

ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE AGENDA

March 7, 2025

1. Call to Order
2. [Adoption of Minutes, February 14, 2025](#) (p.2)
3. Introduction of Guests
 1. Dr. Reuben Burch, Associate Vice President for Research
 2. Dr. David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President
4. [Report of the Faculty Senate President](#)..... (p.11)
5. [Report of the Faculty Senate Vice President](#)..... (p.13)
6. Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees
7. Business sent to Committee
 - 7.1. AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses
8. Business to be sent to Committee
9. Standing Committee Reports
 - 9.1. Academic Affairs
 - 9.2. Ancillary Affairs
 - 9.2.1. [Confidence Survey](#) (p.14)
 - 9.3. Charter & Bylaws
 - 9.3.1. [Handbook Updates](#) (p.15)
 - 9.4. Faculty Affairs
 - 9.4.1. [AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses](#) (p.46)
 - 9.5. Student Affairs
 - 9.6. University Resources
10. Old Business
11. New Business
12. Adjourn



Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Uncorrected Minutes of February 14, 2025

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, February 14, 2025.

Members absent and excused were James Chamberlain, Robin Fontenot, Santanu Kundu, Alison Lee, Andy Perkins, Neeraj Rai, and Tara Sutton.

Members on Sabbatical: Kimberly Kelly and Peter Messer

Faculty Senate President Robert Banik called the meeting to order and asked for corrections to the minutes of the January 17, 2025 Faculty Senate meeting. Senator Lemus made a correction to state he was absent, and it was not listed as such. President Banik requested a motion and second to accept the minutes as corrected. Senator Lemley made a motion to accept the minutes, and Senator Taebi gave the second. President Banik accepted the minutes as presented.

Guests

Mr. Zac Selmon, Director of Athletics

Mr. Selmon greeted the Senate and gave updates on athletics. He said opening day of baseball was moved to today due to the weather. Mr. Selmon thanked the senators for what they do for the institution and for the athletics department. He said when you mix higher education and sports, the number one priority is for the student athletes to graduate. Last semester our student athletes had a 3.34 GPA with 15 of 16 sport programs above a 3.0.

Mr. Selmon said the transfer portal nationally is something to be worked on and stated there were over 50 new student athletes in January. That is a big challenge to come in mid-semester, not only academically, but socially, and then mixing with the team.

Mr. Selmon stated one of the biggest challenges not just at MSU, but industrywide, is a case called *House v. NCAA*. He said if the case is formally approved in April, each institute would provide up to \$20.5 million dollars in revenue sharing with the student athletes. He said when NIL went through legislation there were not a lot of guardrails, and it left everyone scrambling. He said we are now at the hands of the court.

Mr. Selmon stated they are looking into ways to control the expenses to meet the requirements. One of those ways was to adjust ticket pricing for faculty and staff. He said they should know more about the legal challenges very shortly.

Senator Lemus asked if they know how it will be distributed among the teams. Mr. Selmon said they are working that out because there is not a model where they would become employees.

Senator Lemus stated it was not adding up for him to have the student athletes share up to \$20.5 million dollars but not our regular students. Mr. Selmon stated the \$20.5 million goes directly to student athletes but not to other students. He said we are in a completely different day and age, and it is an economic reality specifically of big-time college football and basketball, and the landscape of athletics has drastically changed the past few years.

Mr. John Rush, Vice President for Development and Alumni

Mr. Rush greeted the Senate and thanked the senators for what they do in investing in students. He stated donors do not give because of him but because they had professors who invested in them. As they become successful and can give themselves, they want to invest in current students by providing better facilities and opportunities. He said MSU fundraises with our ears. They find out what the person's passions and interests are, then look for those needs and opportunities within the university. This allows the donor to see what their gift has done and how important it is.

Mr. Rush said over the last five years, \$120 million has been raised for MSU. Mr. Rush stated of the funds raised one half of 1% is unrestricted. The remainder of the funds are all donor designated. He said we now have 105 endowed faculty positions across campus with a \$97.5 million endowment collectively. Mr. Rush stated they have raised money for Promise Kids and a mentoring program for them. He said nearly 700 faculty members have contributed over \$8.7 million to MSU. Mr. Rush said they have been able to grow endowments for research to \$22 million and another \$2.2 million for an endowed lecture series.

Mr. Rush stated if you have a relationship in industry or a partner, then reach out to your dean to go to that person. He said they also have staff that does corporate foundation work and will come alongside you. Mr. Rush said in corporate philanthropy they want access to you or something that you're doing. He said we must ride that line between what is sponsored and what is philanthropic. If a corporation is interested in building an endowed faculty position to make sure we have faculty of a certain expertise, we can do that philanthropically. He said they can also help if they want to build a laboratory for our space to make sure we have certain equipment that all our students can use for an educational benefit. When they want you to do a specific project or test a certain thing, then it would be transferred over to sponsored programs to make it work.

Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw greeted the Senate and stated he had met with Human Resources about the Dual-Career resolution passed at the January Senate meeting. He stated a website had been created at <https://www.hrm.msstate.edu/benefits/dual-career-program>. He asked that the senators visit the

site and give feedback about the information. He stated he would be sending the link out campus wide.

Dr. Shaw stated he investigated the Work-Life Balance Committee and found it had not been active for the past 3 years, but they are re-constituting the committee to move that forward again.

Senator Gregory stated she was using and navigating digital measures. She wondered about an opportunity for small groups or a partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning to educate faculty about its uses and so the OIRE office would not have to answer the same questions for others. Dr. Shaw stated he would visit with Dr. Baham about providing more information and tutorials regarding digital measures.

