

**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY  
OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE  
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND VETERINARY MEDICINE AND  
THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH**

**RESEARCH, EXTENSION AND CLINICAL FACULTY POSITIONS**

**PURPOSE**

A comprehensive university requires a cadre of personnel who are able to devote full time to research, extension, and clinical activities. The purpose of this document is to establish a consistent set of titles for such positions and to establish promotion criteria for the positions. Existing procedures are to be used for establishing positions, advertising vacancies, and filling positions. Affirmative action regulations apply to these positions.

**POLICY**

**Position Titles**

Four levels of faculty appointment exist within the Division of Research and the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine that parallel the four academic appointments. These are:

<b>Academic</b>	<b>Research</b>	<b>Extension</b>	<b>Clinical</b>
Instructor	None	Extension Instructor	Clinical Instructor
Assistant Professor	Assist. Research Professor	Assist. Extension Professor	Assist. Clinical Professor
Associate Professor	Assoc. Research Professor	Assoc. Extension Professor	Assoc. Clinical Professor
Professor	Research Professor	Extension Professor	Clinical Professor

The title consists of three distinct elements: rank, discipline, and function. The process for identifying the faculty member's given discipline is illustrated by the following: Associate Professor of Agronomy, Associate Research Agronomist, or Associate Extension Agronomist. These positions may also be known by the discipline name. In this case, Research Historian, Extension Economist, etc. would be appropriate.

The above titles are for faculty without academic appointment. Faculty hired on a split appointment with one part being academic, which constitutes a tenure-track position, will carry a single professorial title consistent with their tenure-track appointment, i.e., assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. Those faculty members who hold joint research, extension, and clinical appointments, including adjunct appointments, but without an academic component, may use one or all titles as deemed useful, e.g., research, extension, or research and extension. Such use should be appropriately related to the variety of functions assumed in pursuit of their given role(s) within the Divisions and the university community. Faculty without an academic component to their appointment may, from time to time, engage in teaching provided they satisfy expectations of the Provost before being assigned, in part, to an academic budget. Such teaching, which must be approved by the department head and dean/director prior to consideration by the

Provost, does not constitute an academic component of appointment and, as such, does not move the individual to a tenure-track appointment.

For faculty on split appointments, units responsible for each element of the appointment are to have input in the promotion and annual review process.

Financial rewards for promotion will be uniform across all units of the Divisions and must be consistent with those of the Mississippi State University faculty.

### **General Criteria for Appointment to Research/Extension/Clinical Positions**

All regulations of Mississippi State University concerning employment and promotion must adhere to the By-Laws and Policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (1970, with subsequent amendments). Specific attention is called to the section Promotion and Tenure Policy and Procedures in the MSU Faculty Handbook, <http://msuinfo.ur.msstate.edu/handbook.fac/> ).

All research/extension/clinical faculty positions are non-tenure track and must be so indicated to prospective and incumbent holders of these positions or titles.

Every person employed by the University is expected to meet high standards of professional integrity, collegiality and objectivity, and to further the goals of his/her unit(s) and the University. In addition, a person of research/extension/clinical rank must have an appropriate degree, or its equivalent in training and experience; a strong commitment to higher education, and in particular to the mission of Mississippi State University; and a willingness to assume the responsibilities and obligations appropriate to a professional or faculty university employee (see Faculty Handbook, <http://msuinfo.ur.msstate.edu/handbook.fac/> ). In addition, the following is appropriate at each level.

1. Extension/Clinical Instructor: A faculty member with a minimum of a professional master's degree appropriate for the discipline, who possesses the potential for successful performance in extension/clinical activity or creative achievement in a university environment.
2. Assistant Research/Extension/Clinical Professor: A faculty member with a terminal degree in the discipline, who possesses the potential for successful performance in research/extension/clinical activity or creative achievement in a university environment.
3. Associate Research/Extension/Clinical Professor: A faculty member who has met the criteria for Assistant Research/Extension/Clinical Professor and has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence appropriate for the rank in research/extension/clinical activity or creative achievement.
4. Research/Extension/Clinical Professor: A faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in research/extension/clinical activity or creative endeavors.

The University recognizes achievement of research/extension/clinical faculty by advances in rank. For this reason, promotion is never granted routinely for simple satisfactory accomplishment. Rank also reflects comparable stature with others in similar disciplines in other university settings. Promotion is based on performance and demonstrated competence and not on

length of service, but a reasonable time must elapse for the individual to demonstrate competence and have it confirmed by periodic evaluation. Professional achievement elsewhere will be considered for promotion.

### **Suggested Performance Standards of Professional Activities**

In every case, the performance of research/extension/clinical faculty members will be judged by all parties involved in promotion decisions on the basis of written policy statements or criteria, i.e., specific requirements, developed by the specific units with which the individual is associated. All criteria should be based on the application of the highest professional standards associated with the university work. Some suggested items to consider in establishing evaluative criteria at the unit level follow.

