WEAPONS POLICY

Policy Statement

The safety of the University’s campuses is of paramount importance to the Administration of The University of Southern Mississippi. In an effort to ensure the safety of our campuses in compliance with the State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) policies and in light of statutory enactments of the Mississippi Legislature, the University has developed this policy regarding the possession of weapons on its campuses. This policy is required for the effective communication of University policy regarding the possession of weapons by employees, students, guests and visitors on all campuses of The University of Southern Mississippi.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

The University of Southern Mississippi recognizes that the possession of weapons on its campuses or at University or student functions off-campus, by persons other than duly authorized law enforcement officials, other authorized persons, and those participating in University approved programs, creates an unreasonable and unwarranted risk of injury or death to its employees, students, visitors, and guests, and further creates an unreasonable and unwarranted risk of damage to property of the University and of its employees, students, visitors, guests and properties of others. The University of Southern Mississippi must comply with the State Institutions of Higher Learning policies, state law, and any other locally applicable laws or regulations regarding the possession of weapons, including firearms, on its campuses. This policy is being implemented to protect the health and safety of the students, employees, guests and visitors on all of The University of Southern Mississippi campuses.

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All employees, students, guests and visitors of The University of Southern Mississippi community.

Website Address for this Policy
Definitions

For purposes of this policy, a weapon is any dangerous instrument if it is used, attempted or threatened to be used, or is readily capable of being used to cause death or serious physical injury, including but not limited to the following: firearms (any weapon from which a shot, projectile, or other object may be discharged by force, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded), bombs, knives (except small, personal, pocket knives with a folding blade no longer than three (3) inches, or culinary knives with blades of four (4) inches or less used exclusively for food preparation), slingshots, etc.

Policy/Procedures

I. POSSESSION OF WEAPONS/FIREARMS

The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg Campus, Gulf Park Campus, and Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Gulf Coast Sites) prohibits the possession of pistols, firearms or other weapons in any form by any person other than duly authorized law enforcement officials, institutional security officials and other authorized persons.

“Authorized persons” includes those individuals authorized by applicable law and by the institutional executive officer or his/her designee. “Authorized persons” also includes those who have in their possession a valid, unexpired state firearms permit with the “Instructor Certified” (IC) sticker on the back, or the equivalent permit issued by a state with a reciprocity agreement with Mississippi.

Even so, those possessing such permits are not permitted to possess firearms in any institutional facilities and/or areas that are deemed non-public. Students and employees are not authorized to possess firearms on institutional property or at institutional off-campus events regardless of possession of firearms permits.

The possession of weapons in violation of this policy may subject one to criminal liability, removal from campus or campus events or facilities, employment discipline, and/or sanctions under the University Student Code of Conduct system.

II. PUBLIC LOCATIONS – The definition of public locations contained herein is only for the purpose of this policy.

A. Hattiesburg:

- The Union Complex (Hub, R.C. Cook and Thad Cochran Center); except for administrative offices
• Eagle Dining Facilities (not located in academic buildings); including, but not limited to The Fresh Food Company, Seymour’s, Power House, A Stone’s Throw, and Starbuck’s
• Joseph Cook Library; except for administrative offices, classrooms, or the Writing and Speaking Centers
• McCain Library and Archives; except for administrative offices or other restricted areas
• Barnes and Nobles Bookstore; except for administrative offices
• Outdoor areas not otherwise designated as a non-public location

B. Gulf Park:

• Hardy Hall; first floor area only, except for administrative offices
• Gulf Park Library; except for administrative offices, classrooms, or the Think Center
• Outdoor areas not otherwise designated as a non-public location

C. GCRL:

• Halstead Campus
  o Gunter Library, during scheduled business hours only; except for administrative offices
  o GCRL Dining Hall, during scheduled business hours only
  o Caylor Auditorium, during advertised public events only
  o Outdoor areas not otherwise designated as a non-public location
• Cedar Point Campus
  o Thad Cochran Aquaculture Visitors Pavilion; except for administrative offices or other restricted areas
  o Marine Education Center (facilities under construction) - TBD
  o Outdoor areas not otherwise designated as a non-public location

III. NON-PUBLIC LOCATIONS - The definition of non-public locations contained herein is only for the purpose of this policy.

A. Hattiesburg Campus, include but are not limited to:

• Academic buildings, including, but not limited to, classrooms, labs, galleries, museums, performance spaces, research facilities and Eagle Dining facilities within academic buildings
• Administrative offices and buildings
• Lake Thoreau Environmental Center
• Athletic facilities; including, but not limited to Reed Green Coliseum, M.M. Roberts Stadium, Pete Taylor Park, Marshall Bell Track and Field/Soccer
complex, Softball Complex, Tennis Facility, and The Judson Family Golf Facility
- Residential facilities; including, but not limited to residence halls, The Village (Sororities), fraternity houses and related outdoor spaces, and Cedarbrook II Apartments
- Payne Center, Natatorium, and Outdoor Center; including, but not limited to all outdoor recreational spaces and facilities
- Moffitt Health Center
- Center for Military Veterans, Service Members and Families
- Collegiate Recovery Community House
- Center for Child Development
- The Children's Center for Communication & Development
- DuBard School for Language Disorders
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (Peck House)
- Any facilities/buildings not designated as public locations

B. Gulf Park Campus include; but are not limited to:
- Academic buildings; including, but not limited to, classrooms, labs, galleries, and research facilities
- Health Center
- Fitness Center; including, but not limited to, all outdoor recreation spaces and facilities
- Administrative offices and buildings; with the exception of the publicly accessible first floor of Hardy Hall
- Any facilities/buildings not designated as public locations

C. GCRL; include, but are not limited to:
- Administrative offices and buildings at Halstead and Cedar Point Campuses
- Academic and research buildings at Halstead and Cedar Point Campuses; including, but not limited to classrooms, labs, and aquaculture facilities
- Point Cadet Teaching Site Research vessels and docks at Halstead and Cedar Point campuses and Point Cadet Teaching Site
- GCRL Museum
- GCRL residential facilities, including but not limited to Dormitory, Quad Trailer, Faculty House and cottages
- Any facilities/buildings not designated as public locations

D. Other Gulf Coast Locations; include, but are not limited to:
- Gulf Coast Center for Child Development
- Stennis Space Center Teaching Site
• Huckleberry Hill property
• Any facilities/buildings not designated as public locations

**Review**

The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for the review of this policy every four years (or whenever circumstances require immediate review).

**Forms/Instructions**

N/A

**Appendices**

N/A

**Related Information**

N/A

**History**

11/01/11: Formatted for Institutional Policies website.
03/04/13: Formatted for template. Minor editing throughout.
04/12/16: Reviewed by Executive Cabinet, revised and updated.
Authorization

RECOMMENDED BY:

[Signature]
Responsible University Administrator

[Signature]
Responsible University Officer

REVIEWED BY:

[Signature]
Director of Compliance and Ethics

[Signature]
Office of General Counsel

APPROVED:

[Signature]
President

Date

8.23.16

Date

8-25-16

Date

8/24/16

Date

8.23.2016

Date

8.23.16