

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF FACULTY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Whereas the Faculty at the University of South Alabama, as defined by the Faculty Handbook of the University of South Alabama and represented by the Faculty Senate of the University may have academic appointments that may vary in their responsibilities and rights, all are recognized as delivering essential value to the institution. Faculty rights and privileges, as outlined below and referred to in the Faculty Handbook, are associated with professional responsibilities, conduct and service on the part of the faculty.

It is understood that rights and privileges may have qualifiers and as such, may not be absolute. We recognize that all Faculty are therefore entitled to a set of shared rights and privileges, enumerated below:

1. All Faculty have a right to academic freedom and a professional responsibility to protect and promote it.

Faculty members shall be protected in their freedom as defined by the AAUP standards of inquiry and instruction. The University community should engender and protect critical thinking, independent thought, diversity, and open discussion. (FH Section 3.11.2)

2. The Faculty own the curriculum.

Faculty will participate in curricular decisions, with rights and responsibilities to facilitate course and program development, to set academic standards and course objectives, and to determine teaching methods. (FH Section 6.0)

3. All Faculty have a right to representation in Faculty governance.

All Faculty shall be given representation in Faculty governance on issues relevant to and commensurate with their academic appointment. Additionally, faculty input shall be considered in hiring decisions of both faculty and administrators, and in other decisions affecting university policies and procedures. (FH Section 2.18)

4. All Faculty have the right to be treated professionally and with courtesy, by peers, staff, administrators and students.

Faculty members have the right to be treated professionally and with courtesy by all members of the University community, and share a responsibility to treat others in the same manner. Discussions or criticisms of college or University policies and procedures should be a right free from risk of retaliation. Faculty have the right to unwavering protection by the University from uncivil student behaviors and communications, and frivolous student grievances. Faculty have the right to administrative support for student adherence to proper policy and procedure, and the responsibility to model standards of professional behavior. (FH Section 4.7)

5. All Faculty have a right to predictable career paths.

Faculty members shall be hired with clear contracts designating the length of appointment and timelines for advancement and promotion. (FH Section 3.10)

6. All Faculty have a right to clearly defined responsibilities.

Faculty members shall be provided with a transparent understanding of the duties associated with their appointment and a predictable schedule for fulfilling these responsibilities. Class assignments and scheduling, and any other scheduling for faculty should be based on rank and seniority, subject to qualifications. (FH Section 3.15.6; 4.3.1)

7. All Faculty have a right to clearly defined expectations for advancement and promotion.

Each unit should create and provide to Faculty transparent criteria for evaluation, reappointment, and promotion. Evaluations should be unbiased based solely on professional qualifications. Committee recommendations for promotion and tenure shall be both considered and respected by Chairs, Deans, the Provost and the President. (FH Section 3.10, 3.11)

8. All Faculty have a right to just and equitable compensation and equal opportunity, commensurate with qualifications. Qualified Faculty should be given the opportunity to participate in programs or activities controlled by the University for additional income, based on rank and seniority.

Faculty salaries shall be equitable within academic appointments and commensurate with professional responsibilities, work load, and performance. A goal of the University should be to maintain salaries and workload at least at the mean of the University's peer institutions for faculty with average or better performance. Participation in University activities for additional salary shall be based on rank and seniority, subject to qualifications. (FH Section 5.1)

9. All Faculty have a right to due process.

Policies and procedures as described in the Faculty Handbook and other mechanisms for Faculty to obtain due process shall be made available to all Faculty. No anonymous or second-hand accusations will be used against any faculty in any manner. Faculty will be immediately notified of any complaint made against them, whether by a named or anonymous party. Excepting a criminal complaint handled by police, no investigation of any complaint shall be made against any faculty member without prior notification, and the faculty member will be provided with any and all evidence provided by the complainant and/or collected in an investigation, whether used against the faculty or not, and prior to ruling on the matter by the University. (FH Section 4.2)

10. All Faculty have the right to support and resources necessary to perform their professional responsibilities and expectations.

Faculty shall have the resources and the support necessary to meet the criteria established for their evaluation, reappointment, and promotion. Resources and support shall be made available relevant to the established expectations of the academic appointment. (FH Section 5.7)