

# **Mississippi University for Women Faculty Handbook**

## **CONDITIONS FOR FACULTY EMPLOYMENT**

### **CONTRACTS**

Faculty contracts for the academic year and/or their accompanying cover letters will specify the teaching load, the salary, the contract period, and any administrative duties, if applicable. The normal teaching load is twelve semester hours each term for a total of 24 hours per academic year. In some instances, contact hours may be used instead of teaching hours to determine the teaching load. Normally, a contact load of 18-20 hours will be considered equivalent to a 12-hour teaching load. Where necessary, this teaching load may be varied from one term to another to provide a full teaching load of 24 hours or the equivalent for the academic year. The contracts and/or letters also will indicate that, on occasion, faculty may be assigned evening or weekend courses and their teaching assignment may be reassigned to other duties. Faculty should note that the contract period begins a few days before the first day of classes and ends typically a week after commencement so that faculty may participate in important departmental and campus activities and meetings. Although contracts may not cover summer-school teaching assignments, faculty interested in teaching during summer school should consult their department chairs. If summer-school teaching is available, regular full-time faculty from the current academic year (defined as fall and spring preceding the summer school sessions) are eligible to receive a percentage (currently 8%) of their nine-month base salary for each three-hour course taught. In addition, faculty may be eligible to teach course overloads. If interested, faculty should consult their department chairs as well as Policy 1307: Part-Time Faculty and Faculty Overloads.

### **INITIAL AND CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT**

The university recognizes two tracks for faculty—tenure track and non-tenure track—along with their respective conditions of initial and continuing employment. Policy 1302: Standards for Initial Appointment and Continuing Employment of Faculty provides information about continuing employment.

### **APPOINTMENT TO GRADUATE FACULTY**

Criteria for appointment to the Graduate Faculty:

1. Hold an earned doctorate or have special competence in an applied field in which the member will serve (teach), e.g., art, music, accounting.
2. Satisfactory evidence of scholarly achievement, e.g., publications, research, creative accomplishments, participation on regional or national programs within the member's subject field of study and successful classroom teaching.

3. Recommendation of the Collegiate Dean to the Director of Graduate Studies. This recommendation must include evidence of need for members on the Graduate Faculty.
4. Recommendation by the Director of Graduate Studies to the Graduate Council and approval by the Graduate Council.

Criteria for the appointment to the Associate Graduate Faculty:

1. Members of the MUW faculty who have completed a minimum of 30 semester hours beyond the master's degree or who hold the master's degree and have special competence in a specific field may be approved to teach specific courses in their field of specialization.
2. The request for approval shall be made by the Collegiate Dean or the Chief Academic Officer, as appropriate, to the Director of Graduate Studies and approved by the Graduate Council.

## **ANNUAL EVALUATIONS**

MUW conducts annual evaluations of all faculty as part of its commitment to continuous improvement. Annual evaluations play a crucial role in promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review. Policy 1314: Standards for the Evaluation of Faculty provides information about evaluations.

## **PROMOTION, TENURE, POST-TENURE REVIEW, AND EMERITUS STATUS**

Depending on their appointments, faculty may be eligible for promotion and/or tenure and may be subject to post-tenure review. Policy 1303: Promotion of Faculty, Policy 1304: Tenure of Faculty and Policy 1312: Post-Tenure Review provide information about these procedures. In addition, tenured faculty members with the rank of assistant professor or above who retire from MUW may be eligible for emeritus status. The conditions and procedures for conferring emeritus status are stipulated in PS #1305: Emeritus Status.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

The university recognizes educational and sabbatical leaves. Policy 1306: Educational and Sabbatical Leaves of Absences for MUW Faculty Members provides information on these types of leaves.

## **OTHER ABSENCES**

Faculty should submit Applications for Leave for all absences, including university business, military/jury duty, and major medical leave. For definitions of different categories of leave, faculty should see the Employment Handbook. Leave for medical reasons (personal illness, illness of immediate family member, and death of immediate family member) will count against medical leave in accordance with state law. Faculty

on less than 12-month contracts already have personal leave built into their contracts. Thus, they should not schedule vacations during their contract period. However, the university recognizes that occasionally faculty may need to be absent for personal reasons. For personal absences that necessitate missing class, faculty should submit Applications for Leave and designate the category of 'other,' since faculty do not receive personal leave per se.

