



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

To: Rodney D. Bennett
President

From: Steven R. Moser 
Provost

Date: June 22, 2018

Subject: Faculty Handbook: Unification Policy

Dr. Bennett,

Attached you will find the Faculty Handbook Committee's *Unification* or "bridge" policy. The subcommittee of the Faculty Handbook Committee that formulated the policy included a representative from General Counsel and the full committee followed standard protocol in vetting and approving the policy. A bridge policy has become necessary due to the lag time between structural changes in the Academy and the revision of evaluation documents and the Faculty Handbook. I support this policy and seek your approval to implement between July 1, 2018 and May 31, 2019.

REQUEST APPROVED:



Rodney D. Bennett, President



Date

Faculty Handbook Committee Report Second Vote Passed on Unification Policy (AKA Bridge Language for 2017/2018 to 2018/2019 year)

Passed First Vote, May 18, 2018

Edited after receiving comments. Edits took place on 06/13/2018 to be submitted to the FHC for second vote.

Passed Second Vote, June 18, 2018

Annual Evaluation and Tenure/Promotion Unification Policy

Policy Statement

This unification policy is intended to provide a framework for annual evaluation and tenure and promotion for faculty. This policy is also intended to provide continuity regarding performance expectations of faculty hired into the tenure track from the 2012/2013 through 2018/2019 academic years. University processes will change as the University transitions to Vision 2020, and this policy will ensure that the new schools and colleges will respect the most recent performance expectations that were in place prior to the reorganization. This policy serves tenure-track faculty who have not yet been tenured (pre-tenured faculty) during the transition phase to Vision 2020 and will expire for them on May 31, 2024. This policy also serves other faculty seeking promotion during the transition phase to Vision 2020 and will expire for them on May 31, 2019.

Reason for Policy

This policy provides continuity in expectations – as detailed in departmental tenure and promotion guidelines – for faculty hired into the tenure track from the 2012/2013 through 2018/2019 academic years. The policy exists to require schools and colleges to respect the most recent performance expectations of pre-tenured faculty established prior to the reorganization. For practical reasons, all faculty within a school will be evaluated by the same process. However, the evaluation must be in line with the most recent performance expectations that were present prior to reorganization.

Who Needs to Know this Policy

Faculty, School Directors, College Deans, Provost, and President

Policy and Procedures

In general, annual evaluations, pre-tenure review, and tenure and promotion are to be conducted as outlined in the Faculty Handbook in effect during the year of evaluation. While the evaluation processes will be the same for all faculty within a school, pre-tenured faculty will be evaluated using the most recent performance expectations that were in place prior to the reorganization. It is the responsibility of the school director to inform the evaluation committee of this requirement and to provide the committee with a copy of the expectations that apply to each pre-tenured faculty member under review.

The 2017-2018 Faculty Handbook outlines the process and procedures for conducting the various levels of faculty review. The process and procedures for faculty review outlined in the 2017-2018 Faculty Handbook will remain in force until superseded by the adoption of the new Faculty Handbook established as a result of Vision 2020. Generally, the school committee structures will replace the department committee structures established in the 2017-2018 Faculty Handbook. Also, the role of school director will replace the terminology of chair or director as described in the 2017-2018 Faculty Handbook. When feasible, school committee structures must include disciplinary peers for the evaluation of pre-tenured faculty members.

Pre-tenured faculty members must either opt in or opt out for evaluation under the new school tenure and promotion guidelines and expectations as they become available. Pre-tenured faculty members must notify the school director in writing of their decision. Faculty members who fail to notify their school directors will automatically be evaluated using the most recent performance expectations that were available prior to reorganization.