Senator Gregory asked Dr. Shaw for insight concerning the Visual Art Center Galleries that are to be demolished on University Drive, which affects the art department because they are losing space. Dr. Shaw stated although he had not been given a specific briefing, he would investigate and have better information next time. He said we are going through a lot of pain related to space across the entire campus due to building and building renovations and they are working on how to accommodate on a temporary basis the needs of the departments. He said they had good conversations with the library for some spaces and good conversations about additional spaces that may be opening within the next 12 month.

Senator Gregory stated her specific concern is the public access to the building and the library restricts public viewing along with faculty and students. Dr. Shaw said he would have information at the next meeting.

Senator Taibi asked if there are going to be any discussions within the administration on how cuts to indirect costs would affect each part of the university. Dr. Shaw stated they are talking about it and a meeting has been set to discuss it for Monday morning. He said it was very fluid and literally changing as he spoke, but as of now the indirect cost rate for NIH grants has been set to 15%. He also stated that the fortunate part for us is that we do not have a lot of NIH funding, and they are already looking at what that means budgetarily for the university. He said there are rumors the same indirect cost rate would be applied across the board, but there has been no announcement of that. He said they are in close contact with the congressional delegation and their staff on almost an hourly basis trying to be sure we have weighed in so we can be in the best position to be advocating for our programs and for our faculty, staff and students.

Senator Taibi asked about DEI at the university. Dr. Shaw stated that with DEI we are dealing with a federal situation and a state situation that are moving in the same direction, but at different speeds and in different ways. He said they have been working with the legislative leadership in the state, in particular, to try to be sure that anything that does come out is well reasoned and not a surprise to either us or the legislators.

Senator Zuckerman asked for Dr. Shaw's thoughts on DEI as the faculty are interacting with others. Dr. Shaw stated as he has spoken with other colleagues at other institutions that taking a breath and waiting a moment to see what changes will happen in a day or even an hour. He said for example, with the indirect cost issue there is frustration and there are institutions in the nation that have 120% overhead. He does not believe 15% is the final number but rather something to be used and considered to get to a more moderate level.

Dr. Shaw said it is the same with DEI. He said if you step back, you will see that maybe this is something that we will see the pendulum swing one way and then we'll see it swing the other way, and somewhere in the middle is probably where we're going to land. He said lawsuits are being filed on an almost minute-by-minute basis, some challenges from the legislature itself at the federal level on overreach of the executive branch and then the ideas that are coming forward. Dr. Shaw stated there is so much that unfolds on a moment-by-moment basis that we don't need to get lost in the moment or on any one particular thing as we see some really unprecedented things start to play out. He said he believes things will be different in a year's time and the best advice he can give is to take a big breath but don't take it as the way it is forever, but as the way it is for the moment until the next conversation comes up. He said they are taking the behind-the-scenes approach that can actually get more done and that things are happening as we speak.

Senator Lemus stated that as administration is speaking with legislators and congressional delegations, he wanted to emphasize that there are a lot of things out there that highlight the impact that Mississippi State and the faculty have on those programs. Dr. Shaw said his point was extraordinarily well taken and said that almost word for word that was the conversation that President Keenum had with both Senator Hyde-Smith and Senator Wicker this week. He said at the very highest levels that we can reach, we are trying to be sure that people understand President Keenum. He said there are so many good programs that we do not need to just do a blanket repeal of funds when they have had such a huge positive impact globally and not just locally.

Senator Lemley stated she was concerned about the teaching grants being eliminated and having a teacher shortage within the state in many areas. The impact would be felt locally by not having quality training for teachers. The faculty in the College of Education would see a possible loss at the national level in funding and what that means for teacher training to move forward. Dr. Shaw said her point was extraordinarily well taken and they will continue to be advocated for. He said every time a question or something comes up, whether it's rumor or whether it's an executive order or such, we have tried to be sure that we weigh in at every level that we have the opportunity to be able to do so for advocacy for those programs.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

I hope that everyone is getting back in the full swing of the spring semester. This time of year is both exciting and nerve-racking for various reasons. I'm looking forward to a more consistent weather pattern, too. Basketball is in full swing, and baseball is just around the corner. The weather is having both good and bad days. Testing is kicking off for many classes.

The Undergraduate Research Symposium will be on us very quickly (April 9th/10th), with abstracts due by March 7th. Spirit of State Award nominations are open now and will close on February 20th with applications due by February 24th.

If you are interested in socializing with other faculty and staff members, on February 18th, there will be a King Cake & Connections social at the Omaha Club at Dudy Noble Stadium with karaoke, music, and (of course) king cake. It will be from 4pm – 6pm. Check it out at <https://www.oidi.msstate.edu/events/2025/01/full-court-festivities-king-cake-connection>

The Benefits Committee would also like to encourage everyone to complete the Benefits Survey that was emailed to faculty on Friday, February 7, 2025. It is due the 28th. https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4Pla0MXbG7YAh5Y.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – The council did not meet in February. The next meeting should be on March 19, 2025. The council has begun work on the year Athletic Academic Support Services report to give to Dr. Keenum. This report should be finalized by our April 2025 meeting for discussion.

Dean's Council – This council did not meet in February. The subcommittee concerning the Faculty Grievance AOP has met and is working on language to address some concerns from this council.

Design Review Committee – This committee met via MS Teams on February 6th to continue discussion on the Wise Center entrance signage. Dr. Nick Frank, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, attended to give his input on the signage. Dr. Frank discussed how the new signage would serve as a landmark aid to guide visitors to the correct place and make the building have a more modern look. The motion was to deny this signage for not meeting the policy standards and was passed unanimously to deny.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This council met on February 5th. Dr. Caroline Kobia talked through recruitment and retention initiatives she has been working on through the Office of Inclusive Excellence. We also discussed the multiple DEI bills that are currently proposed in the Mississippi Legislature. Three of the five bills have died in committee, but two others (SB 2515 and HB 1193) seem to have traction within the legislature. This council will hold an additional meeting later this month on February 19th.

