

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

FACULTY HANDBOOK COMMITTEE

REVISION OF THE FINAL BYLAWS (APPROVED BY COMMITTEE ON APRIL 5, 2011)

(Approved by President Martha Saunders 6-1-11)

ARTICLE I

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Faculty Handbook Committee considers revisions, modifications and amendments to the handbook on the basis of proposals submitted by members of the faculty or administration. If approved by the committee, changes are formally recommended to the University President for a final decision.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members

Voting Appointed Members:

- *Member of the Faculty appointed by the President

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will appoint four faculty members to the committee:

- *A member of the Faculty Senate
- *A non-member of the Faculty Senate
- *A member of the faculty at large
- *A member from the Gulf Coast Faculty

Voting Ex-officio

- Assistant or Associate Provost
- Assistant or Associate Vice President for Research

Voting Elected Members:

- A dean selected by the College Deans
- A chair selected by the Council of Chairs

Non-voting Ex-officio

- General Counsel

* - Must be regular tenure stream faculty below the level of Department Chair or School Director.

Section 2. Terms

The Faculty Handbook Committee Membership shall serve staggered three-year terms. The University Counsel member will serve permanently as Ex-officio on the committee. Terms will begin on September 1, and end on August 31. For the purpose of the initial adoption of these Bylaws terms will have begun on September 1, 2011. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms unless there are no available replacements from within the appointing office (i.e. Office of the Provost and Office of the Vice President for Research)

The committee will be split into two groups. Group 1 shall initially serve a two-year term. Group 2 shall initially serve a three-year term. From those points forward both groups shall serve staggered three-year terms. The Chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee is responsible for notifying represented offices and bodies of term completions and the need for newly appointed or elected members by April 1 of the academic year prior to the replacement being named. Replacements for committee members who do not complete their terms, or are no longer members of their constituency groups, shall serve out the remainder of the 3-year term and are eligible to be elected by their constituency group for additional terms.

The Groups are assigned as follows:

Group 1 (2-year term beginning by 1 September 2011)

- Assistant or Associate Provost
- Non-member of the Faculty Senate appointed by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate
- Member of the Faculty appointed by the President
- A chair selected by the Council of Chairs
- Faculty at-large member appointed by the Faculty Senate

Group 2 (3-year term beginning by 1 September 2011)

- Assistant or Associate Vice President for Research
- Faculty Senate member appointed by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate
- A dean selected by the College Deans
- A member from the Gulf Coast Faculty

Section 3. Election of the Chair

The Faculty Handbook Committee will elect a Chair annually from the Faculty Senate appointees. Chairs may serve up to three consecutive one-year terms. The chair of the committee will be a voting member of the committee.

Section 4. Proxies and Vacancies

Proxies: All members of the Faculty Handbook Committee are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. In the case that a member of the committee must be absent from a meeting it is expected that a proxy will be named to represent the committee member at the meeting. It is preferred that the proxy be chosen from the members of the represented constituency. In the case of an extended absence from the university committee members are expected to name a long-term proxy for a set term as communicated to the chair. All proxies must be reported by the sitting member of the committee to the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee at least one day prior to the meeting the proxy will attend. It is the committee member's responsibility to notify the chair via email of need for a proxy and the name of the proxy. Proxies retain voting privileges in representing regular committee members. If the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee is not notified of a proxy attending at least one day prior to the meeting, the proxy may attend the meeting but will forfeit voting privileges. Proxies may not represent more than one voting member of the committee.

Vacancies: Should a position on the Faculty Handbook Committee be vacated for any reason the Chair of the Committee shall notify the body or office from which the position was vacated of the need for a replacement. It is expected that replacements will be in place by the next scheduled meeting of the Committee. Replacements for members who have not completed their terms, or are no longer members of their constituent groups, shall serve out the remainder of the 3-year terms and will be eligible for election by their constituency groups to additional terms.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Faculty Handbook Committee and communicate the issues raised in the Committee meetings to their represented constituencies. If a member of the Faculty Handbook Committee fails to attend two regularly

scheduled meetings of the Committee in a single academic year without supplying a proxy, he/she shall be notified in writing by the Chair of the Committee that his/her position will be declared vacant in the event of a third absence without a proxy. Upon his/her third absence in a single academic year without a proxy, his/her position shall be declared vacant by the Chair of the Committee and filled immediately by a replacement from the represented office or body.

ARTICLE III

OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 1. Meetings

The Faculty Handbook Committee will meet at least monthly during the academic year and have a quorum for each meeting. A quorum is a majority of members, including at least three members appointed by the Faculty Senate or their proxies. The chair will conduct meetings according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Section 2. Changes to Handbook

Proposals for changes to the Faculty Handbook may be made by any faculty member or by any of the groups represented by the committee. All recommendations shall be brought before the committee for consideration. Proposals should be forwarded to the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee for distribution to all committee members.

Proposals coming before the Faculty Handbook Committee are given two votes. After a first reading, proposed changes are voted on and posted to the committee website, and notice is given to the various constituencies (Faculty Senate, deans, chairs, etc.) that a proposal is under review. Committee members then take the proposal to their constituency and report in a timely manner any feedback or suggestions regarding the proposed change. A proposal is considered approved after it passes a second vote by the committee. Editorial or clerical changes can be approved without a second reading upon approval of the majority of the committee.

Changes to the official handbook take effect on July 1 of the next fiscal year. All changes made to the handbook in a given year will be included in an annual appendix.

ARTICLE IV

COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTING

Section 1. Administrator to whom the Committee Reports

The Faculty Handbook Committee reports and makes recommendations to the President of the University. If approved by the committee, changes are formally recommended to the University President for a final decision.

Section 2. Clerical Help

The Faculty Handbook Committee will have clerical assistance from the Office of the Provost. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will select the staff member who will assist the committee.

Section 3. Minutes

Minutes of the Faculty Handbook Committee meetings are recorded by the chair and approved by the committee members. The approved minutes are distributed to the Provost Office staff member for distribution to the committee members, chairs, deans, the Provost and the President.

Section 4. Website Location and Changes

The Faculty Handbook Committee will communicate to the University community utilizing an appropriate website. The Faculty Handbook Committee website will be the primary resource regarding amendments/revisions in the *Faculty Handbook*, committee minutes, membership list, and bylaws. The Provost Office staff member and Faculty Handbook Committee Chair will be responsible for posting the approved committee minutes within 60 days of the committee's meeting, using an appropriate website. Past minutes are kept on the website for a minimum of five years.

Section 5. System for Preserving Minutes, Changes and Copies

The most current copy of the *Faculty Handbook* is retained by the Office of the Provost and is designated as the official *Faculty Handbook*. The Provost Office will be responsible for keeping records of amendments and revisions to the *Faculty Handbook* and disseminating the amendments and revisions to the faculty.

Section 6. Annual Report

An annual report will be written by the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee and submitted to the President of the University at the end of the academic year. By July 1st of each year, the Faculty Handbook Committee chair will submit a copy of the annual report to the Committee on Committees along with a letter from the President acknowledging receipt of the report. The annual report will include the major yearly activities of the committee, along with a list of amendments and revisions which have been approved by the President during the year.