Faculty on leave for whatever reason should always let their department chairs know how to reach them if needed. They also should indicate how they plan to cover missed classes. Faculty who request to be absent from classes should make careful and specific plans for classes missed and should provide a means for checking student attendance. Faculty should not plan absences from classes without making definite plans for the work that students are to accomplish. Such plans may include supplementary library work, reports to be submitted, class discussion under other faculty direction, special papers or projects to be completed, and other specific assignments suited to the courses concerned.

Faculty should fill out their own Applications for Leave and Leave Records and submit them to their department chairs. Faculty whose time has been partially reassigned to duties other than instruction (e.g., part-time administration outside the department) should submit leave applications and leave records to both their department chairs and their other supervisors to ensure accuracy. Applications for Leave should remain in departmental offices for at least three years. Leave Records are submitted to the Office of Human Resources.

## **PERSONNEL BENEFITS, SERVICES, AND RESOURCES**

Faculty receive benefits in accordance with their appointments and contracts. In addition, the Office of Human Resources provides employment services. Faculty interested in learning more about these benefits and services should contact the Office of Human Resources. Faculty also should consult the other sections of the Employment Handbook for important information about personnel matters.

## **FACULTY DUTIES**

### **TEACHING**

Teaching, which is central to the mission of MUW, is the single-most important faculty duty. Thus, faculty should exercise great care in managing their classrooms.

Syllabi: Faculty must provide syllabi for all their courses in accordance with Policy 1309: Course Syllabi. In addition to the required elements cited in that policy, faculty, in consultation with their department chairs, also should include: office location and phone number, office hours, course description and prerequisites, abbreviated versions of, or references to, the university's plagiarism and disabilities policies, the academic calendar (i.e., add/drop, course withdrawal, university withdrawal, and other important dates), a description of assignments, and academic resources on campus. Faculty of team-taught

courses, in consultation with their department chairs, may post office location, phone number, and office hours on their office doors rather than indicate that information in their syllabi.

Office Hours: Teaching faculty should keep regular office hours and post them on their office doors. Faculty should keep, at minimum, six specific office hours per week. However, faculty should consult their department chairs about what is customary, appropriate, and expected in their departments. Faculty who teach online classes should make themselves available online and should post and disseminate the times that they are available online to assist their students.

Record keeping: Faculty should keep careful course records, including attendance and grades. Faculty must report attendance at appropriate times of the semester for financial-aid accountability and must submit midterm and final grades. Faculty should retain grade records from year to year until they leave MUW, at which time they should submit printed copies of all grade and class attendance records to their department chairs. Faculty also should retain papers and other documents supporting course grades for at least one year.

Course evaluations: At the end of every semester, students should have an opportunity to evaluate faculty and courses. Faculty should use the evaluation results to make appropriate improvements.

ADA: MUW complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and other federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. Students with disabilities who wish to receive reasonable accommodations should identify themselves to the Director of Academic Advising and Support Services to initiate the accommodations process. Faculty members are expected to work with that office to implement approved accommodations plans.

## **ADVISING**

Academic advising is an integral part of the teaching assignment. Most faculty will be assigned advisees in their academic disciplines. Faculty must confer with their advisees at minimum once per semester to assist their advisees with course registration during the advising period. During the advising session, faculty will give their advisees RAP numbers so that they can register for classes. Faculty should never give students their RAP numbers without advising them first, and students must always register for their own courses, since they will be academically and financially obligated for those courses. In addition to course registration, academic advising involves reaching out to students, connecting them with support services, exploring career options, and helping them to persist in reaching their academic goals. All advisors should consult the University Bulletin for information about the general-education curriculum, academic policies, and the requirements of the major(s) in which they advise. They also should consult the current edition of the Advisor Manual for additional information about academic policies and for best practices in advising and should seek assistance from the Advising Center, a

resource for general questions about academic policies and course registration. In addition to advising, faculty should be available during Registration Day prior to the beginning of each semester.

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

Faculty should participate in a wide variety of professional activities, which may include delivering papers, conducting and publishing research, performing or creating works of art, attending workshops, applying for grants, and so forth. In addition, faculty are encouraged to participate in relevant learned societies and professional associations. However, except for select institutional memberships, no provision is made for the payment of individual membership dues.

## **UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Faculty should engage in university service, which may include committee assignments, work with student organizations, administrative duties, and so forth. Committees provide opportunities for shared governance. Policies in the 3500 range specify the responsibilities of university committees.