There are a few events coming up. February is Black History Month, the African American Studies Program, Department of Art, Holmes Cultural Diversity Center, Judy and Bobby Shackouls Honors College, and Office of Inclusive Excellence are among the sponsors hosting several events throughout the next few weeks. Check them out at <https://www.msstate.edu/newsroom/article/2025/02/msu-celebrates-black-history-month-arts-events-shackouls-lecture>

On February 27th, there will be an interactive workshop focused on supporting underrepresented students as they navigate various identities. Lunch will be provided. Check it out at: <https://www.oidi.msstate.edu/events/2025/01/pathways-belonging-empowering-students-across-campus>

Executive Council – This council did not meet in January 2025 due to the Spring General Faculty Meeting. The next meeting will be held on February 24, 2025.

Game Day and Special Events – No meeting is currently scheduled for this committee.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – The committee did not meet in January 2025, but Athletics shared the MSU Athletics Master Plan with the committee. Some projects that have been done or are in progress include:

Humphrey Coliseum Team Areas, Training Room, and Courtside Club – Complete

Volleyball Locker Room – Complete

Palmeiro Center Upgraded Lighting and Ceiling Liner – Complete

Davis Wade Stadium Lighting – In Progress

There are several other projects in the works beyond this for upgrades to many facilities around campus.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee had no in-person meeting in January. The committee was sent an email of the preliminary data from the Campus Transportation Planning process concerning the transportation survey that was sent out to the faculty, staff, and students. The committee should be meeting in February to discuss data in the report thus far.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since the last report.

United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – This committee has not met since last year, but I wanted to give an update on the parental leave petition that began here and was passed last year in this senate. The House of Representatives in the MS Legislature has passed House Bill 1063 THE MISSISSIPPI STATE EMPLOYEES PAID PARENTAL LEAVE ACT 114-0 for January 31, 2025. Shoutout to Senator James Chamberlain for working on this petition last year. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2025.

Faculty Success Team – This committee now has a set date to meet. We will be meeting on the third Wednesday of the month at 11am. On January 15th, the committee met to discuss the objectives and goals of the committee. Topics for the next meeting were discussed along with recommendations for faculty retention ideas and improvements to faculty success.

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 - 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 - Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium will be April 9-10, 2025. The deadline for submissions is March 7. The website is <https://urcd.msstate.edu>.

Also, this is just a reminder that ORED provides annual internal funding for faculty projects with undergraduate student participation.

Senator Williams asked if the Ombud answered to the provost. Senator Breazeale stated the Ombuds is in a unique position within the university and does not answer to anyone as it is completely independent. There are four standards of practice for ombuds: impartiality, independence, confidentiality, and informality. He said independence is a big one and taken very seriously. He has had nothing but support but will be completely independent. The only time he reports to anyone is called upward feedback. If he notices trends and things that are impacting more than 1 or 2 faculty or staff members or that administration needs to be made aware of, he takes those trends upward so that things can be done to address them.

Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees

Business Sent to Committee

Business to be Sent to Committee

Standing Committee Reports

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS — No Report

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS — No Report

CHARTER & BYLAWS

1. Senator Spurlin, on behalf of the Charter & Bylaws Committee, provided the committee report on the updates to Section V of the Faculty Handbook.

Senator Gregory stated her department requires that annual reviews be part of the P&T documents and that some junior faculty are told they are required to submit them to external reviewers which is a personnel issue. She asked if Human Resources also has access to that information.

Senator Spurlin stated the Senate remains silent on the issue of annual and third year reviews. He said that means that as far as the university document is concerned, there is no policy on whether you can or can't include it and leaves it to lower levels in colleges or schools and departments who can then require it if they want to.

Senator Spurlin said he believes Human Resources does have access to personnel files, but he does not believe they are going to weigh in on someone's P&T dossier. He said we only speak to promotion and tenure.

Senator Gregory had concerns that the wording may need to clarify if Human Resources would need to be added to the list of those that have access or if it's clear enough that it is only academic department heads and deans. Senator Spurlin stated they tried to be clear with respect to promotion and tenure but if this body thinks the statement should be more explicit, they can vote to edit that statement.

Dr. Shaw stated everything Senator Spurlin said was correct. He added that all the college and departmental documents will need to be looked at regarding the changes that have been proposed to be in compliance with the superseding document, which is the faculty handbook. Dr. Shaw said they have had conversations on several occasions that departmental and college documents can add to but cannot diverge from.

Senator Zuckerman asked about annual reviews coming up and stated there is language in each section in her area about how we contribute to diversity equity, inclusion and access. She asked if they complete that or leave blank at this time. Dr. Shaw said he was not familiar with the document and asked that she forward it to him for review.

Senator Parker stated on line 407 about the annual faculty review evaluation. She said line 407 is describing a different population than line 568 with the same subheadings and wondered if those were addressing two different tracks. Senator Spurlin asked if she is suggesting putting a parenthetical behind each one for professional track faculty where appropriate, and then previously for tenure track faculty. He stated the committee would review before the next meeting.

Senator Lemus stated we need to be very careful with the evaluations and that when you expose faculty and evaluations to the whole department it becomes a legal issue because you are exposing the confidentiality of the applicant. Senator Spurlin stated any changes the Faculty Senate recommends must be approved by Legal and they let us know if we violated some sort of lower confidentiality standard.

No further discussion.

2. Senator Spurlin, on behalf of the Charter & Bylaws Committee, provided the committee report on the Faculty Apportionment.

The motion to accept the committee report on Faculty Apportionment passed unanimously.

FACULTY AFFAIRS – No Report

STUDENT AFFAIRS

1. Student Voting Letter

Senator Haynes, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee, provided the committee report on the Student Voting Letter submitted at the November 2025 meeting.