To qualify for excellence in research/extension/clinical activity or creative achievement<sup>1</sup>, the work must be submitted to a critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the applicable discipline or professional area. It includes such things as development and validation of new knowledge essential for the maintenance of professional development and vitality; providing creative forms that bring greater meaning to life; systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement of human knowledge or solution of contemporary problems; books published by commercial or university presses and articles published in refereed journals of international, national, or regional prestige; other books and published articles; continued success in obtaining grants for research/extension/clinical activities, permitting high quality research, outreach, and clinical activity; acceptance of papers for presentation before professional groups; invited participation in scholarly conferences; editorial and referee work in professional journals or other publications; book reviews in professional journals; artistic or humanistic presentations; evidence of substantive progress on long-term projects that meet the criteria above.

### **Annual Evaluation and Reviews of Research/Extension/Clinical Faculty Members**

On an annual basis, each department head or appropriate officer and each of his/her faculty members in research/extension/clinical faculty positions will agree in writing to the faculty member's objectives, responsibilities, and expectations. This written agreement must be consistent with the promotion criteria for research/extension/clinical faculty positions of the department and the University. This agreement will be reviewed by the next appropriate administrator, and a copy placed in the faculty member's promotion file. If the department/unit head and a faculty member cannot reach an agreement, the matter will be referred to the next appropriate administrator.

An annual performance review, based on the predetermined agreement, will be conducted by the department/unit head or appropriate officer and each research/extension/clinical faculty member in his/her department before the budget is made for the next year or when specified by the central administration of the University, whichever occurs first. A copy of this review, signed by both parties, will be reviewed by the next appropriate administrator and placed in the faculty member's promotion file. The faculty member may attach a dissenting statement to all copies of this review.

A permanent, confidential file for each research/extension/clinical faculty member is to be maintained by the department/unit head or appropriate officer. No record in the file is to be added, changed, or withdrawn without the knowledge of both parties. The responsible administrative officer will make all pertinent information available to the appropriate individuals when the faculty member is a candidate for promotion, or when the information is needed in an appeals or grievance case.

### **Procedures for Promotion of Research/Extension/Clinical Faculty**

Recommendations for promotion of research/extension/clinical faculty shall be initiated by the department/unit head and forwarded to the appropriate dean or director for consideration. The dean or director will add his/her recommendations and forward the promotion package to either the Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine or the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, as appropriate. The Vice Presidents will add their recommendations and forward each package to the President of the University, who will make the final decision on all recommendations for promotion, utilizing whatever data are deemed appropriate.

The faculty member will be officially notified as to the disposition at each level of his/her nomination for promotion. Written recommendations of decisions will come from each level in the process and will be placed on file in all the appropriate offices. These recommendations will also become the basis for future discussions between the faculty member and department/unit head on further professional development or growth of the faculty member. The faculty member has the right to discontinue the review process for promotion at any point in the process.

### **Schedule for Promotion Decisions**

The schedule for promotion of individuals holding research/extension/clinical faculty positions should follow, whenever possible, the schedule outlined for faculty promotions. This schedule, together with the appropriate procedures, is listed below.

Departmental recommendations must be submitted to the appropriate dean or director by January 15 of each year.

Recommendations by deans or directors must be submitted to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development or the Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine by February 15 of each year.

Recommendations of the Vice Presidents must be submitted to the President by March 10 of each year.

Official notification, in writing, will be sent by the President, or his/her designated officer, to faculty no later than April 1, or as soon as possible after that date.

**REVIEW**

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every four years or as needed by the Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine and the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

OP 56.06  
06/05/01  
Revised 06/12/07

<sup>1</sup>Creative achievement refers to significantly original or imaginative accomplishments in literature or the fine arts, and to effective experience or practice in professional fields, such as Agriculture, Architecture, Engineering, Business and Industry, or Veterinary Medicine.

**REVIEWED BY:**

/s/ Vance Watson 07-31-07  
Vice President, Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine Date

/s/ Kirk Schulz 07-26-07  
Vice President, Research and Economic Development Date

/s/ Don Zant 07-31-07  
Director of Internal Audit Date

/s/ Charles Guest 08-08-07  
General Counsel Date

**NOTE - THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SUPERSEDED**

**APPROVED BY:**

/s/ Vance Watson  
Vice President, Division of Agriculture, Forestry  
and Veterinary Medicine

07-31-07  
Date

/s/ Kirk Schulz  
Vice President, Research and Economic Development

07-26-07  
Date

/s/ Robert H. Foglesong  
President

09-17-07  
Date

**NOTE - THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SUPERSEDED**