writing to express multiple concerns about the continued erosion of contact hours at MSU. This fall, the academic calendar contains only 44 contact hours instead of the IHL-required 45 contact hours (i.e., 2250 contact minutes) for a 3 s.h. course.[1] This decision impacts all teaching faculty, and my MWF course suffers even more so since it a 4 s.h. course. I lost 3 hours of class time because the last day of classes this fall semester is now a Tuesday. This shortfall has required me to rearrange my schedule of topics and to make drastic cuts in my lesson plans. I no longer have the class period to cover engineering ethics, which is one of the student outcomes I typically assess for our accreditation (ABET) review, or to hold a final review session for the students. Thus, the shortfall negatively impacts student learning.

In AY2022-2023, I was a member of the Contact Hour Working Group. Our charge was to define direct faculty instruction that comprises the 45 contact hours vs. indirect instruction that falls outside those hours (i.e., what occupies 2-3 hours of the students' time outside of every 1 hour in class). During our discussions, we raised an alarm that contact hours in the spring semesters were being dropped from the academic calendar. Even if teaching faculty make use of the additional class day for M-only classes and the "optional" day for MW and MWF classes, students are not getting the required 45 contact hours. Since the fall semester contact hours are diminishing as well, our warning appears to be falling on deaf ears.

My concern runs even deeper because MSU is already shortchanging student learning opportunities by including the final exam as part of the 45 contact hours. When I came from the University of Iowa, I had to cut a week's worth of content (a whole chapter!) from my course since Iowa does not include the final exam in the 45 hour count. Iowa is not unique in its accounting of only lecture periods for required contact hours: public institutions in Georgia are examples of our peer institutions that do likewise.

Finally, as a parent, I am very displeased that my child is not being offered instructional time with subject-matter experts to its fullest extent. If I am cutting corners in my classes to fit these shortened semesters, I am certain that their educational experience is also being adversely impacted. There are only 24 hours in a day – instructors cannot simply assign an online lecture to fill the gaps caused by the shortened semesters. Students need time to process material, and students need time to interact with their instructors to ensure that they understand the concepts. To make matters worse, my child is charged the same tuition for this diminished instructional time.

I am requesting that the Faculty Senate investigate why the number of contact hours has been reduced from the required 45. I am also requesting that teaching faculty have a larger voice on the Calendar Committee. I note that the only faculty member on the committee appears to be the Faculty Senate representative – the rest of the committee is made up of staff and administrators.[2]

If the MSU vision is truly to "provide an innovative, hands-on learning experience,"[3] we need to ensure that the students are guaranteed the minimum required contact hours with their instructors.

Sincerely,

Julie L. P. Jessop
Professor

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1 https://catalog.msstate.edu/undergraduate/academicpolicies/creditsgradesandstanding/
2 https://www.msstate.edu/directory/standing-committees?criteria=committee&term=calendar
3 https://www.president.msstate.edu/communications/vision-mission/

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Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Faculty Affairs Committee

Report on AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures

November 4, 2024

Background

On October 15, 2024, Robert Holland Faculty Senate President Robert Banik assigned AOP 13.05, Faculty Grievance Procedures, to the Faculty Affairs Committee for review. This AOP was previously seen by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate in the Spring 2024 semester. Due to the number of changes that were made, the AOP is going through the review process again.

Recommendation

The Faculty Affairs committee recommends that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve AOP 13.05: Faculty Grievance Procedures, with the edits made by the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Discussion

Since the Grievance Committee is a standing committee, the word standing was added, where applicable, throughout the AOP when the Grievance Committee is referenced.
In part (a) of Section 1, some grammar was cleaned up in the second half of the paragraph.

In part (c) of Section 1, the last sentence was edited regarding the grievance of a student.

In part (b) of Section 2, we added that the mediator needs to be impartial and should be agreed upon by the chair of the Grievance Committee, the grievant, and the respondent.

In part (c) of Section 2, we have added the requirement that members of the Hearing Committee should not be a part of the unit of the grievant or respondent and members of the Hearing Committee should not have a personal or professional connection with the grievant or respondent. In this same section, we added clarification on the administrators if there is a grievance with a faculty member holding an administrative position or with the Provost and Executive Vice President.

In part (f) of Section 2, added that the respondent and grievant may be represented by counsel.

The Faculty Affairs Standing Committee requests that the President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate send this revised AOP to the Office of the General Counsel to ensure that the policy is up to legal standards.

Committee Members: Jacob Tschume (Chair), Russel Carr, Whitney Crow, Alexis Gregory, Kimberly Kelly, Krish Krishnan, Swapnil Patole, Amirtaha Taebi

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

AOP 13.05: FACULTY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to establish a standardized procedure concerning the review and resolution of the grievance of a faculty member.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Executive Vice Provost with recommendations for revision to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. **Foreword**

    a. The University operates under a philosophy that emphasizes the importance of ensuring the rights of its faculty. Both personnel and operating policies are formulated ~~in order~~ to assist administrators and faculty in working harmoniously toward the collective goals and objectives set forth by the Board of Trustees. When a faculty member has a grievance, efforts will be made to determine the facts surrounding that grievance and to respond appropriately and justly ~~with~~in a timely manner. The purpose of these procedures is to address grievances of faculty members and to provide a mechanism for resolving them. The time lines noted in these procedures are to be adhered to,~~followed~~ except under extenuating circumstances.

    b. Whenever possible, problems of faculty members should be solved within the University at the level at which they arise. The faculty member may wish to consult with the University Ombud~~sman~~ prior to initiation of a formal grievance.

    Each member of the University faculty shall have the right to a hearing of a grievance through established channels. Access to these channels is restricted to University faculty members or those who were University faculty members when the event leading to the grievance occurred~~.~~.

    c. This policy (AOP 13.05) will not apply to some types of grievances~~.~~. Grievances related in any way to tenure, promotion, salary, grounds for termination, termination procedure, and notice of nonreappointment or termination are not covered by this policy. In such cases, the aggrieved faculty member should refer to other applicable University policies, including the Tenure and Promotion Policy (AOP 13.07) or the

Termination of Employment Policy (OP 60.113). If the grievance is related in any way to harassment or discrimination based on being a member of a protected class, this policy AOP 13.05 will not apply. The aggrieved faculty member should instead refer to the Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy (OP 03.03) or Sexual Misconduct Policy (OP 03.04). The ~~grievance of a student or the~~ grievance of a faculty member against a student will not be covered by this policy.

d. A faculty member holding an administrative position will have access to these procedures with regard to ~~his/her~~their faculty duties~~,~~ but will not have access to the procedures with regard to ~~his~~their~~/her~~ administrative duties.

~~d.~~e. To facilitate the resolution of grievances the University will establish a standing grievance committee ~~to consist~~consisting of the following members:

- President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate (if eligible),
- Chairperson of the Robert Holland Faculty Affairs Committee (if eligible),
- Chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure (Appeals) Committee,
- Two faculty members elected from each college, MSU Extension Service, MSU Meridian, and the University Libraries serving two-year terms. Each of these committee members will serve two-year staggered terms with half of the committee members (one from each of the above units) elected each year. Committee members can be re-elected, but cannot serve more than 3 consecutive terms.

All members of the Committee must be full-time faculty with rank 2 or higher. Specifically, committee members must have the titles of Professor, Clinical Professor, Teaching Professor, Professor of Practice, Extension Professor, or Research Professor at the associate level or higher, or Instructor II or III. The chair of the standing Grievance Committee will be elected at the first meeting of the academic year, will serve a one-year term, and will be eligible for reelection.~~, and will serve a one-year term.~~

2. **Faculty Grievance Process**

An aggrieved faculty member is encouraged to pursue an informal resolution of the grievance with the individual(s) with whom the faculty member believes caused the grievance prior to submitting a formal grievance. If an informal resolution cannot be reached, the aggrieved faculty member may then ~~make~~initiate a formal grievance appeal and proceed according to the following process:

~~Membership on the standing Grievance Committee will include the following individuals:~~

a. A written grievance must be submitted to the chair of the standing Grievance

Committee. ~~Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President.~~ The grievance must contain a statement of the facts of the grievance, the individual(s) who the grievant believes is responsible for the wrongful action, and a precise description of the remedy sought by the grievant. The grievance must be signed and dated by the grievant.