The committee recommended the Senate review AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences.

The committee recommended the Stennis Association work with the Division of Student Affairs to create a website that has detailed voter information about all the resources in different states about voting.

The committee recommended educating faculty about how excused absences work and being able to do more than what is listed in the AOP, not just the things itemized.

Senator Taibi stated he remembered from the November meeting that we agreed on the importance of our student to be able to practice their voting rights but there were concerns raised about the consequences and concerns. Senator Haynes stated she has a list of concerns that people have raised, but this recommendation is only to pull the AOP for review.

Senator Carr stated that he agreed there should be means to educate students on what they need to do to vote based on where they live. He also stated giving students an excused absence for something they can plan to do is not something the faculty senate should necessarily be involved in. He then stated his concerns about verifying students voting for the excused absence.

Senator Gregory stated there was not early voting in the state of Mississippi and that to absentee vote you must get it notarized which costs money as there is a payment to send it. She said it is an onerous process to not go in person and vote.

The motion to review AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences passed by with 29 yay to 8 nay.

President Banik stated the AOP will be assigned to the Academic Affairs Committee.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES – No Report

Old Business

New Business

1. Student Course Survey Letter

President Banik presented a letter from Senator Carskadon about Student Course Surveys and asked for a motion that we accept the letter.

Senator Lemley gave the motion to accept the letter and Senator Haynes gave the second. The motion passed by majority hand vote.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Stacy Haynes, Secretary

Dinah Jenkins, Administrative Assistant

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Dr. Reuben Burch, Vice President for Research
Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Spring is in the air, and I personally hope that the cold weather is completely behind us now. Other than the pollen, I love this time of year. Spring break officially starts very soon.

We have a couple events to be mindful of between now and our April 2025 meeting. Nominations close for new senators on Tuesday, March 11th. Elections for new senators will open on March 17th and will close on March 28th. Please vote for your new representatives and encourage your colleges to do the same. We will also be working on the Confidence Survey which will be conducted in April, so be on the lookout for that.

Faculty Senate will also begin accepting nominations for Senate officers after the Senator elections close. Be on the lookout for more information near the end of March. As the outgoing president, I will serve as our elections officer. The new officers will be elected at our April 2025 meeting.

On February 21st, I attend the National Alumni Board meeting at the Mill Conference Center. Dr. Julie Jordan presented on generative AI, and other updates were given by athletics, the student association, and development. It was a pleasure representing this body at the board meetings for the last two years.

Vice President Breazeale and I met with President Keenum and Provost Shaw on Monday, February 24 to discuss a wide variety of topics including the possibility of a DEI bill being passed in the Mississippi Legislature, the “Dear Colleague” letter, the bills being considered regarding state income tax, and the possible reforms on retirement accounts. I have also passed along the University of Connecticut letter to both Dr. Keenum and Dr. Shaw. After talking to President Keenum, his resolve is dedicated to looking out for the employees of this university. The people of this university are important to him, and he is going to bat for us every day in Jackson. Though everything does not get a response in writing from the administration, Dr. Keenum and the rest of the administration are there fighting for us.

On March 4th, I will be hitting the road to help in recruiting transfer students. I will be going to Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville, MS, which is the community college that both I and Dr. Keenum attended. I’ll be representing this body to the students and faculty at NEMCC.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council –The next meeting should be on March 19, 2025.

Dean’s Council – The next meeting should be on March 10, 2025.

Design Review Committee – The next meeting should be on March 6, 2025.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This council held an additional meeting for February on February 19th. This meeting concerned the “Dear Colleague” letter and possible DEI legislation in the Mississippi House of Representatives and Mississippi Senate. The council discussed what things should be or must be changed throughout the university, such as making all student organizations “registered” instead of “sponsored”. Also discussed were impacts on scholarships, presentations, teaching lectures, and exhibits. So much of what was discussed in looking to what “may” happen and trying to be proactive in our approach for opportunities for all students.

Executive Council – This council met on February 24, 2025. AOP 12.12 Credit and Grades and AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement were considered and passed. AOP 13.03 Responsibilities in Instruction and Curriculum, and Attendance at Classes was tabled for various reasons, mostly due to the wrong version being on the agenda. OP 70.05 Federal Property at Mississippi State University was on the consent agenda due to updating URLs in the policy. A technical change occurred to AOP 12.01 Academic Add/Drop due to a change in the drop time from 8am to 5pm.

Game Day and Special Events – No meeting is currently scheduled for this committee.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee did not meet in February.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee met on February 27th. Walker Consultants were in attendance and discussed the capacity issues from a parking aspect, stating that MSU operates at approximately 78% capacity at peak times. Full capacity is considered to be greater than 85%. They also discussed that if there was a 1.5% increase in demand for parking, at current levels, we would be out of parking spaces, especially for commuter students, within about five to seven years. Data from the recent parking survey and suggestions were discussed. The committee will consider all suggestions at the March 2025 meeting, but the plan is to implement some changes this year.

Another topic of discussion was the north side of campus. Currently, there is a very high volume of pedestrians, scooters, bikes, and vehicular traffic at the intersection of Barr and George Perry near the Old Main Academic Center. Just to the north of this intersection, Hurst Lane is the one-way street that runs south of Zacharias Village, between Ruby Hall and what will be Azalea Hall. With the introduction of Azalea Hall this fall, the volume of each mode of transportation is expected to increase, which causes safety concerns. To help eliminate cut-thru vehicular traffic and to give a safe passage corridor from the Zacharias Village area southward across Barr Avenue, bollards are proposed on Barr Avenue to close a small portion of Barr from George Perry Drive to the P1 entry of the Old Main Parking Garage. Additionally, to eliminate unneeded traffic on Hurst Lane, which becomes inundated with the residents in the area, gates on Hurst Lane are proposed to only allow emergency, service, shuttle, and delivery trucks so that the node between the front doors of each of the residence halls is a safe pedestrian area. No decision was made or voted upon, but this will also be considered at the March 2025 meeting.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since the last report.

