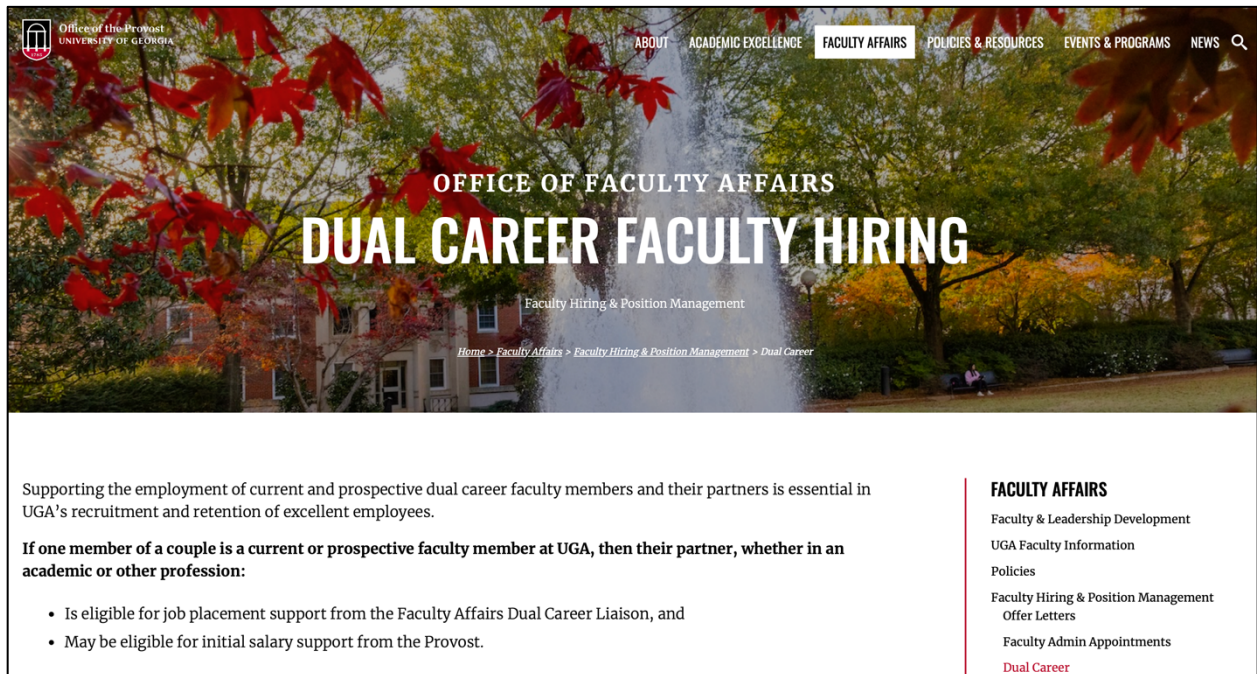# Robert Holland Faculty Senate (RHFS) resolution
in support of a Dual Career Hiring Program

Proposed by Senators **Matthew W. Priddy** (BCoE) and **Lauren B. Priddy** (BCoE)

Faculty recruitment and hiring is time-consuming for current personnel and a significant financial investment from the hiring department. For example, the startup package cost for a faculty member in a STEM-related field can be $250k or greater[1]. There is a 7% annual turnover rate nationally in academia for tenure-track faculty[2], with higher annual turnover rates (as high as 15% since 2016) in some units at MSU.

Dual-career academics represent a significant portion (as much as 30%) of the academic workforce[3]. Further, recent survey data indicated that over 50% of faculty seeking employment made employment decisions based on partner/spouse job offers, and in nearly half (40%) of cases, a partner/spouse offer was made from the same institution[4]. Collectively, these data suggest academic institutions would benefit from a formal dual career hiring process.

However, only 45% of research universities have a dual career hiring policy[5]. In the SEC, 10 of the 16 schools have a policy and/or webpage[6] (e.g., below from the University of Georgia[7]). **Mississippi State University does not have an outward facing dual career faculty hiring policy or webpage.**

Screenshot of the dual career faculty hiring webpage at University of Georgia[7].

WHEREAS, dual career hiring policies have gained traction at many institutions since the early 1990s[8], more recently these policies have become transparent hiring procedures to facilitate dual career hiring[9]. A 2008 study indicated that 36% of full-time faculty in America have an academic partner, and this percentage has remained relatively unchanged since the 1980s[10].

WHEREAS, of the dual career hiring programs currently in place, they vary in function depending on level of university involvement[11] and availability of funding[2]. At a minimum, dual career hiring programs provide a framework and set of operating procedures for a partner's hiring. The programs often also include the establishment of a campus liaison for assisting the trailing partner with securing employment, either internally or externally to the university. Using this type of program, Virginia Tech has successfully helped approximately 1,000 trailing partners find employment in and around Blacksburg, Virginia, with nearly 60% being hired by Virginia Tech[12].

WHEREAS, a more advanced dual career hiring program outlines policies for how to fund the hiring of trailing partners[3]. The most common model for this is referred to as the 1/3 – 1/3 – 1/3 model. In this situation, three entities—typically the trailing partner's hiring department, the leading partner's hiring department, and the Provost's office—each provide 1/3 of the funding required to hire the trailing partner. The duration for this funding split is typically 3 years. In many instances, the trailing partner undergoes an interview process identical to that of candidates who apply through traditional means.

THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED,
> that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate advises the University President and University Provost to:
> (i) explore establishing a formalized dual career hiring program at the University that includes an outward facing component (e.g., webpage),
> (ii) work with on-campus stakeholders to determine the mission and vision for a dual career hiring program at the University,
> (iii) identify funding sources for long-term sustainability and maximum impact of a dual career hiring program at the University.

References

[1] https://coache.gse.harvard.edu/publications/revealing-data-faculty-retention-departure
[2] https://www.cupahr.org/surveys/workforce-data/higher-ed-workforce-turnover/
[3] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44217-024-00118-6
[4] https://faculty.vt.edu/content/dam/faculty_vt_edu/files/studies-reports/COACHE_QuantitativeReport_VTECH_2021.pdf
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[12] https://faculty.vt.edu/academic-personnel/recruitment/dual-career-program.html