~~b. After reviewing the grievance, the Provost or histheir/her designee may attempt to pursue an informal resolution with the grievant and the respondent. If such an attempt is not successful within thirty (30) days of receiving the grievance, or if the Provost, in histheir/her discretion, determines that informal resolution would be futile, the Provost will forward the grievance to the Grievance Committee.~~

~~Membership on the Grievance Committee ("the Committee") that hears an individual grievance will be determined by the level of the grievance. Each formation of the Committee will include five elected faculty members chosen by the Provost from the following:~~
~~President of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate (if eligible),~~
~~Chairperson of the Robert Holland Faculty Affairs Committee (if eligible),~~
~~Chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure (Appeals) Committee,~~
~~Aand a pool of full-time, tenured faculty members, two elected from each college, MSU Extension Service, MSU Meridian, and the University Libraries to servinge two-year terms.~~
~~Allthe Committee must be full-time faculty with rank 2 or higher. Specifically, committee members must have theor, or or~~

b. After reviewing the grievance, the chair of the standing Grievance Committee, in consultation with the grievant and respondent, may provide an impartial mediator or ask the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President's Office to provide an impartial mediator to attempt to pursue an informal resolution. The mediator must be selected from a pool of trained mediators consisting of at least one full-time faculty member at rank 2 or higher, one department head or equivalent, and one associate dean.

~~When the grievance involves a faculty member holding an administrative position, the Committee to hear the grievance will also include at least one administrator at the level of the grievant and/or respondent and one higher level administrator, both to be chosen by the Provost. The grievant and the respondent shall have the right to challenge any individual member of the Committee with the total number of challenges limited to two (n=2) for each party. As each challenged member is excused, histheir/her replacement will be selected by the Provost in consultation with the other members of the Committee.~~

c. If mediation~~an informal resolution~~ is not successful within thirty (30) calendar days, as agreed upon by all involved parties, the chair will form a Hearing Committee consisting of five members of the standing Grievance Committee and will schedule a grievance hearing. Members of the Hearing Committee should not come from the unit of the grievant or respondent. Members of the Hearing Committee should have no personal or professional connection with the grievant or respondent. ~~Upon receipt of the grievance from the Provost, the Committee will schedule a grievance hearing.~~

This hearing should be held within 10 business days after receiving the request. The Hearing Committee will elect its own chairperson, who will act as presiding officer. The notice of a time and place for the hearing must be delivered to the parties involved at least two business days prior to the hearing.

When the grievance involves a faculty member holding an administrative position, the Hearing Committee will also include at least one administrator with a faculty appointment at the level of the grievant and/or respondent and one higher level administrator with a faculty appointment, both to be chosen by the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President. In grievances involving the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President, the President will serve on the Hearing Committee and select one other administrator at the Vice President level holding a faculty appointment and assume thereafter ~~receiveappoint the relevant administrators and assume thereafter the recommendation and thereafter assume~~ the responsibilities of the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President with respect to the remainder of the grievance procedure.

~~c.~~d. The grievant and respondent parties, each of which may consist of multiple individuals, shall have the right ~~shall have the right~~ to challenge any individual member of the Hearing Committee with the total number of challenges limited to two (*n* = 2) for each party. As each challenged member is excused, their replacement will be selected by the standing Grievance Committee Chairperson (or ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President in the case that the excused member is an administrator) in consultation with the other members of the standing Grievance Committee.

~~d.~~e. The formal hearing will be conducted in private. During the proceedings, the parties concerned will be permitted to have a nonparticipating advisor of their choice. A recording or transcript of the proceedings shall be kept and made available upon request to the parties concerned. The grievant will present ~~his~~their~~/her~~ own case and has the right to present whatever evidence, written or oral, ~~he/she~~they consider~~s~~ relevant or material to the grievance. This includes the calling of witnesses.

~~e.~~f. After the presentation by the grievant, the respondent will be given an opportunity to present ~~his/her~~their case under the same rules as the grievant. The ~~University~~respondent and grievant may be represented by counsel. The Hearing Committee may also call witnesses as it considers appropriate. Both the grievant and the respondent may question all witnesses. The Hearing Committee will not be bound by strict rules of legal evidence. The Hearing Committee may receive any evidence of probative value in determining the issues involved. Every reasonable effort shall be made to obtain the most reliable evidence possible. All questions relating to the admissibility of evidence or other legal matters will be decided by the Chairperson of the Hearing Committee. Evidence considered in the hearing must relate to the grievance and be of the type relied on by faculty members or administrators in the conduct of their professional affairs.

~~f.~~g. After all evidence is received, the Hearing Committee will meet privately to consider the evidence. The opinion held by the majority of the members will constitute the

Hearing Committee's recommendations. -The Hearing Committee should provide its recommendations in writing to the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President, with copies to the parties to the grievance, no later than 5 business days from the last date of hearing of the grievance. ~~In grievances involving the Provost, the President will receive the recommendation and thereafter assume the responsibilities of the Provost with respect to the remainder of the grievance procedure.~~ Minority opinions of the committee may be submitted to the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President and involved parties at the same time as the Committee recommendations are submitted~~.—~~. Recommendations to the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President are advisory in nature.

~~g.~~h. The ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President should send a written notice of ~~his/her~~their final decision within 5 business days of receipt of the Committee's recommendations. -Copies of the final decision will be sent to the grievant, respondent, and Grievance Committee Chairperson. -If the ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President's recommendation is different from that recommended by the Hearing Committee, the grievant, the respondent, and the Grievance C~~c~~ommittee will be informed in writing of the reasons. The ~~Provost~~Provost and Executive Vice President's decision is the final University decision on the grievance.

~~h.~~i. The grievant may withdraw a formal grievance at any stage of this process but may not reinstate it once it is withdrawn. The withdrawal request should be made in writing to the ~~Provost~~ Grievance Committee Chairperson who will then notify the Grievance Committee if applicable.

REVIEWED:

Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs	Date
Provost and Executive Vice President	Date
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate	Date
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness	Date
General Counsel	Date

APPROVED:

President	Date

Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

University Resources Committee

Report on AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement

November 1, 2024

Background

On October 15, 2024, Robert Holland Faculty Senate President Robert Banik assigned AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement to the University Resources Committee for review. The proposed changes to the AOP were largely to address the terminology in the advising centers, and to consider what goes into policy versus procedure. Additional proposed revisions provide clarification for different advising pathways and allow some flexibility for differences among systems, colleges, and departments.

Recommendation

The University Resources Committee recommends that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement, with the edits and additional statements made by the University Resources Committee.

Discussion

The University Resources Committee exchanged initial comments electronically during the week of October 14-18, 2024. An overview of the proposed changes was presented to the Executive Committee. Based on that feedback, the University Resources Committee reviewed the following changes, shown in purple on the track changes version of the AOP, and agreed it was ready to be presented to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate:

1. **Section 1**: The committee added language regarding the timing of when advisors are assigned, as well as the reassignment of an advisor when a student changes major or when an advisor leaves their position.
2. **Section 3**: The committee changed "who have an ACT score less than 21 or no ACT score" to read "who have no ACT score or an ACT score less than 21."
3. **Section 6**: The committee added a new first sentence to the effect that each unit should make advising expectations clear and develop clear guidelines. This is related to Section 7.
4. **Section 7**: The committee changed "…should be included in performance appraisal." to read "…should be included in an annual performance appraisal."
5. **Section 9**: The committee edited "new students" to read "newly enrolled students."

Committee Members: Michele Herrmann (Chair), Ryan Akers, Leigh Beckman, Cheryl Justice, Fred Musser, Neeraj Rai, Amber Robinson (for Peter Messer on Sabbatical), and Beth Stokes

AOP 12.38: UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to emphasize the importance of advising and provide guidelines for establishing quality advisement for all students. Mentorship and career exploration are complementary to academic advisement, but not covered under this AOP.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Every student in the University will have access to quality academic advising. All students will be assigned an advisor in Banner prior to the first day of class for the students' semester of enrollment. If a student changes their major or when an undeclared student declares a major, the new unit will assign a new advisor when the Change of Major form is approved~~and will be informed of their advisor's name~~. If an advisor leaves their position, the unit will assign a new advisor.

2. All undeclared undergraduate students will be advised by faculty and/or staff based on their ~~campus~~primary location: Center for Advising (Starkville campus), ~~Meridian Campus Advisement Center~~G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Advisement and Career Services Center (Meridian locations), or Center for Distance Education (Online Education ~~campus~~).~~All undeclared undergraduate students will be advised by staff in the University Academic Advising Center.~~

3. All first-time in college students~~new freshmen~~ who have no ACT score or an ACT score less than 21~~ or no ACT score,~~ and a cumulative high school grade point average less than 2.5 will be undeclared until the student passes a minimum thirty (30) hours of course work.~~advised by staff in the University Academic Advising Center until the student accumulates a minimum thirty (30) hours of course work.~~

~~4. Academic Advisement of Meridian Campus students at the Meridian locations will be conducted by the Meridian Campus Advisement Center and academic division.~~

~~5.~~4. Students should declare a major upon the accumulation of sixty (60) credit hours and are required to do so upon accumulation of seventy-five (75) credit hours. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Executive Director of the Center for Advising~~University Academic Advising Center~~.

~~6.~~5. All students with declared academic majors will be advised by faculty and/or professional staff in their respective units, or in the ~~Center for Advising~~centers listed in item #2, upon ~~department~~unit approval. Each unit will develop its own academic

Commented [RK12]: This addition to Purpose is the subcommittee's preferred reference to mentorship. An alternate option would be to instead edit #6 to read the following:

All students with declared academic majors will be advised by faculty and/or professional staff in their respective units, or in the Center for Advising, upon department approval. Each unit will develop its own course scheduling advising system. The University will support opportunities to complement course scheduling advising, such as mentorship and career exploration. Units are expected to inform their majors about the opportunities appropriate to their discipline.

Commented [RK13]: Note that students in this category are undeclared and will be advised according to the revised statement in #2.

Commented [TB14]: Deleted what was originally #4 as suggested by Dr. Spurlin to join with a more inclusive sentence in what is now item #5 and to ensure that programs at the Meridian locations do not have to use Meridian Campus Advisement Center (e.g., PA, Nursing).

Commented [RK15]: Question for Associate Deans? Can this be reduced below 75?

Commented [TB16R15]: Associate Deans decided to investigate a little more how junior and senior undeclared students are successful before making an adjustment to the policy.

advising system.

~~7.~~ To ensure academic advisors have a clear understanding of their role, each unit will establish clear guidelines that document the advising load and minimum expectations of an academic advisor. ~~Advisors will be assigned after a student declares a specific academic major or prior to their first registration. All students will be informed of the faculty/staff advisor's name to whom they have been assigned.~~

~~8.~~6. Training of academic advisors is the responsibility of the unit. Academic Advisors are encouraged to avail themselves of training programs provided by the university (e.g., Center for Advising~~University Academic Advising Center~~, Academic Advisors Council, and the Center for Teaching and Learning).

~~9.~~7. Advising will be assessed by the respective unit, and an advisor's level of performance ~~will~~ should be included in an annual performance appraisal~~as a factor in decisions related to annual salary increase, promotion, and tenure~~.

~~10.~~8. Academic advisors will be assigned ~~a reasonable number of~~ advisees relative to the individual's other work assignments.

~~11.~~9. All newly enrolled students, both first-time in college~~freshmen~~ and transfer~~s~~, will be invited to participate in ~~summer~~ orientation and advising sessions.

Commented [TB17]: Previous item #7 was deleted because it was merged with item #1 to prevent the need for specifying a time frame or a method of communicating who the advisor is.

Commented [RK18]: Due to resource constraints, the subcommittee did not support adding specificity to "reasonable number of advisees." We recommend this be referred to Deans Council.

Commented [TB19R18]: ADC discussed the possibility of adding a sentence such as "Each unit will determine what reasonable means for advising activity."

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

REVIEWED:

Executive Vice Provost~~ and Dean, Graduate School~~	Date
Provost and Executive Vice President	Date
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate	Date
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness	Date
General Counsel	Date

APPROVED:

President	Date

OLD BUSINESS

To the Presidents and Chancellors of the Institutions of Higher Learning in Mississippi:

On behalf of the United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM), this letter is to express unwavering support for the Mississippi State University's Robert Holland Faculty Senate's resolution advocating for the protection and promotion of academic freedom for faculty members across all Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) in Mississippi. The resolution, which the Robert Holland Faculty Senate passed on October 4th reads:

> *Be it resolved that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate advocates for the protection and promotion of academic freedom for faculty members across all Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) in Mississippi. The Robert Holland Faculty Senate calls on other faculty senates in the state to join in this resolution and requests a letter of support from the United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM). This letter will be shared with all university presidents and chancellors. While the media maintains the right to free speech, it is essential that universities uphold and defend the principles of academic freedom to foster a vibrant and open academic environment throughout Mississippi's universities.*

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of higher education, enabling faculty to engage in research, teaching, and discourse that challenge prevailing notions and foster a rich intellectual environment. We recognize the vital role that academic freedom plays in cultivating critical thinking and encouraging diverse perspectives within our academic communities. As we witness increasing pressures that may threaten this principle, it is essential that we stand united in our commitment to uphold and defend academic freedom.

We wholeheartedly support the Robert Holland Faculty Senate's resolution and encourage all faculty senates across the state to join us in this critical initiative. Together, we can ensure that academic freedom remains a foundational principle of higher education in Mississippi.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We appreciate your support in championing academic freedom for all faculty members.

Sincerely,

United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM)

Provisionally approved by UFSAM on October 18, 2024

NEW BUSINESS

Graduate Faculty – Inclusion of Professor of Teaching and Professor of the Practice

Graduate Faculty Criterion

MSU graduate faculty members are employees of Mississippi State University. Other criteria for holding an MSU graduate faculty appointment follow:

- earned a terminal degree (highest degree awarded in the discipline) in or related to the faculty member's area of graduate discipline;
- be a full-time employee of Mississippi State University, holding the rank of assistant professor, assistant research professor, assistant extension professor, assistant clinical professor, assistant teaching professor, assistant professor of the practice or higher without any qualifying designations such as 'visiting,' 'emeritus,' or 'adjunct'; and
- have demonstrated and maintained noteworthy accomplishments in research and/or creative achievement, as defined in the Faculty Handbook (6.1.2)

Such decisions are at the discretion of the academic department and are affirmed by the affixed signatures of the Department Head and Dean on the "Application to Graduate Faculty" form.

Government affiliates embedded in the university may be considered MSU graduate faculty by agreement.

Faculty holding the title of Instructor may serve as the program coordinator and advisory to students in a non-thesis master's program for which they can affirm when program requirements are met for graduation. If Instructors have the appropriate terminal degree in a discipline they may also serve on graduate committees but not in the capacity as a major professor or director of thesis/dissertation.

Graduate faculty members are appointed through submission of the 'Application to Graduate Faculty' form, which is approved by the Department Head and Academic Dean. Reappointment to graduate faculty is not required provided the faculty member remains full-time faculty (as described in the second bullet undergraduate faculty qualifications) of Mississippi State University and remains affiliated with an academic program. Removal of a faculty member from graduate faculty is at the discretion of the Department Head, Academic Dean, and Graduate School Dean.

PLR; Revised 10-15-2024

November 3rd, 2024

To Robert Banik, President of the Mississippi State Faculty Senate,

We, the executive members of the Stennis Montgomery Association, are writing with a request that is of great importance: voting. As students at Mississippi State University, we are not granted time to vote in elections without risking penalties on attendance, in-class assignments, and participation grades. As classes can run throughout all hours of the day, students' right to vote can be compromised by the grading scale. We have discussed the issue with both the Mississippi Secretary of State, Michael Watson, and State Senator, Bart Williams, who were both interested in our concerns; however, before continuing at the State level, we, as students, would
like to reach out to you, the faculty. Our request is as follows.

Whereas, 34% of Mississippi State Main Campus Students were out-of-state students according to the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness 2023 Enrollment report, and a majority of in-state students do not permanently reside in Oktibbeha County.

Whereas, many students face the logistical challenges that occur when registering to vote absentee or change their polling location for the period of time in which they are in college, especially those students who have transferred from other colleges or universities.

Whereas, Mississippi State University was home to about 21,121 students eligible to vote in the United States in 2023 with an expectation for those numbers to rise in coming years.

Whereas, every year, Mississippi State accepts thousands of 18-year-olds who have just received the right to vote, and who will spend their first election at college, meaning they either must immediately change their polling location, vote absentee, or risk not voting at all.

Whereas, federal elections take place biannually and federal Presidential elections take place every 4 years.

Whereas, Mississippi State University students are not protected from risk of penalization for missing class to vote in federal Presidential elections.

Whereas, Mississippi State University should pride itself in allowing its students to practice their civil responsibilities and commitments to their federal governments.

Therefore, we would ask that Faculty Senate review AOP 12.09 via the appropriate committee to allow for the addition of an "Excused Absence" on the first Tuesday following the first Monday of November in presidential election years to allow students time to vote. This would allow in- state students to prioritize voting in person, be it in Oktibbeha County or any other Mississippi county, while also giving out-of-state students the chance to return to their home state to exercise their right to vote without risking penalties to attendance, in class assignments, or participation grades.

Thank you for your consideration and respect of the democratic processes that act as the foundation for our great nation.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Williams

Stennis Montgomery Association Secretary

Kendall Sanders

Stennis Montgomery Association President

Brady Bolling

Stennis Montgomery Association Vice President

ADJOURN