United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – This committee had its first in-person meeting on February 20, 2025. The committee met in Jackson at the IHL Board of Trustees meeting. After the IHL meeting, the committee met together to discuss several topics including updates from the parental leave bills, DEI bills, changes in federal grants, state tax structures, and retirement plans issues. As the upcoming deadline was approaching fast, the decision was to craft a statement concerning ORP retirement plans. The statement was passed by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate on Wednesday, February 26 via MS Teams. All other faculty senates across the IHL system passed the statement as well, and the UFSAM will distribute to pertinent legislators.

Faculty Success Team – This committee met on February 19, 2025. The committee of 16 members reviewed the survey distributed to the committee members to discuss topics to take up. The major topics were picked. These included Faculty Mentoring, Faculty Professional Development, and Faculty Recruitment. The 16 members were divided into 3 teams of 5 members each, with Dr. Jim Dunne floating between the three teams. Each team will take on one topic. The subgroups will work on gathering information before our next meeting on March 19th.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Committee on Campus Access

This committee met March 3. We approved the design of the route and wayfinding signage that was mentioned last semester. This project will be moving forward with some funding that was allocated earlier this academic year.

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

Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium will be April 9-10, 2025.

Also, this is just a reminder that ORED provides annual internal funding for faculty projects with undergraduate student participation.

REPORTS FROM FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEE

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS

Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Ancillary Affairs Committee

Report on the Confidence Survey

March 4, 2025

Background

The university conducts a confidence survey related to university administration to assess their performance and improve university functioning. The committee reviewed survey questions to determine if they were still relevant and if changes were needed.

Recommendation

1. For any administrator below Drs. Keenum and Shaw, change the wording of the following question:
“Makes decisions based on what is in the best interest of the University”
to:
“Makes decisions based on what is in the best interest of their unit”
2. Change the wording of the following question: “Conducts themselves in a professional manner when interacting with faculty, staff, and students”
to:
“Effectively supports their faculty, staff, and students”
3. Add questions related to the confidence in the Faculty Senate.

Discussion

The committee members felt that some questions could be reworded to make them more useful and provide more specific feedback. For example, the question “Makes decisions based on what is in the best interest of the University” might not be applicable to every administrator. A department head might have a limited ability to affect decisions at the university level. The role of a department head is to lead the department, and if they act in the best interest of their unit, they also act in the best interest of the university. Similarly, we thought that the question “Conducts themselves in a professional manner when interacting with faculty, staff, and students” was not very helpful and suggested changing it to “Effectively supports their faculty, staff, and students.” That question would be more helpful in assessing how effective the administrator is in effectively supporting/managing their unit. The committee also recommends including questions related to confidence in the Faculty Senate. Although the questions would not focus on a specific individual, they would help increase the senate’s visibility and provide feedback on faculty concerns that the senate should address.

Committee Members: Robert Grala (Chair) – CFR, Christine Coker - CALS/MAFES, Robin Fontenot – CVM, Rocky Lemus – EXT, K.C. New – LIB, Lauren Priddy – ENG, Tara Sutton - A&S.

CHARTER & BYLAWS

Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Charter & Bylaws Committee

Report on Suggested Updates to the Faculty Handbook

March 7, 2025

Background

During the fall 2024 semester, the Charter & Bylaws Committee of the faculty senate was asked to consider how the faculty handbook may be edited to allow for faculty to receive credit for innovation and entrepreneurship activities (PTIE) and to address the new Schools that are being led by deans in Meridian. In its January 2025 meeting, the senate received a letter from Dr. Jim Dunne in the provost's office asking about other items in Section V. of the faculty handbook. Finally, in the February 2025 meeting, Senator Julie Parker asked if Section V., Part C. of the handbook might be edited for clarity.

Recommendation

The Charter & Bylaws Committee recommends that the full Robert Holland Faculty Senate vote on the changes to Sections II. and V. of the faculty handbook that are noted in the attached document.

Discussion

On October 25, 2024, the Charter & Bylaws Committee (CBC) met virtually via Microsoft Teams to discuss PTIE and how to address deans leading Schools in Meridian. These requests were discussed, and the committee was ready to present the resulting changes to Section V. of the handbook but decided to wait to present them because additional changes were expected after considering issues in Dr. Jim Dunne's letter to the senate.

The CBC met on Jan. 31, 2025, via Microsoft Teams to discuss Dr. Dunne's questions: should annual reviews and/or the third-year review (for tenure track faculty) be required at the university level to be included in promotion and/or tenure dossiers to allow certification as satisfactory in the new four areas mandated by the IHL, and what university officials should have access to personnel file information as related to the P&T application process?

The CBC is of the opinion that access to faculty personnel files should be as restricted as possible in the P&T process. Therefore, we explicitly list the administrators who may view the

personnel file in the P&T review. Note that these administrators already have access to personnel files, so we are explicitly listing them so that others do not assume they may have access. The C&B committee recognizes that faculty members may choose to include their annual reviews and third-year review as supporting documents in their P&T application but believes that it is not necessary to include either of these items into the P&T dossier to certify a candidate as satisfactory in the new four areas mandated by the IHL. The handbook already states that a faculty member is to be considered satisfactory in these areas unless clear and consistent evidence exists that they are not. This clear and consistent evidence may come from the dossier or, more likely, from the personnel file. If from the dossier, the P&T reviewers would already have access. If from the personnel file, then our suggested changes require that when any negative statements in a P&T review are based on personnel file information, that fact must be transparently stated with the related personnel file information provided to the committee(s) and administrator(s) in the continuing review. The candidate would also have an opportunity to address the raised issue under our existing language in the handbook.

