II. Criteria and Standards for Appointments

Appointments to the faculty of The University of Alabama are based on the personnel requirements of the University’s academic programs and on the ongoing goal of achieving and maintaining excellence in its teaching, research, and public service activities. Recruiting for faculty positions is conducted according to the University’s Affirmative Action Plan and other approved administrative procedures established in the various administrative and academic units. It is a policy of the University to involve faculty, students, and others as may be appropriate in the review of candidates for positions of academic and administrative leadership (see Appendix A).

Faculty members who have not been awarded tenure have one of two types of appointments: probationary or temporary. Probationary faculty members are employed with the understanding that performance at appropriate levels during a probationary period may result in the award of tenure. Employment as a temporary faculty member conveys no right or expectation of continued employment beyond the period specified in the letter of appointment.

Probationary and tenured ranks for new appointments shall be, in ascending order, Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. Eligibility for promotion is limited to probationary and tenured faculty. Titles for temporary appointees vary from division to division; they include Lecturer in addition to the four academic ranks listed above, each rank being prefixed by one or more of the words Adjunct, Temporary, Visiting, and Clinical.

Candidates for appointment to the rank of Associate Professor or Professor in an academic area of specialization are expected to possess an appropriate terminal degree. Candidates for appointment to the rank of Assistant Professor normally are expected to have completed requirements for an appropriate terminal degree.

A. Instructor
A candidate for appointment to the rank of Instructor must have an appropriate record of educational achievement or relevant experience or both and must have the potential to be an effective teacher. All Instructors are expected to demonstrate a high level of performance in the classroom, to contribute to instructional effectiveness in assigned courses, and to engage in outreach/academic citizenship.

B. Assistant Professor
Appointment to the rank of Assistant Professor is based on educational achievement or related professional experience or both and upon potential for outstanding instructional effectiveness and for scholarly contributions appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization. The candidate normally should have completed a doctoral program or other terminal academic program appropriate to the discipline. There should be substantial evidence to indicate that the individual has the capabilities and competencies required for successful performance of all anticipated professional responsibilities.

An individual who has not completed requirements for a terminal degree may be offered an appointment as Assistant Professor. If the offer of appointment is made contingent upon completion of requirements for the degree but the appointee fails to meet this contingency by the effective date of employment, the individual will be assigned the rank of Instructor, and a revised appointment letter will be issued which specifies a period of time during which the individual is expected to complete requirements for the degree. Failure to
complete all degree requirements by the specified time may serve as cause for non-retention. If a decision is made to retain the individual, a new appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor may be offered as soon as requirements specified in the revised appointment letter are met. If the initial offer of appointment as Assistant Professor is not made contingent upon completion of requirements for the degree by the effective date of employment, the offer should specify a period of time during which the individual is expected to complete requirements for the degree; failure to complete all degree requirements by the specified time may serve as cause for non-retention. By mutual agreement, the mandatory tenure decision time for an individual who completes degree requirements after the effective date of employment may be as late as the sixth academic year after the academic year during which requirements for the terminal degree are satisfied, even if this results in a probationary period of more than six years; the terms of any such agreement shall be specified in a new letter of appointment issued at the time degree requirements are met.

All faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor are expected to maintain a good level of performance in the classroom and/or other appropriate instructional settings; to contribute to the overall instructional effectiveness of the academic programs in which they have assigned duties; to engage in an ongoing program of research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly efforts appropriate to their discipline and fields of specialization; and to engage in outreach/academic citizenship appropriate to one's area and expertise.

C. Associate Professor
Appointment to the rank of Associate Professor is based upon a candidate’s instructional effectiveness and record of scholarly contributions appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization; however, candidates who have no prior record at the rank of Assistant Professor may be appointed at the rank of Associate Professor provided they possess a combination of educational achievement and professional contributions which gives them the capabilities and competencies required for successful performance at the Associate Professor rank and also the professional stature commensurate with that rank.

All faculty members who hold the rank of Associate Professor are expected to approach a standard of outstanding performance in the classroom and/or other appropriate instructional settings; to make a strong contribution to the overall instructional quality of the academic programs in which they have assigned duties; to engage in an ongoing and substantive program of research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly efforts appropriate to their discipline and fields of specialization; and to engage in outreach/academic citizenship appropriate to one's area and expertise.

D. Professor
Appointment to the rank of Professor is based upon a candidate’s instructional effectiveness and record of scholarly contributions appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization; however, candidates who have no prior record at the rank of Associate Professor may be appointed at the rank of Professor provided they possess a combination of educational achievement and professional contributions which gives them the capabilities and competencies required for successful performance at the rank of Professor and also the professional stature commensurate with that rank.

All faculty members who hold the rank of Professor are expected to contribute to the leadership of academic programs; to maintain an outstanding level of effectiveness in the classroom and/or other appropriate instructional settings; to make a strong contribution to overall instructional quality; to engage in an ongoing and substantive program of research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly efforts appropriate to their discipline and fields of specialization; and to engage in outreach/academic citizenship appropriate to one's area and expertise.

E. Endowed Chairs and Professorships
Endowed chairs and professorships enhance the quality of programs in higher education through both the
recognition and contributions of the chair-holders and professors. (See Appendix M for criteria and procedures for appointments to endowed chairs and professorships.)

F. Temporary Ranks
Eligibility for appointment to a temporary rank normally requires professional preparation and experience comparable to that required for a regular faculty appointment at that academic rank. Temporary Lecturers must have preparation and experience appropriate to the duties to be assigned.

Temporary appointees may be assigned to teach courses, conduct research, direct students, assist with research projects of students, direct field work of students, or provide consultation on research or instructional projects. Temporary appointments are for a predetermined period of time and convey no right or expectation of employment beyond the period specified in the letter of appointment. Temporary appointees are not eligible for promotion in rank but may apply for any other temporary faculty position, including upgraded positions they have previously held.

The recommendation to accord temporary full-time or part-time faculty appointments begins at the program level and is forwarded to the academic dean. Deans may make temporary, part-time and full-time faculty appointments after receiving approval from the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The compensation for temporary appointees will depend on the type of service rendered and the rank of appointment. Unless authorized by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, compensation for temporary appointees will not exceed the rates approved for regular members of the faculty.

G. Joint Appointments
Occasionally, reasons may exist for appointing a faculty member to more than one department or area. Recommendations and authorization for joint appointments follow the same policies and procedures that apply to appointments to individual departments or areas. Before approving a joint appointment, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will ensure that there is agreement between and among all the authorities involved. This agreement shall include rank in each department or area and procedures for considering tenure and promotion and for assigning duties and compensation.

H. Non-Faculty Research Appointments
Various research contracts, grants, and projects depend in part on the services of personnel whose primary commitment is to research rather than to the combination of teaching, research and service appropriate for faculty status. Consequently, the University has established a category of non-tenure-earning positions called Research Positions. The duration of appointments in these positions will be limited by the duration of the contracts, grants, and projects which fund the positions. Personnel policies for persons holding Research Positions are described in The University of Alabama New Personnel Category: Research Positions, which is available in the Office for Academic Affairs. The personnel policies in this Handbook do not apply to such Research Positions.