As part of their university service, faculty should participate fully in the life of the university. Their participation includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Commencement: Faculty are expected to participate in the line of march and attend commencement exercises. Faculty wishing to be excused from the ceremonies may apply to their department chairs, who will send their recommendations regarding such requests to their deans and then to the Chief Academic Officer, who makes the final ruling on the requests.

Communication: Faculty should sign up for MUW e-mail accounts as well as appropriate listservs in the Office of Information Technology Services and should check their e-mail regularly, as e-mail is an important vehicle of campus communication.

Meeting Attendance: Faculty should attend departmental, college, and campus-wide meetings.

Collegiality: Faculty should promote a collegial environment and uphold professional standards.

Special projects and initiatives: Faculty should participate in activities that include, but are not limited to, outcomes assessment, program review, recruitment and retention activities, and, whenever possible, summer orientations.

In addition to university service, faculty should engage in community service where their expertise, standing, and leadership may make a contribution and through which university-community relations will be enhanced.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Faculty should engage in on-campus and off-campus opportunities for professional development as part of their plans for continuous improvement in the areas of teaching and advising, professional activity, and university and community service.

## **RESOURCES**

The University provides faculty with resources to assist their teaching and professional activities. Faculty should consult the staff in Fant Memorial Library to learn about available resources and services in the library. In addition, departments typically provide a limited pool of travel money for which faculty attending conferences may apply. The Faculty Senate and the Faculty Research Committee also allocate funds to assist faculty with professional activities. Faculty interested in applying for those funds should consult the appropriate bodies and Policy 3507: Faculty Research Committee. Faculty interested in writing grants should consult the Director of Sponsored Programs for procedures and opportunities.

## **FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

Academic freedom is the privilege and responsibility of faculty employed by Mississippi University for Women. MUW endorses the AAUP and AACU *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom*, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.
2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.
3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. 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.

Although an individual faculty member enjoys academic freedom, the faculty as a body has the right to make collective decisions about course content that the entire faculty must follow. These faculty decisions do not violate academic freedom.

In addition, the University believes in the right of the people, within the framework of constitutional guarantees, to determine the policies of the educational institutions which they support. It also recognizes the separate functions and duties of the Board of Trustees, the Administration, and the Faculty. It considers mutual cooperation on the part of these several groups essential.

## **APPEALS**

Faculty have the right to due process if they feel that their academic freedom has been violated or if they have contractual or other disputes with the administration. Policy 3528: Faculty Appeals Committee describes the appeals process.

## **FACULTY SENATE**

The Faculty Senate represents the MUW faculty and serves as a liaison between faculty and administration on issues of policies, practices, and procedures in areas involving the faculty and the academic program. All full-time faculty are eligible for election to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate website contains the most recent edition of the Faculty Senate Constitution.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

University policies provide procedures that govern appeals, due process, committees, and other university functions. All faculty have the right to initiate policy review, and all full-time faculty may sit on standing committees charged with reviewing university policies. Faculty should consult the Human Resources website for the most recent versions of university policies. In particular, they should consult P.S. 1000, which outlines the process for initiating, reviewing, and eliminating university policies.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The Academic Council, on which each college/school is represented, has responsibility for adopting and revising the University's academic policies and procedures. The Academic Council recommends academic policies and procedures to the Chief Academic Officer, who transmits them to the President with a recommendation for approval, disapproval, or modification. Academic policies approved by the President are published in the University Bulletin, with which faculty members should be familiar.

## **PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Faculty should uphold the highest principles of professional ethics and responsibility, including, but not limited to, the following:

Research: Faculty should maintain the highest standards in research. Policy 1311 Misconduct in Research addresses this issue. Faculty also should consult the Institutional Review Board about specific policies concerning research.

Communication: Faculty should not divulge sensitive information that violates the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or university guidelines.

Social Relationships: Faculty should approach all relationships with university constituencies with honesty, respect, and cooperation, even in stressful or difficult situations. Faculty also should show tolerance towards others and should not allow personal biases to interfere with their teaching or university service.

Responsibility: Faculty should conduct university business dependably, accurately, and efficiently and should promote the safety of self and others. They also should exercise caution when posting sensitive or unprofessional material in a public domain, including personal websites.

Professionalism: Faculty should show professionalism in their personal appearance, attitudes, and conduct at all times.