Based on Senator Parker's request, the committee has provided non-substantive edits to attempt to make Section V., Part C. of the handbook read more clearly.

Potential changes to Section V. (P&T) of the handbook must be presented at 2 regularly scheduled senate meetings before a vote can be held on such changes. This March 2025 meeting is the second time the changes of substance to Section V. have been presented.

An update to Section II., Part C. of the handbook is also shown in the attached document. It was made due to a senior university administrator title change.

Committee Members: James Chamberlain, Courtney Crist, Michael Jaffe, Andrew Jarosz, Stephanie Lemley, Matthew Priddy, Paul Spurlin (Chair), and Barry Stewart

II. Administrative Organization

A. Board of Trustees

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

B. The President

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

C. Other Senior Administrative Positions

Provost and Executive Vice President

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

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

Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine

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

Vice President for Development and Alumni

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

Vice President for Research and Economic Development

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

Vice President for Student Affairs

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

Vice President for Finance and Administration (CFO)

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

Vice President for Access, Opportunity, and Success (VPAOS)

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

Vice President for Access, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Vice President for Access, Diversity, and Inclusion (VPADI) serves as the senior diversity and inclusion advisor to the university president and has administrative responsibility to provide strategic and programmatic leadership for access, diversity, and inclusion initiatives that advance equity as a critical component of social, academic, and intellectual life at MSU. The VPADI provides vision and leadership to effectively integrate inclusion into the work of MSU, working closely with university leadership and the university community to shape and implement investments, plans, and strategies aligned with institutional goals and creating a welcoming environment for all. This includes facilitating and coordinating university strategic planning and prioritization in the areas of diversity and inclusion, conducting periodic climate surveys, and working collaboratively to develop and implement strategies and initiatives that advance a climate of diversity and inclusion and support.

V. Promotion and Tenure Procedures

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

A. Scope

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

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

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

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

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

B. Academic Rank

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

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

Tenure-Track Positions

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

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

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

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

Professional-Track Positions

Teaching Professor Ranks:

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

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

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

Professor of Practice Ranks:

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

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

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

Clinical/Extension/Research Professor Ranks:

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

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

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

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

Instructor Ranks:

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

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

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

Clinical/Extension Instructor Ranks:

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

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

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

C. Faculty Advancement

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

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

Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-Track Faculty

Promotion

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

Tenure

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

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

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

Dismissal of Tenured Faculty of this document.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Further, collegiality:

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

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

Probationary Period

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

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

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

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

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

Relationship Between Promotion and Tenure

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

Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities for Tenure-Track Faculty

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

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

In addition, a tenure-track faculty member's performance will be judged based on criteria in written policy statements developed by the appropriate academic units. In evaluating a tenure-track faculty member being considered for tenure and/or promotion, the appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give adequate consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function of their relative academic workload assignments within the seven categories required by the IHL Board. Adequate consideration of a tenure case consists of a conscientious review, which seeks out and considers all available evidence bearing on the relevant performance of the faculty member and assumes that the various academic units follow their approved procedural guidelines during the tenure and promotion review process. Such consideration should be based upon adequate deliberation over the evidence in light of relevant standards and exclusive of improper standards (i.e., any criterion not

related to the professional performance of the faculty member). The evaluation of a tenure case should constitute a bona fide exercise of professional academic judgment.

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

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

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

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

Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review

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

Annual Evaluation and Review of Tenure-Track Faculty

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

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

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

No record in personnel files relating to promotion or tenure is to be added, changed, or withdrawn without the knowledge of the faculty member and the unit administrator. With respect to promotion and/or tenure, Personnel files are confidential and are available only to the faculty member and the following individuals: department head (or equivalent), dean/director (or equivalent), university provost and executive vice-president, and university president. Appropriate administrators will make all pertinent information available to the faculty member's personnel file is used to reflect negatively upon a candidate for promotion and/or tenure, the individual providing the negative reflection must transparently state the fact and make the information available to elected promotion and tenure committee(s) and administrator(s) who are part of the continuing review of the candidate's application for promotion and/or tenure, or when the information is needed in a related appeals or grievance case. If material from a personnel file (or other material that is not in the candidate's promotion or tenure application) is provided to a committee or administrator, then the candidate will be provided a copy of the material and an opportunity to submit their written comments regarding the material before the material is considered by the committee or administrator. Otherwise, no additions will be made.

Promotion of Professional-Track Faculty

Promotion

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

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

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

In evaluating a professional-track faculty member being considered for promotion, the appropriate faculty committees and academic administrators will give adequate consideration to the faculty member's professional performance as a function of their relative academic workload assignments within the seven IHL defined criteria included below as stated in the faculty member's offer letter. Adequate consideration for promotion consists of a conscientious review, which seeks out and considers all

available evidence bearing on the relevant performance of the faculty member, and assumes that the various academic units follow their approved procedural guidelines during the promotion review process. Such consideration should be based upon adequate deliberation over the evidence in light of relevant standards and exclusive of improper standards (i.e. any criterion not related to the professional performance of the faculty member). The evaluation of a promotion case should constitute a bona fide exercise of professional academic judgement.

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

1. *Professional training and experience;*
2. *Effectiveness of teaching:* Criteria for assessing instructional activities may include regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work, internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations; development of educational materials; conduct of other academic programs that confer university credit; invited presentation of non-credit and off-campus lectures and demonstrations; and other teaching activities as defined by the academic units. Excellence in teaching as defined by the current academic operating policy/policies includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods, and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students in their own research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline. Excellence in teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student awards, student evaluations, student successes, faculty teaching awards, recognition of teaching excellence, sample course materials, recordings of teaching sessions, graduate student theses and dissertations, and any other documentary materials that demonstrate teaching effectiveness on the university campus or at the national or international level.
3. *Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;* The IHL Board endorses the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states in part: "When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."
4. *Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional ethics, cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;*

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

6. *Professional growth, such as research, publications, and creative activities.* Research is not an expectation of instructional faculty (i.e. Teaching Professors, Professors of Practice, and Instructors) and should not be a requirement for promotion. Research that allows the instructional faculty member to remain active in their discipline or that contributes to their excellence in instruction or service may be included in the evaluation.

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

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

Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review of Professional-Track Faculty

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

member will agree by signature to the understood and agreed upon terms of employment.

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

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

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

DE. Promotion and Tenure Committees

University Committee on Promotion and Tenure

The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure serves five functions:

- To advise the provost on promotion and tenure matters, including the review of criteria, policies, and procedures for promotion and tenure used by schools or colleges;
- To review suggested changes in this document;
- To review and approve appropriate requests related to variations made during the review process;
- To hear appeals from faculty members whose nominations for promotion or tenure have been denied; and

- To hear appeals from tenured faculty members who have been recommended for termination.

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

College Promotion and Tenure Committees

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

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

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

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

Department and School Promotion and Tenure

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

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

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

- Committee members must hold a rank (i.e., 2, 3) at or above the candidate's aspirant rank to vote on each case. For example, a Rank 2 faculty member cannot vote on a candidate's promotion to Rank 3. The department promotion and tenure policies shall describe the procedures that will be followed if sufficient numbers of members are not available because of absence, recusal or insufficient rank. Only tenured faculty may vote on a tenure recommendation;
- Unless a unit uses a committee-of-the-whole, the members of the committee must be elected. The length of terms will be determined by the unit;
- No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative. Appearance of conflicts of interest should be avoided;
- No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director of an academic unit will be a member of the committee;
- A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may observe but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure review at the department level. The committee will annually elect its chair;
- The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and
- An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being considered.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EF. Procedures for Faculty Promotion and Tenure

Notification of Application for Promotion and/or Tenure

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

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

External Letters

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

In the case of professorial tracks, external reviewers should be faculty at peer to peer-plus institutions, or peer to peer-plus departments. In the case of instructor tracks, external reviewers must be external to the department, but may be internal or external to the university. External faculty reviewers should not include individuals who have a professional or personal conflict-of-interest with the candidate. Conflicts-of-interest in general would include but not necessarily be restricted to previous mentors, previous graduate students, collaborating co-authors, collaborating co-investigators, or

relatives/past-relatives. In disciplines or fields where the general conflict-of-interest definition commonly does not apply, external reviewers normally excluded from the process can be utilized if complete and adequate justification is provided. Definition of what constitutes a conflict-of-interest may be further defined in the department promotion and tenure document and be in accord with the Policy and Procedures Document for Conflict-of-Interest and Ethics (Department of Human Resources and Management: Employee Relations Section Mississippi Code of 1972 Sections 25-4-101 through 25-4-105). The candidate, the department promotion and tenure committee, and department head will each provide a list of names that will be used to create a master list of potential external reviewers.

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

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

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

Candidate Application

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

A complete dossier for promotion and tenure for the official review process will include the application submitted by the candidate and at least the minimum of four external letters of review. Only complete dossiers for promotion and tenure that contain the application for the candidate and the minimum number of external letters will be evaluated at the level of the department promotion and tenure committee, department head, college committee, college dean, and university provost. Except for the candidate's optional letters of factual correction (described below), the candidate takes no part in the process after submission of the application, unless requested to do so by those considering the dossier. No discussion of correspondence relating to the dossier is to be initiated by the candidate with the reviewing authorities. Deliberation at all levels will be confidential.

Dossier Review

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

The department head or director will review the dossier and make a recommendation based on pertinent evidence documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier and information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in professional activities. The department head must provide written justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and service have been met. Written justification must also be provided if it is believed the faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining criteria. The candidate will receive a copy of the department

head's or director's letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the department head's or director's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the department head or director will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chronology

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

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

By October 1 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified in the department promotion and tenure document, a faculty member eligible for consideration for

986 promotion and/or tenure must have provided the department head with all pertinent and
987 available information to apply for consideration.

988
989 By November 15 (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified by the college
990 promotion and tenure document, each faculty member's complete dossier will be
991 provided to the college promotion and tenure committee. This will include letters of
992 recommendation and rationale from both the department promotion and tenure
993 committee and the department head. Each of these letters of recommendation and
994 rationale will be copied to the candidate. The letters will be redacted only insofar as
995 necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. These letters must include a
996 summary of the procedures followed by the academic unit in evaluating the candidate
997 and the committee's and head's independent evaluation of the candidate's teaching
998 effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and service to the profession and
999 university. The chair of the college promotion and tenure committee is responsible for
1000 inserting letters of recommendation and rationale from the department head and the
1001 department promotion and tenure committee, along with any letters related to correction
1002 of factual errors at the department level, into the dossier of each candidate reviewed by
1003 the college promotion and tenure committee.

1004
1005 By December 15 (or first working day thereafter) or earlier if specified by the college
1006 promotion and tenure document, the college promotion and tenure committee's letter of
1007 recommendation and rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the college dean.
1008 Letters of recommendation and rationale shall be copied to the candidate. The letters
1009 will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers.
1010 The letter concerning each candidate must include the committee's summary of the
1011 procedures followed by the college committee in evaluating the candidate and the
1012 committee's evaluation of the candidate in regards to the seven criteria required by the
1013 IHL Board. The college promotion and tenure committee chair is responsible to provide
1014 the dean with each candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of review.
1015 For each candidate, the dean is responsible for collection and inclusion of any letters
1016 related to correction of factual errors at the college level.

1017
1018 By January 15 (or first working day thereafter), the dean's letter of recommendation and
1019 rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the provost and copied to the candidate.
1020 The letter concerning each candidate must include the dean's evaluation of the
1021 candidate with regards to the seven criteria required by the IHL Board. The dean is
1022 responsible to provide the provost with each candidate's dossier including letters from
1023 previous stages of review. Copies of publications, works of art, etc., will be included only
1024 if specifically requested by the provost.

1025
1026 By March 10 (or first working day thereafter), the provost will have reviewed each
1027 candidate's dossier and will make a recommendation to the university president. The
1028 provost must provide written justification that the criteria of teaching, research, and
1029 service have been met. Written justification must also be provided if it is believed the
1030 faculty member does not meet any of the four remaining criteria. Copies of the
1031 provost's recommendation will be sent to the candidate with copies to the dean,

department head, and chairs of college and department promotion and tenure committees.

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

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

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

FG. Appeals

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

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

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

The committee will review all available pertinent information and will conduct interviews with appropriate persons, i.e., appellant, unit head, unit committee chair, dean, college committee chair and provost. The committee will render its recommendation, in writing,

to the provost. The committee will also provide a copy of this written recommendation to the candidate.

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

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

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

GH. Non-reappointment / Dismissal of Faculty

o *Professional-Track Faculty*

members will be notified in writing of the university's intention not to renew their contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 404.02:

- Notice of intention not to renew non-tenure track personnel shall be furnished in writing thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the contract. Notice of non-Renewal of employees with written contracts, other than those covered in IHL Board Policy 403.0102, is 30 days.

- o Lack of Funds-Notice of termination of non-tenure track personnel prior to expiration of the contract due to a lack of funds shall be furnished in writing thirty (30) days prior to termination

o *Non-tenured Tenure track Faculty*

members will be notified in writing of the university's intention not to renew their contracts as provided in IHL Board Policy 403.0102:

- Not later than March 1 before the date of contract termination during the first year of service;
- Not later than December 1 before the date of contract termination during the second year of service; or
- Not later than September 1 before the date of contract termination after two or more years of service.

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

o *Dismissal of Tenured Faculty*

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

- Financial exigencies as declared by the Board;
- Termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as approved by the Board;

- 1119 • Malfeasance, inefficiency or contumacious conduct; or
1120 • For legitimate and justifiable cause.

1121 Termination for cause of a tenured faculty member or the dismissal for cause of a
1122 faculty member prior to the expiration of a term appointment will not be
1123 recommended by the institutional executive officer until the faculty member has been
1124 afforded the opportunity for a hearing. In no event will the contract of a tenured
1125 faculty member be terminated for cause without the faculty member being afforded
1126 the opportunity for a hearing.

1127 In all cases, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action
1128 against them and that they have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense.
1129 Within ten (10) working days from the date of the university president's decision, the
1130 faculty member will state in writing their desire to have a hearing. They will be
1131 permitted to have with them an adviser of their own choosing who may be an
1132 attorney. The institution is directed to record (suitable for transcription) all hearings.
1133 In the hearing of charges of incompetence, the testimony will include that of faculty
1134 and other scholars.

1135
1136 Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for financial exigencies or termination
1137 or reduction of program, academic or administrative units will remain employed for a
1138 minimum of 9 to 12 months, consistent with current contract periods of time, from
1139 date of notification. Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for malfeasance,
1140 inefficiency, contumacious conduct or for a legitimate and justifiable cause will have
1141 their contracts terminated at any time subsequent to notice including the right to
1142 have a hearing with no right to continued employment for any period of time. At the
1143 discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer, any faculty member's salary may be
1144 paid, and they may be relieved of all teaching duties, assignments, appointments
1145 and privileges when they are dismissed for any reasons stated above or pending a
1146 termination hearing.

1147

APPROVED:

/s/

Jason Barrett, Faculty Senate President

Date

/s/

David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President

Date

/s/ Mark E. Keenum

Mark E. Keenum, President

Date

FACULTY AFFAIRS

Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Faculty Affairs Committee

Report on AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses

March 4, 2025

Background

On February 25, 2025, Robert Holland Faculty Senate President Robert Banik assigned AOP 11.05, Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses, to the Faculty Affairs Committee for approval of recession. This AOP is being marked for recession as the contents of the AOP are now part of AOP 12.12, Credit and Grades.

Recommendation

The Faculty Affairs committee recommends that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve to have AOP 11.05: Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses rescinded.

Discussion

The members of the Faculty Affairs Standing Committee voted to approve rescinding AOP 11.05 by an email vote.

No comments or concerns were brought up from the members of the committee.

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



AOP 11.05: REQUIREMENTS FOR SHORTENED-FORMAT COURSES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to establish the requirements for shortened-format courses offered at Mississippi State University.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

This AOP applies to courses offered in fewer than 15 weeks. The total contact minutes must be equivalent to the minutes required for courses with the same credit offered during 15-week terms. Undergraduate student courseload limits are referenced in AOP 12.22.

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.

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:

<u>/s/ Peter Ryan</u> Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School	<u>11/9/2022</u> Date
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<u>/s/ David Shaw</u> Provost and Executive Vice President	<u>11/16/2022</u> Date
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<u>/s/ Jason Barrett</u> President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate	<u>3/10/2023</u> Date
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<u>/s/ Tracey N. Baham</u> Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness	<u>3/20/2023</u> Date
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<u>/s/ Joan Lucas</u> General Counsel	<u>3/31/2023</u> Date
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APPROVED:

<u>/s/ Mark E. Keenum</u> President	<u>5/22/2023</u> Date
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AOP 11.05

STUDENT AFFAIRS
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS