



# Faculty Handbook

Version 4/26

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## MISSION & HISTORY

### 1.1 HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Mars Hill University is the oldest educational institution on its original site in western North Carolina. It was founded by a small group of pioneer families, most of them the children and grandchildren of the original settlers of the area, who erected a modest schoolhouse and later two residential buildings on what was then called “Pleasant Hill.” When the founders could not pay the contractors, Joe Anderson, a slave held by one of the trustees, was seized as collateral until funds were raised to pay off the institution’s debts. Mr. Anderson is today counted as one of the founders of Mars Hill University, and his gravesite is located on campus.

The school opened in 1856 as the French Broad Baptist Institute, named for the association of churches in the area. In 1859, it was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly and renamed Mars Hill College, a name taken from Acts 17:22 *“Paul stood up in the midst of Mars’ Hill and said: ‘People of Athens, I see that you are very religious.’”* (Acts 17:22) The town of the same name grew up subsequently around the college.

During the first two years of the Civil War, Mars Hill College continued to operate, but dwindling enrollment and skirmishes in the area forced it to close in 1863. For the last two years of the war, the college’s buildings served as barracks for a series of Confederate units. In 1865, on the eve of peace, Union troops burned down the two residential buildings, and while the college managed to reopen later that year, the incident began a prolonged period of difficulty for Mars Hill. Over the next three decades, fourteen men served as president, most for no more than a year at a time.

The election of Dr. R. L. Moore as President in 1897 was, in a sense, the second founding of Mars Hill College. Under his leadership the college grew continuously, its assets multiplied, and its character as an institution of higher education was firmly established. In 1921, Mars Hill was reorganized as a junior college and became a successful pioneer in that field. In 1923, the college forged close ties with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which provided support and appointed trustees; this relationship continued through 2008 when the board became self-perpetuating once again.

In 1938, after 41 years of distinctive service, Dr. Moore retired from the presidency and was succeeded by Dr. Hoyt Blackwell, a member of the faculty. Under Dr. Blackwell’s leadership, the progress of the college continued. High standards were maintained, facilities were expanded and improved, and the curriculum was revised. In 1960 plans were approved to convert Mars Hill into a senior college. The junior year was added in 1962-1963, and the first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in May 1964.

After 28 years of distinguished service as President, Dr. Blackwell retired in 1966 and was succeeded by Dr. Fred Blake Bentley, at that time the youngest college president in the nation. Taking “Emphasis On Excellence” as the creed of his administration, he guided Mars Hill to accreditation as a senior college, led faculty development and curriculum innovation, and fostered numerous other educational and physical advances. Dr. Bentley retired in 1996 and was succeeded by Dr. Max Lennon ’60, who served from then until 2002.

In 2002, Dr. Dan G. Lunsford ’69, Dean of the School of Education & Leadership, was appointed Interim President and affirmed as President the following year. Under Dr. Lunsford’s leadership, Mars Hill has

seen the construction and refurbishment of numerous instructional and residential facilities, the expansion of student activities and programming, the development of new faculty and staff positions, and the addition of academic programs, including the institution's first graduate program in 2011. This growth and improvement has caused Mars Hill's student population to grow by nearly 30% since 2010. In recognition of these profound changes, Mars Hill College transformed into Mars Hill University in 2013.

## 1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

Mars Hill University, an academic community rooted in the Christian faith, challenges and equips students to pursue intellectual, spiritual, and personal growth that is:

- grounded in a rigorous study of the Liberal Arts,
- connected with the world of work, and
- committed to character development, to service, and to responsible citizenship in the community, the region, and the world.

## 1.3 RELIGIOUS IDENTITY STATEMENT

Mars Hill University, an academic community rooted in the Christian faith...

*"Paul stood up in the midst of Mars' Hill and said: 'People of Athens, I see that you are very religious.'" (Acts 17:22)*

Mars Hill University is a place where faith and reason meet, where students, faculty, and staff explore questions of faith reasonably in the spirit of Christ like compassion and respect. While Mars Hill is not a church, our roots are Christian, and our heritage is Baptist. We encourage students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and alumni in their practice and expression of faith. We honor the variety of denominations, faith traditions, worship practices, theological persuasions, and spiritual disciplines represented among our constituencies.

...challenges and equips students to pursue intellectual, spiritual, and personal growth...

*"The most important commandment,' answered Jesus, 'is this . . . Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" (Mark 12:29- 30)*

At Mars Hill, we see that developing knowledge, values, and skills are integral ways of loving God and following what Jesus called the greatest commandment. Pursuing intellectual growth - developing knowledge- is critical to loving God with all your mind. Pursuing spiritual growth - deepening values - is critical to loving God with all your heart and soul. And pursuing personal growth - strengthening skills for life and work is critical to loving God with all your strength.

...through an education that is grounded in a rigorous study of the Liberal Arts...

*"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)*

"Liberal Arts" comes from the Latin phrase meaning the arts suitable and necessary for free people to govern themselves. The liberal arts at Mars Hill are rooted in freedom - freedom to explore critical questions of life from different perspectives in the pursuit of truth. Our Baptist heritage strongly

emphasizes religious liberty, expressed as the freedom and autonomy of persons and churches in a free state. This heritage nurtures our practice of academic freedom. We recognize that any form of coercive dogmatism claiming to have the only correct version of truth, imposing that view on others, and restricting freedom of inquiry is incompatible with the way we experience the liberal arts and Christian higher education at Mars Hill.

...connected to the world of work...

*"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." (Ephesians 4:1)*

The idea of vocation, or calling, is central to Mars Hill's mission. God gifts people with a wide variety of abilities and interests and calls them to employ their gifts across the spectrum of professions: ministry, law, medicine, education, business, social work, etc. We want our graduates to find worthwhile work and distinguish themselves in every field by doing good (ethical work making a life) and doing well (successful work making a living).

...and committed to character development, to service, and to responsible citizenship in the community, the region, and the world.

*"There are different kinds of service ... [and] varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." (1 Corinthians 12: 5-7)*

At Mars Hill, we balance the freedom inherent in a liberal arts education with responsibility. We challenge our students to become "response-able," prepared to respond to the difficult challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with core commitments and activities that serve the common good. We want our graduates to value civic engagement, to be the kind of people who live out their faith commitments in every arena and spend their lives making a positive difference in their homes, in their workplaces, in their communities, and in their world.

## 1.4 ACCREDITATION

Mars Hill University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award bachelor's and master's degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Mars Hill University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)).

*Other Accreditations:*

- Council on Social Work Education
- National Association of Schools of Music
- Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation
- North Carolina Board of Nursing (Initial Approval)
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (Initial Accreditation of Baccalaureate Nursing programs)
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (for Teacher Education)

*Affiliations:*

- Appalachian College Association
- Association of College and Research Libraries
- College Entrance Examinations Board
- Council for Advancement and Support of Education
- Council of Independent Colleges
- Independent College Fund of North Carolina
- North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
- American Council on Education

## ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Mars Hill University is distinguished by its shared governance approach to the administration of the university. The Board of Trustees is the policy-setting body for the institution. All major policies governing the operation of the university are set by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees does not administer university policy but appoints the President of the University as the Chief Executive Officer. The President delegates administrative, decision-making responsibilities to the various administrative components of the university. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators participate in the administration of the university where appropriate.

The Board of Trustees consists of thirty-six members, each of whom is elected to a four-year term, with nine members elected each year. The Committee on Trusteeship is charged with recommending trustee nominees to the entire Board of Trustees for its vote. The President of the University is an *ex officio* member of the Trusteeship Committee. The Board selects its own officers and appoints its members to standing committees and whatever special committees it deems necessary. Its officers are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The full Board meets at least three times each year. Committees meet to conduct business as necessary.

For current Mars Hill University organizational charts, please refer to Appendix A, beginning on page 81.

### 2.1 PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The President is selected by the Board of Trustees and holds office at its pleasure. The President is the chief executive officer (CEO) of Mars Hill University and is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the supervision, management, and government of the university (including all academic affairs, fundraising and institutional development, and athletics,) and for interpreting and carrying out the policies of the Board of Trustees.

The President is an *ex officio* member of the Board and of all standing committees but has no vote. With the cooperation of the Provost, the President puts into effect the actions of the faculty and the Board of Trustees in the internal administration of Mars Hill University.

The President, with the assistance of the Provost and the Vice President for Finance, annually prepares and submits to the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees a proposed annual budget for Mars Hill University prior to the beginning of the fiscal year covered by the budget. The President submits to the Board of Trustees an annual report on the condition, operations, and needs of Mars Hill University.

The President chairs the President's Leadership Team (PLT), the senior administrative council of the

university. All officers of the university are ultimately responsible to the President.

## **2.2 PROVOST AND VP OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

The Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Management is a member of the President's Leadership Team and serves as the university's chief academic officer (CAO). The Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Management reports directly to the President, is the second-ranking officer of the university, and provides the internal management and leadership required for the university to fulfill its mission of teaching and learning. The Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Management is the senior administrator for all programs related to academics, academic support, institutional research, accreditation, marketing, financial aid, and admissions. The Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Management chairs the Deans Council and related bodies.

### **2.2.2 Division Deans**

The curricular programs of the university are administratively organized into two divisions (Arts & Sciences, and Professional Programs & Social Sciences). Each division or school is led by a dean who is appointed by the Provost. A Dean's responsibilities include management of the academic programs, personnel, and budgets of each division as well as oversight of services to students provided by the division's academic programs. Each Division Dean is assisted by Department Chairs and Program Coordinators representing the academic majors, minors, and concentrations in the division. Division Deans maintain an active teaching load in their respective discipline. A Department Chair is appointed by the Provost upon the recommendation of the appropriate Division Dean. Division Deans hold faculty rank but cannot vote in faculty meetings or serve as faculty representatives on committees. They serve as members of the Academic Council and related bodies.

### **2.2.3 University Registrar**

The University Registrar oversees all education records, is responsible for developing and publishing academic calendars and course schedules, and administers the December and May Commencement exercises. He or she serves as a member of the Academic Council and related bodies.

### **2.2.4 Director of Library Services**

The Director of Library Services is responsible for the leadership of all aspects of library operations, library management and strategic planning that support student learning, faculty teaching and research, library programming, resource management, and management of user services and library systems. S/he serves on the Academic Council and the Graduate Council. The Library Director holds faculty rank and votes in faculty meetings when there is no conflict of interest.

## **2.3 VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE**

The Vice President for Finance is a member of the President's Leadership Team and serves as the university's chief financial officer (CFO). The Vice President is responsible for managing the business operations of the university and for working directly with the management of the university's endowment.

## **2.4 VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

The Vice President for Institutional Advancement is a member of the President's Leadership Team and serves as the chief development officer for the university. The Vice President is responsible for directing and coordinating all giving programs of the university, including fund-raising, annual giving, planned giving, corporate/foundation grants, and alumni relations.

## **2.5 SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND STRATEGY**

The Senior Director of Planning and Strategy is a member of the President's Leadership Team and serves as a catalyst for promoting plans and strategies for the development of the university and its operations. In this capacity, the Senior Director works with all members of the Leadership Team, and other program and department leaders., and strives to ensure that efforts are aligned across the organization. The Senior Director has administrative responsibility for the IT department.

### **2.5.1 Director of Information Technology**

The Director of Information Technology administers the Office of Information Technology Services and serves as the university's chief information officer (CIO). The director of IT is responsible for managing all wired and wireless networks, administrative software platforms, computer hardware, and related technologies.

## **2.6 VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE**

The Vice President for Student Life is the university's chief student affairs officer, with responsibility for housing and residence life, campus engagement and leadership, student government, student conduct, campus safety and security, Cothran Center for Career Readiness, student success, Student Support Services, and health and wellness on campus. The Vice President for Student Life will provide exceptional, innovative leadership that demonstrates strong understanding of the priorities for student success, notably, student engagement, student leadership, parental involvement, community partnerships, diversity and inclusion, short and long range planning concerning student development, and intentional co-curricular experiences and activities. The VPSL works under the supervision of the University President, and is a key position in shaping the future of Mars Hill University culture.

## **2.7 SENIOR DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications is a member of the President's Leadership Team. The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications provides leadership and supervision for all marketing and communications for Mars Hill University. This position works closely with Athletics through the Director of Athletics Communications regarding marketing and communications. The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications ensures brand and messaging quality and consistency.

## **2.8 UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN**

The University Chaplain is a member of the President's Leadership Team, administers all aspects of religious life at the university and oversees programming in Broyhill Chapel and Bentley Fellowship Hall. The Chaplain's office organizes weekly Crossroads programs, advises the Christian Student Movement, provides oversight for all campus ministry groups, updates the university community about celebrations and concerns, and leads mission trips.

## **2.9 DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS**

The Director of Athletics, a member of the President's Leadership Team, is responsible for the administration of all the intercollegiate athletic programs of the university. The Director of Athletics coordinates all strategic planning for the athletic programs and is responsible for assuring that they are functioning within the overall educational mission of the institution. The Director recommends and manages all operating budgeting for athletic programs and recommends all coaching and staff appointments in the athletic department. The Director of Athletics works with the President to plan and coordinate operations of the facilities of the university as they relate to the athletic programs.

## 2.10 DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The Director of Human Resources / Title IX Coordinator, a member of the President's Leadership Team, is responsible for all phases of the Human Resources Office. This position is responsible for supervising both the Human Resources Specialist and the Student Work Program Manager. Additionally, he/she is responsible for coordinating University Title IX Compliance efforts by developing, overseeing, managing and evaluating, updating and revising, as needed, the University's comprehensive Title IX program.

## 2.11 SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI AND TRUSTEE RELATIONS

The Senior Director of Alumni and Trustee Relations, a member of the President's Leadership Team, is responsible for the planning and execution of a comprehensive alumni relationship program designed to increase alumni engagement and support. This position works strategically with colleagues whose primary focus is fund raising. The Director also serves as co-liaison to the Mars Hill University Board of Trustees.

## FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICIES

The primary basis of employment for faculty members at Mars Hill University is professional competence and support of the ideals and purposes of the institution. The university takes seriously its mission to provide liberal education in a Christian context. The university respects the academic freedom and religious integrity of each faculty member and expects acknowledgment and support of the university's mission by members of the faculty in a way that affirms their convictions and those of the university.

Consistent with its Christian mission, Mars Hill University is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. The university does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, or disability. This policy of nondiscrimination is applied to the recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention of faculty. The university affirms the educational value of the development of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.

### DEFINITIONS OF FACULTY RANK AND STATUS

**Faculty Status:** Faculty status is for personnel who are not associated with any academic department on campus and thus are not eligible to serve on standing committees as division representatives.

Librarians have faculty status; therefore, they can vote in faculty meetings and serve on committees as at-large representatives, but do not have faculty rank: Instructor, Lecturer, Assistant/Associate and full Professor.

Personnel with faculty status are not eligible for faculty four-year reviews, tenure, or promotions.

**Faculty Rank:** Faculty rank (Instructor; Lecturer; Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor) is for faculty members who have been vetted by the academic departments in which they teach through a *bona fide* search process, who fill a vacancy or new position in a particular department, and who have at least a master's degree relevant to the department into which they are hired. Personnel with faculty rank who are contractually eligible may go up for four-year reviews, tenure, and promotion. Academic administrators at or above the level of division dean who hold faculty rank are not eligible to vote in

faculty meetings or to serve on faculty standing committees.

### **3.1 FACULTY APPOINTMENTS AND CONTRACTS**

Faculty appointments and contracts fall into three categories: full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty. All faculty members at Mars Hill University must hold appropriate credentials for teaching at the undergraduate or graduate level, as determined by their instructional assignments. The minimum credential required for a faculty member teaching undergraduate courses is a master's degree with at least 18 semester hours of graduate credit in the teaching field earned from an accredited institution of higher education. The minimum credential required for a faculty member teaching graduate courses is a terminal degree in the teaching field or a closely related field earned from an accredited institution of higher education.

#### **3.1.1 Full-Time Faculty**

Full-time faculty members are defined as persons holding annual appointments whose assigned duties constitute at least a three-quarter-time load, as defined in Section 4.3.6 Faculty Workloads. Search procedures for full-time faculty are detailed in Appendix B: Faculty Search Procedures.

#### **3.1.2 Part-Time Faculty**

Part-time faculty members are defined as persons holding annual appointments whose assigned duties constitute less than a three-quarter-time load, as defined in Section 4.3.6 Faculty Workloads. Search procedures for part-time faculty are detailed in Appendix B: Faculty Search Procedures.

#### **3.1.3 Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct faculty members are defined as persons holding short-term contracts, usually semesterly, whose assigned duties constitute less than a three-quarter-time load, as defined in Section 4.3.6 Faculty Workloads.

Adjunct positions are approved by the Provost. Adjunct faculty members are recruited by department chairs in consultation with Division Deans. Applicants must submit a university application form, a current C.V., and official copies of all graduate transcripts. Contracts are made by the dean on the recommendation of the chair.

### **3.2 TYPES OF FACULTY APPOINTMENTS**

Full- and part-time faculty appointments fall into five categories: visiting appointments, defined-term lecturer appointments, instructor appointments, tenure-track appointments, and tenured appointments.

#### **3.2.1 Visiting Appointments**

Visiting appointments are one-year appointments that carry no expectation of reappointment at the conclusion of the academic year. Visiting faculty members are hired to fill vacancies resulting from sabbaticals, short-notice departures, and other short-term needs. Visiting appointments may be converted to defined-term appointments at the discretion of the Provost.

#### **3.2.2. Defined-Term Lecturer Appointments**

Defined-term Lecturer appointments are continuing appointments until the maximum term of employment is reached. The standard maximum term is 3 years, at the conclusion of which, individuals may apply for continuation of the appointment. Within the term of the appointment, the faculty

member will not be terminated without cause and will be extended the full protection of academic freedom.

Lecturers may be contracted for 24 or 30 workload units per academic year. A 24-unit appointment will include teaching as well as other standard faculty duties, such as advising and committee work. A 30-unit appointment includes more teaching responsibilities but no expectation of additional duties beyond the classroom. Lecturers are expected to attend monthly faculty meetings as well as called department and division meetings. Lecturers undergo an annual personnel review performed by the department chair, program coordinator, and/or division dean.

### **3.2.3 Instructor Appointments**

Non-tenure track Instructor appointments are continuing appointments with no specified maximum term. Annual reappointment is based on two factors (1) review of the position in relation to the needs of the university and the program, taking into account both educational demands and the financial resources of the university; and (2) an assessment of the faculty member's performance in the position relative to evaluative criteria applied to all full-time faculty members and to any stated criteria specific to the position.

Instructors may be contracted for 24 or 30 workload units per academic year as described in 3.2.2 above. The contracted workload will be determined by the needs of the institution and program(s) that the position serves and may be modified by mutual agreement between academic years. Instructors are subject to the annual and four-year reviews. A faculty member holding the Instructor rank may apply for promotion to Assistant Professor (untentured) during their fifth year of employment, with the support of the department chair and division dean. Instructors have full faculty responsibilities unless otherwise specified in their appointment letter and contract.

### **3.2.4 Tenure-Track Appointments**

All tenure-track appointments are probationary and carry conventional rank. The terms and conditions of the appointment will be communicated in writing to the faculty member at the time of initial appointment. Every faculty member without tenure will be informed each year in writing of the status of appointment and of matters relative to eligibility for the acquisition of tenure.

Annual reappointment is based upon two factors: (1) review of the position in relation to the needs of the university and the program, taking into account both educational demands and the financial resources of the university; and (2) an assessment of the faculty member's performance in the position relative to evaluative criteria applied to all full-time faculty members and to any stated criteria specific to the position.

Annual reappointments during the probationary period should not exceed seven consecutive years. Written notice that a tenure-track appointment is not to be renewed will be given to the faculty member in advance: (1) not later than March 1 of the first academic year of service, if the appointment expires at the end of that year, or, if the appointment terminates during the academic year, at least three months in advance of its termination; (2) not later than December 15 of the second academic year of service, if the appointment expires at the end of that year, or, if the appointment expires during the academic year, at least six months in advance of its termination; or (3) at least twelve months before the expiration of an appointment after two or more consecutive years of service at the university.

The university ordinarily will notify all other faculty members of the intent to renew their contracts by the

day following the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees.

### **3.2.5 Tenure Appointments**

The purpose of tenure is to provide the teaching faculty with a reasonable degree of economic security while protecting the academic freedom of its members. Tenure is a serious and virtually permanent commitment by the institution to a faculty member, a recognition by the university that the tenured individual has demonstrated qualities and achievements that embody the ideals and purposes of the university. It is, therefore, not to be taken lightly. Tenure has a legal standing to the extent that the courts have held that, when a tenured faculty member of a private university is dismissed, the institution must provide upon request a written statement of the reasons for termination and a hearing for the aggrieved party. In such instances, the burden of justification for the dismissal rests on the institution.

A faculty member with a tenure-track appointment may be granted tenure after the completion of five years of continuous full-time faculty status. Continuing annual reappointment to fulfill the conditions for tenure may extend to a maximum of seven years, or proper terminal notice will be given. Annual renewal of an appointment and technical eligibility for tenure are not in themselves an assurance of an award of tenure. All candidates for tenure will have been evaluated annually according to criteria and processes described below. In addition to receiving favorable evaluations under the criteria applicable to all faculty members, candidates for tenure will be expected to have fulfilled any stated conditions for tenure specific to their position or appointment and to have demonstrated a loyalty to the university and a commitment to the stated mission, purpose, and ideals of the university.

A faculty member who achieved tenure at another institution of higher education and holds the rank of assistant professor or above may be eligible for tenure consideration in the second year of probationary status, at the discretion of the Provost, provided all conditions for tenure outlined in the original appointment have been fulfilled.

It is the responsibility of the faculty member seeking tenure to establish a record that justifies the awarding of tenure. Division Deans recommend candidates for tenure to the Faculty Personnel Committee by the due date for Dean feedback to the FPC (four weeks after the Friday of the first full business week in August). If this request for tenure consideration is not acted upon or is denied by the Division Dean, the faculty member may then bring before the Faculty Personnel Committee a request for tenure review by the September meeting of the Faculty Personnel Committee. The committee may act at its discretion upon such requests initiated by the faculty member. For complete guidelines for faculty evaluation, see Appendix C: Evaluation Procedures.

All candidates for tenure will be asked to provide a written document justifying the granting of tenure; this document will include a statement regarding the candidate's commitment to the mission and purpose of the university, documentation of professional growth and teaching effectiveness, plans for future development, and contributions to the university. Supportive evaluations from former students and from colleagues are appropriate but not required. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide the Faculty Personnel Committee with all relevant information on candidates for tenure, and the committee will make its recommendation to the Provost. Final tenure decisions are made by the Provost and must be approved by the President and the Board of Trustees. In unusual circumstances, the Provost may waive appropriate portions of the stated criteria for tenure.

Tenure status does not apply to administrative or staff positions. If a tenured faculty member is appointed to an administrative or staff position, the tenure status will be in force at any future date full-time faculty duties are resumed. If a non-tenured faculty member accepts an administrative or staff contract, the faculty member relinquishes all claim to a continuing faculty position, unless the administrative contract contains a written statement to the contrary. Once tenure is attained, it may not be terminated except by agreement of both the faculty member and the administration, or for adequate cause as set forth in 3.6.

### **3.3 FACULTY RANK**

Except in exceptional circumstances, no instructor of record shall be appointed with less than a master's degree. In such cases, it must be possible to document experience or other indicators of competence that constitute a justifiable substitute for the degree. The following shall be the minimum qualifications for the respective academic ranks. Unless specifically stated as a part of an individual contract, only full-time annual teaching contracts are considered when calculating years of teaching experience and time in rank. Therefore, leaves of absence and time spent in primarily administrative or staff positions are not counted for purposes of tenure and promotion unless exceptions are granted by the Provost or the President. Non-tenured administrators or staff with faculty rank can move to a regular faculty contract only by making application for and being appointed to a vacant faculty position as part of a due-process search.

Administrators and professional staff who hold at least a master's degree may qualify for faculty status. Upon request or recommendation, the Committee on Faculty Personnel may recommend to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs that an administrator or professional staff member be recognized with faculty status.

Eligibility to serve on faculty committees is determined according to the Faculty Bylaws in Article II. Other restrictions applying to administrators and professional staff with faculty status are noted above, in 3.1, Definitions of Faculty Status and Rank. Administrators and professional staff with faculty status are only eligible to serve on faculty standing committees as at-large representatives.

In unusual circumstances, the Provost may waive appropriate portions of the minimum requirements for each of the ranks described below.

#### **3.3.1 Instructor**

The minimum qualification for an instructor is a master's degree in the teaching field of appointment.

#### **3.3.2 Lecturer**

The minimum qualification for a lecturer is a master's degree in the teaching field of appointment.

#### **3.3.3 Assistant Professor**

The minimum qualifications for an assistant professor are the master's degree and one additional year of full-time graduate study or the equivalent in the teaching field of appointment, plus three or more years of successful college teaching experience or its equivalent, or the terminal degree in the teaching field of appointment.

#### **3.3.4 Associate Professor**

The minimum qualifications for an associate professor are the terminal degree in the teaching field of

appointment and at least five years of successful college teaching experience or its equivalent, including at least five years at the assistant professor rank.

### **3.3.5 Professor**

The minimum qualifications for a professor are the terminal degree in the teaching field of appointment and at least twelve years of successful college teaching experience or its equivalent, including at least seven years at the associate professor rank.

## **3.4 ORIENTATION OF THE FACULTY**

The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning and the Office of Academic Affairs, with the assistance of senior administrators and members of the faculty enlisted for this purpose, is responsible for orienting new faculty members to the university. Such orientation shall include an introduction to the university's mission and heritage; faculty rights, responsibilities, and benefits; academic programs; and institutional policies and procedures. As a part of the orientation process, a senior tenured faculty member from another academic department will mentor each new faculty member during his or her first year of service. Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning and the Office of Academic Affairs, with the assistance of senior administrators and members of the faculty enlisted for this purpose, is responsible for orienting new faculty members to the university. Such orientation shall include an introduction to the university's mission and heritage; faculty rights, responsibilities, and benefits; academic programs; and institutional policies and procedures. As a part of the orientation process, a senior tenured faculty member from another academic department will mentor each new faculty member during his or her first year of service.

Orientation to the academic unit, to specific job responsibilities, and to performance evaluation is the responsibility of the department chair in concert with the Division Dean.

## **3.5 EVALUATION OF FACULTY MEMBERS**

In general, the purposes of teacher/scholar evaluation are to create the means to encourage continuous self-evaluation, improvement, and growth by each member of the faculty, and to provide a basis for administrative and peer review of performance. This implies both formative and summative evaluation. The purpose of the formative evaluation is to assist the faculty member to understand strengths and weaknesses in order to provide opportunities and means for improvement. The purpose of the summative evaluation is to provide information required for tenure, promotion, retention, and salary decisions.

Full-time faculty members with tenured, tenure-track, or defined-term appointments are evaluated annually with reference to their performance in three areas: effectiveness in helping students learn; scholarly and professional activity and development; and university and community service. The current evaluation procedures are available in Appendix C: Evaluation Procedures. The policy is reviewed annually by the Faculty Personnel Committee.

Faculty members with visiting or part-time appointments are evaluated annually by the appropriate department chair and Division Dean. The chair and dean will determine what elements of the evaluation process are required, which, at a minimum, will include student course evaluation results for all covered courses and a Performance and Planning Record.

Adjunct faculty members are evaluated at the conclusion of each semester by their department chair. The chair will determine what elements of the evaluation process are required, which, at a minimum, will

include reviewing student course evaluation results for all covered courses.

## **3.6 TERMINATION AND GRIEVANCES**

The following section outlines the policies and procedures for termination, early retirement, and filing grievances with the university.

### **3.6.1 Termination by Faculty Member**

Faculty members may terminate their appointments effective at the end of an academic year, provided that they give notice in writing at the earliest possible opportunity, but not later than May 15, or thirty days after receiving notification of the terms of appointment for the coming year, whichever date occurs later. Faculty members may properly request a waiver of this requirement of notice in case of hardship or in a situation where they would otherwise be denied substantial professional advancement or another opportunity.

An early retirement plan is provided for faculty who had between 11 and 30 years of service with the institution by July 31, 1999. Faculty may not earn years toward early retirement benefits after July 31, 1999. The plan is outlined in Appendix D: Early Retirement Plan. Details are available from the Office of Human Resources.

### **3.6.2 Termination by Institution**

Termination of a faculty member with tenure, or of any other faculty member prior to the end of his or her specified term of employment, may be effected by the institution only for adequate cause and with due process. Termination will not be used to retrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom or other rights of American citizens.

Adequate causes for termination are moral turpitude, neglect, breach of contract, demonstrated incompetence, financial exigency, or discontinuation of program or department.

Due process begins with a meeting between appropriate administrative officers and the faculty member, who will receive written notification of termination with an explicit rationale. The faculty member may request for a formal hearing before a grievance committee, which shall be composed of five faculty members chosen as follows: one member of the Faculty Personnel Committee, one member named by the President, one member selected by the faculty member, and two others chosen by these three committee members. The grievance committee will review the notification with rationale and any evidence. The committee may find that there is adequate cause and that the termination is justified, that there is adequate cause but that another penalty would be more appropriate, or that there is not adequate cause for termination. These findings are communicated in writing to the faculty member and to the President. If the President rejects the committee's report, the President will respond in writing to the faculty member, explaining the reasons for rejecting the committee's report, and will provide an opportunity for the faculty member to reply before taking final action.

Termination procedures shall be conducted in accordance with the "Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure" published by the American Association of University Professors.

### **3.6.3 Other Grievances**

A faculty member may bring a grievance for matters other than separation issues through the following procedure:

- The faculty member will file a grievance to the Chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee, who will attempt a resolution between or among the parties involved.
- If the committee chair is unable to help the parties resolve the situation, the next step is a hearing before an ad hoc grievance committee. This step is initiated by the aggrieved, who will submit a written request to the Chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee. The Chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee will then convene a grievance committee that will contain five faculty members as follows: one member of the Faculty Personnel Committee, one named by the Provost, one selected by the aggrieved, and two others chosen by these three committee members. The decision of the grievance committee will be final except in the case of a review and action by the President.
- If the President does not affirm the decision of the grievance committee, the Chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee and chair of the grievance committee will report and make recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees, who will then make a final determination. If the President affirms the decision of the grievance committee, the matter does not need to go before the Board.

## FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Mars Hill University seeks to make a distinctive contribution in the field of education by providing an academically sound liberal arts program within a campus climate conducive to the growth of strong Christian character and to the development of desirable qualities of personal leadership. Anyone employed by the university is expected to be well prepared to teach in an institution of higher education and to accept an obligation to the university's traditions and mission. Within the context of these principles, the university subscribes to the following statement on academic freedom adopted jointly by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges:

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. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.
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.

### 4.2 PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The following "Statement on Professional Ethics" was adopted by the American Association of University Professors in 1966 with revisions approved in 1987 and 2009:

1. Professors, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end professors devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although professors may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry.
2. As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Professors demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Professors make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any

exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom.

3. As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates, even when it leads to findings and conclusions that differ from their own. Professors acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.
4. As members of an academic institution, professors seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. Although professors observe the stated regulations of the institution, provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain their right to criticize and seek revision. Professors give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it. When considering the interruption or termination of their service, professors recognize the effect of their decision upon the program of the institution and give due notice of their intentions.
5. As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

### **4.3 FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **4.3.1 Obligations to Students**

The primary obligation of an institution of higher education is the intellectual development and enhancement of the minds of students. The mission and purpose of Mars Hill University suggest certain other obligations to students that may not be shared by all institutions of higher education:

- To offer individual attention to students, the faculty should seek to know students, to nurture their intellectual curiosity, and to foster their individual capacity for growth.
- To demonstrate commitment to the liberal arts tradition, the faculty should encourage students to develop the capacity for critical judgment, to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth, to acquire a sound basis in general education as well as in a special area of knowledge, to cultivate open-mindedness and integrity, and to draw valid connections among different disciplines. The faculty should not only help students to learn, but to learn how to learn, to stimulate an interest in and an awareness of the importance of life-long learning. Students with promising academic potential should be encouraged to continue their formal education. The faculty should be prepared to assist them with admission to appropriate graduate schools and with applications for graduate scholarships and assistantships.

- To provide education in a Christian context, the faculty must be concerned about the spiritual as well as the intellectual formation of students. The faculty must be sensitive to opportunities to explore the relationship between faith and learning in an atmosphere of tolerance and support and to assist students in the development for themselves of a valid and workable worldview. While the university's institutional posture is unapologetically Christian, the faculty must respect the spiritual journey of each student and assist students in cultivating respect for the opinions and beliefs of others.
- To reflect the university's Christian heritage and its historic commitment of service to the region, faculty should encourage students to develop a balanced perspective of learning and experience, and to use their gifts and educational achievements not only for their personal advancement but also for the benefit of humankind.

### 4.3.2 Meeting Classes

The primary responsibility of the faculty is to conduct assigned classes as scheduled. Faculty members are expected to arrive for all class meetings promptly and conduct them for the full allotted time. Accurate attendance records must be maintained.

A faculty member must consult the department chair and the registrar if changing classrooms or hours and must report any temporary schedule changes to the appropriate chair and/or dean. When unable to meet classes for illness, emergencies, or other reasons, faculty members must inform the students and the appropriate chair and/or dean, in advance if possible. Faculty members in each department should cooperate in helping to meet a class when a colleague, on short notice, must be absent for an emergency.

### 4.3.3 Class Attendance

Because classroom attendance and punctuality are vital to student success, instructors should help to instill this value in their students. Absences and their effect on grades are to be determined by the instructor. Students are responsible for arranging makeup work and given full responsibility for attendance and work missed because of absences. Students are accountable to the instructor for all work.

An attendance policy may be determined by the academic department or the division in accordance with the following principles:

1. The policy shall be set realistically to provide students an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.
2. Each instructor shall announce the attendance policy at the beginning of each semester and include it in the written syllabus for the class.

Students who miss classes while representing the university in some capacity or for reasons of documented illness, inclement weather, or other emergencies must be allowed to make up such classes by arrangement with and at the discretion of the faculty member concerned.

All university instructors must keep attendance records for purposes of monitoring student absences and are responsible for reporting to the Retention Office any student who has consecutive absences amounting to a week plus one class (for example, three consecutive absences for a class which meets twice a week).

#### 4.3.4 Tests and Examinations

Tests shall be given only during regular class time unless students are notified at the beginning of the semester. In fairness to those who have other classes following the period of a test, no student should be allowed extra time to complete a test unless extended time is granted a student as a reasonable accommodation for a disability. Advance notice of scheduled tests must be provided. Because of their potential for instruction as well as for evaluation, final exams should be valued and considered part of the instructional semester. Exam periods, as scheduled by the registrar, are a part of the instructional semester and must be used for teaching or testing. Tests or examinations missed for any reason must be made up by arrangement with the instructor within a reasonable time.

#### 4.3.5 Office Hours

It is important for faculty members to be available to students outside of the classroom. This does not mean that faculty members are always on call, but it does mean that they are regularly available throughout the work week and respond to student inquiries in a timely manner. Ways to communicate with the faculty member should be clearly indicated on their syllabi and on the faculty member's office door.

It is also expected that faculty will be present around campus outside of class time. This can take many forms, such as traditional 'office hours', leading student activities/events, or meeting with students or colleagues at various places on and around campus. Faculty members, including part-time and adjunct, should work with their supervisor (typically a program coordinator, department chair, or dean) to determine appropriate availability for students outside of the classroom.

#### 4.3.6 Faculty Workloads

Full-time faculty members are contracted for 24 load credits per academic year. Typically, this is organized as 12 load credits of teaching per semester in the fall and spring semesters, though faculty members may have their teaching loads divided unevenly between the fall and spring terms. Full-time faculty members may be granted release time for administrative or other duties; such release time is determined by the Provost.

One load credit is typically the equivalent of one semester hour of lecture credit in a course in which the full-time faculty member is the sole instructor of record. Increased or reduced load credits for non-lecture courses are determined by the Provost in consultation with the appropriate Division Dean and Department Chair. Multiple sections of the same course are counted separately. A cross-listed course is counted as a single course. For a co-taught course, load credit is divided evenly among the instructors of record.

Load credits for faculty members supervising directed readings, independent studies, and internships are determined based on enrollment. For directed readings and independent studies, a faculty member earns 1/6 of a load credit for every student-credit generated; for internships, the rate is 1/12 of a load credit for every student-generated credit. Any alternative calculation must be approved by the Provost.

Load credits are calculated in the following order:

1. Load credits for non-instructional duties (e.g., release for administrative responsibilities)
2. Load credits for AMU (determined by multiplying the total student credits generated by 0.67 —

- i.e., course credits × students enrolled × 0.67)
3. Load credits for other regular courses, beginning with those courses/sections with the highest enrollment
  4. Load credits for labs and clinical experiences (e.g., nursing)
  5. Load credits for directed readings, independent studies, or internships

Any work by a full-time faculty member that exceeds 12 load credits in a semester is considered an overload, unless that faculty member did not meet his or her contracted workload in the previous semester. (In such rare instances, load credits in excess of 12 are used to offset prior shortages before they are counted as overload credits.) If only a portion of the load credits of a course is required to reach 12 in a semester, that portion is counted toward the full-time faculty member's load, and the remainder is considered an overload.

A full-time faculty member's workload may not exceed 16 load credits per academic semester without the written approval of his or her Division Dean. This limit includes the sum of teaching duties for the traditional academic program and Adult & Graduate Studies, as well as any workload credit for administrative or other assigned duties. An adjunct may not be responsible for more than 9 load credits per academic semester without the written approval of the Provost.

A faculty member who engages in external funding or employment must report these on his or her annual Performance and Planning Record. For external funding/employment during the contract period, typically August- May for 10-month employees, a faculty member must secure written approval from his or her Division Dean prior to entering into any new agreement; external funding/employment outside of contracted time must be reported but does not require the Division Dean's approval. Should an extant external funding/employment agreement interfere with a faculty member's contracted duties, his or her Division Dean may rescind approval. A Division Dean's decision not to approve an external funding/employment opportunity or to rescind approval for an extant external funding/employment agreement may be appealed to the Provost, whose decision in such instances is final.

Work by a full-time faculty member in excess of 12 load credits per semester is compensated at the rate of \$700 per additional load credit. Adjunct instructors who hold a terminal degree in the area of instruction are also compensated at the rate of \$700 per load credit. Adjunct instructors who do not hold a terminal degree in the area of instruction are compensated at the rate of \$625 per load credit, though adjuncts with an extensive history of quality teaching for the college may be compensated at the higher rate, at the discretion of the Provost.

A class with fewer than 5 students enrolled will be cancelled.

By default, full-time faculty members are compensated for overload credits during the semester in which they are generated. However, with the consent of the appropriate Division Dean and Department Chair, a faculty member may elect to "bank" overload credit in exchange for release time in a subsequent semester. Any such banked credit must be used within two years of its generation; banked credit not used within two years is lost unless arrangements are made with the Division Dean's approval.

Generally, no more than 6 banked load credits may be used for release in a given semester. (*Approved by the Deans Council 05/31/2017*)

### 4.3.7 Academic Advising

The Mars Hill University advising system develops and promotes systemic yet personalized faculty advising that helps students grow intellectually, spiritually, and personally. Academic advising is a cooperative learning experience between student and advisor that aims to help students plan their academic program of study, learn the connections between academic learning and the world of work, and cultivate life-long habits of good citizenship and service to others. At Mars Hill University, faculty advisors have the responsibilities:

- Faculty advisors will help students by serving as personal mentors and academic advisors for students, recognizing that the student is responsible for scheduling, attending and keeping assignments for their academic advising appointments.
- Faculty advisors will help introduce incoming students to the Mars Hill experience: the physical campus, the curriculum, the various academic departments and majors, academic support programs, Self-Service, and campus services.
- Faculty advisors will provide accurate information concerning course sequencing and academic planning. Faculty advisors will guide students through the university's Foundations & Perspectives general education program and their respective major.
- Faculty advisors will monitor students' academic progress and will help students identify major and minor areas of study.
- Faculty advisors will assist students with important recordkeeping such as meeting important deadlines filling out important forms, e.g., drop/add, withdrawals, change of major/advisor, and intent to graduate.
- Faculty advisors will help students prioritize academic and campus life activities to achieve short-term and long-term goals.
- Faculty advisors will help students identify and understand the relationships between educational and career choices by helping them reflect upon their personal interests, skills, and talents.
- Faculty advisors will link students to The Center for Community Engagement and The Cothran Center for Career Readiness concerning information about internships, service learning opportunities, and graduate school options.
- Faculty advisors will help students learn how to monitor their own success in achieving life goals.
- Faculty advisors will become familiar with the Mars Hill University Academic Advising Handbook and any changes made to the advising process.

### 4.3.8 External Funding/Employment

A faculty member who engages in external funding or employment must report these on his or her annual Performance and Planning Record. For external funding/employment during the contract period, typically August- May for 10-month employees, a faculty member must secure written approval from his or her Division Dean prior to entering into any new agreement; external funding/employment outside of contracted time must be reported but does not require the Dean's approval. Should an extant external funding/employment agreement interfere with a faculty member's contracted duties, his or her Division Dean may rescind approval. A Dean's decision not to approve an external funding/employment opportunity or to rescind approval for an extant external funding/employment agreement may be appealed to the Provost, whose decision in such instances is final.

### 4.3.9 Cooperation and Campus Involvement

The faculty should study carefully the policies and procedures, purpose and objectives of the university and should assist the administration in carrying out these policies and achieving these objectives. Thorough familiarity with university publications is essential.

Each department and division holds regular meetings to enable its members to become better acquainted with each other, to study the problems in the division or department, and to make plans. Department chairs, in cooperation with the Division Deans, are responsible for determining course offerings, course numbers, and curricular requirements for major programs.

It is desirable that members of the faculty be involved in all aspects of the university community to the extent that their interests, work schedules, and time will permit. One means of involvement is to attend and participate in the variety of events that take place on the campus, such as seminars, lectures, music and theatre performances, art exhibits, athletic events, and worship services.

Faculty members are expected to attend all convocation and commencement exercises. They are expected to march in academic regalia for fall and spring convocation and for commencement exercises as announced.

Academic regalia are furnished by the faculty or may be rented through the university bookstore. A faculty member who must be absent from these exercises must first obtain approval from his or her Division Dean.

## 4.4 ACADEMIC POLICIES

### 4.4.1 Academic Calendar

The university operates on a semester basis with most traditional courses offered during two 15-week terms in the fall (August-December) and the spring (January-May). Most courses delivered through Adult & Graduate Studies are offered during four nine-week short terms, two in the fall (August- October, October-December) and two in the spring (January-March, March-May). The university also offers two five-week summer terms (May-June, July-August) with some courses encompassing both summer terms.

### 4.4.2 Course Credits

#### Credit Hour Defined

In accordance with federal government guidelines, the University defines a credit hour as the amount of student time investment that reasonably approximates one hour of classroom (or direct faculty instruction) and two hours out-of-class student work for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester (with exceptions made for laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, applied music and ensembles, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours). In accordance with commonly accepted practices in higher education, the University operates on a 50-minute hour for this definition. Fifty clock minutes per week per credit hour for approximately 15 weeks provides approximately 750 minutes of direct faculty instruction time per credit hour based on the Carnegie Unit. Courses on accelerated calendars should also include approximately 750 minutes of direct instruction per credit hour.

#### Direct Faculty Instruction

Direct faculty instruction, referred hereafter as academic engagement, includes traditional on campus, face-to-face classroom instruction with regular meetings for approximately 750 minutes for each credit

hour granted (equivalent to one hour per week in a 15-week semester, or comparable amounts for other term lengths.) In the case of online and hybrid (semi-online) courses, academic engagement must be equivalent to traditional classroom instruction in terms of time (750 minutes per credit hour) and may include, but is not limited to, submitting an academic assignment, listening to class lectures or webinars, taking an exam, completing an interactive tutorial, attending a study group that is assigned by the institution (synchronous or asynchronous), contributing to an academic online discussion, initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course, conducting laboratory work, and completing an externship or internship.

Contact Judge-McRae School of Nursing ([sharon\\_shepard@mhu.edu](mailto:sharon_shepard@mhu.edu)) for specific application/NCBON definitions of clinical experiences, faculty directed clinical practice, and simulation.

#### **4.4.3 Registration and Schedule Changes**

Courses are offered on a semester basis with schedules published in Self-Service in October and March for the following semesters. Early registration with advisors is held for continuing students during the fall and spring semesters. Continuing students not registered during early registration may register at the beginning of the semester with new students. No student may attend class unless cleared by the Business Office and officially registered.

During the first 5 days (2 days in summer terms) of class, a student may make schedule changes with advisor authorization. Normally, no course may be added after these 5 days (2 in summer); however, exceptions may be made with the approval of the instructor and the registrar. Any instructor may refuse to accept a student after the initial registration period if too much subject matter has already been covered. If a student fails to attend a class during the first four days of regular classes, the faculty member may request that the student be dropped from the class roll.

A student is allowed to drop a course, with advisor authorization, during the first 20 days of classes (2 weeks for short-term classes, 5 days for summer session classes) with no grade entry on the transcript. All courses on the student's schedule after that deadline are considered courses attempted and will appear on the student's transcript.

After the drop deadline and before the withdrawal deadline (the day following fall or spring break in regular-term classes, after 4 weeks in short-term classes), a student is allowed to withdraw from a class with a grade of "W" as long as the student remains full-time (12 semester hours) after the withdrawal. After this stated deadline, a student may not withdraw from any class without wholly withdrawing from the university. Courses for which a grade of "W" is posted will remain on the transcript, but the grade will not be calculated in the grade point average.

A student may be administratively withdrawn from all classes if he or she fails to attend classes for two weeks. Grades will be entered on the student's transcript according to withdrawal guidelines.

#### 4.4.4 Grades and Grade Points

Mars Hill University employs a letter grading system to indicate levels of student performance in coursework. In most courses, most students earn conventional letter grades: A (excellent), B (good), C (acceptable), D (marginal), and F (failure). All conventional letter grades aside from F may also carry a + or suffix. Students may also earn grades of S (satisfactory), U (unsatisfactory), I (incomplete), W (withdrawn), or CR (Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate credit).

The university seeks to encourage students in the quality as well as the quantity of their work through a grade point system. The following grade points will be assigned for each conventional letter grade: A+/4.0, A/4.0, A-/3.7, B+/3.3, B/3.0, B-/2.7, C+/2.3, C/2.0, C-/1.7, D+/1.3, D/1.0, D-/0.7, F/0. To satisfy a curricular requirement, a student must earn a grade of D or higher. For additional policies related to grading policies, see the Academic Catalog.

#### 4.4.6 Academic Probation and Suspension

Mars Hill University students must demonstrate their ability to perform satisfactorily by grade point average. To remain enrolled in good academic standing, a student must have maintained at the end of any semester the following cumulative grade point average:

Qualitative Standards:

Freshmen (1-27 hours earned)	1.50
Sophomores (28-59 hours earned)	1.80
Juniors and above (60 or more hours earned)	2.00

A student earning a term grade point average of a 0.00 and 0 credit hours (excluding HHP 115 or TA 469 credits) will be placed on immediate academic suspension. Other students who do not meet the minimum requirement will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. A student who fails to meet the requirements during the probationary semester will be placed on academic suspension. However, a student who earns 12 hours and a 2.00 grade point average for the probationary semester will automatically be granted one more semester to achieve the required cumulative standard.

Any student placed on suspension will be notified using official university communication (email and physical mail to the home address on file). A suspended student may appeal their suspension by completing a suspension appeal application and submitting it for review by the Admissions, Academic Standards, and Financial Aid committee. Instructions for how to submit a suspension appeal are included in the notification of suspension from the university. Applications that are received after the deadline will not be considered.

Students placed on academic suspension at the end of the spring semester may use the summer session to meet the minimum qualitative standards to be reinstated for the fall semester. Those placed on academic probation may use the summer session to return to good standing for the fall semester.

#### 4.4.7 Change of Grade

Once reported to the registrar through Self-Service, all grades become part of the permanent record. A

faculty member may not change a grade except in the case of a clerical or calculation error. After grades have been recorded and grade processing is complete, a posted grade (other than Incomplete) may not be changed without approval from the chief academic officer. A student appeal for a grade change or a challenge to the academic record must be made before the end of the semester following the term in which the challenged grade was received.

#### 4.4.8 Academic Appeals Procedures

Only academic matters come under these guidelines. Personnel matters are handled by the appropriate administrators, and student conduct issues are covered by Student Code of Conduct procedures. The following section clarifies rights and responsibilities of the faculty and students in the academic areas of campus life.

Statements of grievance and appeals of decisions should adhere to standards of fairness, civility, and responsible citizenship and must not infringe upon the rights of either students or instructors.

When a student believes that a decision of an academic nature has been made unfairly or improperly, he or she may appeal that decision. An appeal should be initiated only when the student considers the case serious and for which substantial supporting evidence is available. The following are categories of decisions that may be appealed:

1. Grading: To appeal a grade, a student must have verifiable evidence that the grade is inconsistent with the work done in the course or that an instructor failed to take into account valid and verifiable extenuating circumstances that interfered with the student's opportunity to complete and submit required courses assignments in a timely manner.
2. Breaches of Academic Integrity: A student who has been accused of plagiarizing, cheating, or otherwise engaging in academic dishonesty by an instructor and whose work in the instructor's course had been graded accordingly may appeal the decision using the university's Academic Integrity Policy. (See Academic Integrity Guidebook)
3. Transfer Credit: A student who believes credits transferred from another institution have not been properly evaluated may request that they be reevaluated. To do so, the student must provide copies of the other institution's appropriate academic catalog(s) and course syllabi.

To appeal a grading decision, a student must proceed through the following steps:

1. The student must make an appointment to meet with the instructor (or registrar, in the case of transfer credit appeals) to discuss the decision being appealed. Whenever possible, this meeting must take place in person.
2. If the student is not satisfied after having met with the instructor, the student may appeal the instructor's decision to the instructor's supervisor, typically the department chair or the Division dean. The supervisor will convene a meeting of the student, the instructor, and him- or herself, will hear the reason for the appeal and examine the evidence, and will issue a ruling in writing to both parties.
3. If the supervisor's ruling is considered unacceptable either party may lodge a formal appeal of the ruling in writing to the chief academic officer, who will refer the matter either to the Committee on Admissions, Academic Standards, and Financial Aid or to a special Board of Academic Appeal, at his or her discretion. A meeting of the committee or board will take place within two weeks of submission of the formal appeal, during which both the student

and the instructor will provide relevant evidence. Within one week of this meeting, the chair of the committee or board will issue a decision about the appeal, which is final and binding.

## **4.5 FACULTY LEAVE AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **4.5.1 Faculty Leave Policy**

Unless otherwise specified, a full-time faculty member's term of employment begins on 1 August and ends on 31 May. The institution assumes that each faculty member, as a professional, abides by the terms set forth in his or her individual contract on all work days during this period. The following periods are not considered work days for faculty members:

- Fall Break (2 days)
- Thanksgiving Break (3 days)
- Christmas/ New Year's Break (from fall Commencement to spring First-Year Orientation)
- Spring Break (5 days)
- Good Friday (1 day)

In addition, a faculty member's supervisor may require him or her to represent an academic program, department or division at institutional events held on weekends or during the summer, including Visit Days, Lion Life pre-orientation days. Such responsibilities will be shared among all members of the academic program, department, or division in as equitable a manner as is feasible.

A faculty member is not required to take paid leave days for professional development opportunities that occur during the term of employment, including workshops, conferences, seminars, meetings, and institutes, provided the faculty member's supervisor has approved the time away and the faculty member has made appropriate arrangements to cover courses and other responsibilities prior to taking the leave.

In the event of the death of an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) or other person for whom the faculty member is the primary healthcare agent, a faculty member is allowed up to 5 paid days off in addition to those already accrued. In the event of a summons to jury duty, a faculty member is allowed paid leave days for the duration of his or her service and is not charged paid leave days while serving. A faculty member who takes leave for bereavement or for jury duty is expected to work with his or her supervisor to develop a plan to cover courses and other responsibilities prior to taking leave.

During their first through fifth years of employment, faculty members are entitled to 15 paid leave days per year. During their sixth through twelfth years of employment, faculty members are entitled to 20 paid leave days per year. During their thirteenth and subsequent years of employment, faculty members are entitled to 25 days of paid leave time per year. Paid leave days not used by the end of the faculty member's term of employment may be "rolled over" to the next term of employment; up to 132 paid leave days may be accumulated in this manner. At no time will a faculty member receive pay for unused paid leave.

During the term of employment, a full-time faculty member may take paid leave for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Birth of a child
- Adoption of a child
- Care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) or other person with a serious health condition for whom the faculty member is the primary healthcare agent

- A healthcare-related appointment
- Inclement weather
- Other reason deemed appropriate by the faculty member's supervisor.

A faculty member must inform his or her supervisor in writing prior to taking paid leave when possible, must give reasonable notice of the anticipated date and duration of the leave, and must provide formal documentation justifying the leave when it is requested by the supervisor.

Should a faculty member need to miss work for an extended period of time for a reason covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), paid faculty leave days will run concurrently with FMLA-covered leave.

A faculty member may donate a portion or all of his or her accrued leave time to another faculty member who has exhausted all available leave time.

#### **4.5.2 Sabbatical Leave**

A faculty member may apply for sabbatical leave in the seventh year of service to the university.

Application forms for leaves are available to all faculty members on a continuing basis and can be found on MyMHU under Academic Affairs.

Completed applications for sabbatical leave, using guidelines supplied with the application forms, must be submitted to the applicant's division dean not later than January 31 for leaves for the following summer and academic year. The deans will review all applications and make recommendations to the Provost, who will inform applicants of administratively approved sabbaticals not later than March 15. Final approval of sabbaticals is made by the Board of Trustees.

A faculty member granted sabbatical leave will receive either full salary for one semester or half salary for two semesters and will continue to be fully eligible to participate in all fringe benefit programs. Barring financial exigency, at least two sabbatical leaves will be granted each year. The university will seek to grant additional leaves to eligible faculty members in cases where course loads can be adequately covered in ways that are not excessively costly to the university.

The purposes of sabbatical leaves may include professional and personal renewal as teacher-scholars, scholarly research and publication, and the development of courses or other parts of the teaching and learning program. These sabbatical leaves are not to be considered primarily as rewards for services to the university; rather they are intended to be a means of faculty development, mutually beneficial to the individual faculty member and to the university as a whole. Ordinarily, a sabbatical leave will not be granted for work toward a degree. To be eligible for a sabbatical leave, a faculty member must 1) have completed at least seven consecutive years of service to Mars Hill University, 2) have not received sabbatical leave in the preceding seven years, and 3) agree to return to Mars Hill University for at least one year following the leave. If the recipient does not return to the university for one year following the leave or grant, the recipient agrees to repay to the university all funds received from the university in connection with the leave.

The Deans and Provost are guided by the following questions in evaluating applications for sabbatical leave:

1. Does the proposal reflect a sound self-assessment of the applicant's role in the university and a realistic plan for the applicant's professional and personal development over the next three to five years?
2. Do proposed activities promise to enhance teaching and learning at Mars Hill University to a degree commensurate with the resources requested?
3. Does the proposal state clearly the goals to be attained by the applicant, the methods and activities by which the goals are to be attained, and a plan for evaluating the results and reporting achievements?
4. Is the proposed project intellectually and conceptually sound?
5. Does the applicant make the case that he or she can successfully carry out the proposed activities and achieve the stated goals?

### 4.5.3 Faculty Enrichment and Renewal Grants

All full-time faculty are eligible for Faculty Enrichment and Renewal Grants. Proposals for monetary grants in excess of \$500 are to be submitted to the Chair of the Faculty Enrichment and Renewal Committee (FERC).

Electronic submissions are required; guidelines and application forms can be found on myMHU. Applications for FERC-administered grant funds are considered during three funding cycles: (Cycle One) Fall (September- January), (Cycle Two) Spring (January-May), and (Cycle Three) Summer (May-September). Events that take place during overlap months (September, January, or May) may be funded during either cycle. Fall and Spring applications must be submitted by the second Thursday of the funding cycle; Summer applications must be submitted by the first Thursday of that funding cycle.

Applications for grants of \$500 or less may be submitted to the Provost via the Provost's Administrative Assistant at any time. These grants are awarded at the discretion of the Provost.

The purposes grant projects for enrichment and renewal may include professional and personal renewal as teacher-scholars, scholarly research, and publication, attending and/or presenting at scholarly conferences, and the other faculty activities for the development and enhancement of teaching-learning. Enrichment and renewal grants ordinarily will not be used in support of tuition costs incurred in graduate degree programs. To be eligible for an enrichment and renewal grant, a faculty member must: 1) be a full-time member of the faculty and 2) agree to return to Mars Hill University for at least one year following the grant award. If the recipient does not return to the university for one year following the grant, the recipient agrees to repay to the university all funds received from the university in connection with the grant.

The overarching criterion for evaluating proposals for grants is the likelihood that the proposed activities will enhance the educational program of Mars Hill University. In applying this criterion, the members of the Faculty Enrichment and Renewal Committee will be guided by the following questions and by other questions that may arise in specific cases:

1. Do proposed activities promise to enhance teaching and learning at Mars Hill University to a degree commensurate with the university resources requested?

2. Does the proposal state clearly the goals to be attained by the applicant, the methods and activities by which the goals are to be attained, and a plan for evaluating the results and reporting achievements?
3. Is the proposed project intellectually and conceptually sound?
4. Does the applicant make the case that he or she can successfully carry out the proposed activities and achieve the stated goals?

#### **4.5.4 Grants from External Sources**

Proposals for grants from external sources must be coordinated through the Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations. Before pursuing a proposal, the idea or concept must be cleared by the director in consultation with appropriate administrative officials. If the desired funding is judged to assist with programs that serve the mission of the university, then the person requesting permission to pursue the proposal will work with the director to complete a formal proposal. The formal proposal will then be approved by the appropriate administrative official before being submitted to an external agency.

Any grants funded through formal proposals must specify the university official responsible for administering the grant. That official will be responsible for establishing appropriate accounting procedures with the Business Office to assure full and accurate tracking of all funds secured through the grant. A final report on the use of monies for any funded proposals must be filed with the Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations.

#### **4.5.5 Leaves Without Pay**

Leaves without pay are granted by the university to faculty members upon the recommendation of the appropriate Division Dean and with the approval of the Provost, provided that the leave request is submitted prior to the deadline for sabbatical applications. Requests submitted after the deadline will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances. Leaves without pay are not considered “time in rank” unless stipulated by the Provost upon the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee.

#### **4.5.6 Emeritus Status**

A retiring faculty member may submit a request for emeritus status to the Faculty Personnel Committee if the faculty member has been awarded tenure at MHU or if the faculty member has taught full-time at MHU for a minimum of ten years. In the event that a retiring administrator has faculty rank, the administrator may submit a request to the Faculty Personnel Committee for emeritus status. The Faculty Personnel Committee will consider this request and make a recommendation to the Provost. A final decision is made by the Provost and approved by the President. In unusual circumstances, the Provost may waive appropriate portions of the stated criteria.

Faculty who are awarded emeritus status will receive free admission to MHU athletic events and cultural events, access to the MHU library, continued MHU email and network access, access to MHU athletic facilities, and a campus parking permit.

A faculty member who is awarded emeritus status may submit a request to the Provost for office/carrel/practice/lab space to continue work begun at MHU. Such space may be awarded based on availability and the merit of the request.

#### **4.6 Phased Retirement**

To be eligible to participate in phased retirement, the age of the faculty member plus the number of years of service to the university must equal at least 85 (e.g., 55 years old plus 30 years of service). Phased retirement provides two “stair step” years of partial retirement prior to full retirement in the third year. During the first year of phased retirement, the faculty member earns 75% of his/her pre-retirement compensation, is responsible for 75% of his/her pre-retirement workload, participates in all university benefit programs, continues serving on faculty committees, and may continue to serve in administrative roles counted toward workload. During the second year of phased retirement, the faculty member earns 50% of his/her pre-retirement compensation, is responsible for 50% of his/her pre-retirement workload, participates in no university benefit programs except healthcare, no longer serves on faculty committees, and cannot serve in administrative roles counted toward workload. Faculty members participating in phased retirement are not eligible to apply for professional development funding through the Faculty Enrichment and Renewal Committee and may not apply for a sabbatical.

#### **4.7 Institutional Policies**

Mars Hill University is committed to providing all administration, faculty, staff, and students a safe work and academic environment that is conducive to intellectual and personal development. Mars Hill University expects all administration, faculty, staff, and students to behave and to conduct themselves in such a way that promotes a safe, respectful and productive campus that is free from violence, harassment, hazing, or bullying in any form. The University will not condone or tolerate actions by any member of the administration, faculty or staff, or by any student, that disrespects the basic human dignities of other persons at the University. For policies related to safe work practices, including who to contact and where to report violations of the policies, see the Employee Handbook or the Human Resources portal at [my.mhu.edu](http://my.mhu.edu).

##### **4.7.1 Doors & Windows Policy**

Mars Hill University encourages cooperation, socialization and collegial interaction amongst the administration, faculty, and staff. The University also encourages appropriate academic, advisory, and mentoring relationships between administration, faculty, staff, and students. However, in an effort to reduce the risk of administrators, faculty, staff or students finding themselves in a vulnerable situation, it is the policy of Mars Hill University that faculty and staff will keep all windows to their offices, classrooms, or other work spaces unobstructed such that a third party can look into the office, classroom or workspace at any time. In addition, it is the policy of Mars Hill University that if a member of the faculty or staff is meeting one-on-one with a student in an office, classroom or work space that does not have a window, the door shall remain open at all times. Any member of the administration, faculty or staff that violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. (Exceptions shall be made for members of the administration, faculty and staff that are involved with confidential aspects of the on-campus student health services or on-campus counseling center, and accommodations shall be made for any member of the administration, faculty or staff that is nursing children.

##### **4.7.2 Intellectual Property Rights Policy**

Mars Hill University encourages the publication and display of original works and the dissemination of new knowledge. This Intellectual Property Rights Policy seeks to promote excellence and innovation in teaching and learning, in creative activities, and in the production of materials through identifying and

protecting the rights of all members of the community: faculty, staff, students, and the institution. The basis of this policy is the concept that creative works produced at Mars Hill University should be used for the greatest possible benefit.

The policy governs the respective ownership rights of the university, its employees, and its students in material produced with the direct material and/or financial support of the institution. The policy protects the traditional rights of all members of the university community with respect to the products of their scholarly, creative, and professional endeavors. The university cedes ownership to the author(s) of works such as books, papers, and journal articles created using only generally available university resources. When university support makes the work possible, or when it provides extra or special support, whether with money, facilities, equipment, or staff for the development of ideas or the production of works, it is reasonable for the university to participate in the benefits of the work. The university asserts its right of ownership if substantial university resources, including sponsor-provided funds, are used in the creation of the work.

The university owns the rights to all works, inventions, developments, and discoveries herein referred to as “work” or “works,” created with the substantial use of university equipment, services, or resources. This includes any patentable invention, computer software, database, web-based learning resource, or related material. The university historically has not, and does not now, assert any claim to or ownership interest in the following categories of works: textbooks; class handouts or presentations; research articles, proposals, or monographs; student theses or dissertations; paintings; drawings; sculptures; musical or dramatic compositions or performances; poetry; and popular fiction and nonfiction. Ownership of these categories of endeavor is waived by the university in favor of the author, and these are exempt from the provisions of this policy.

The use of university resources is substantial when it entails the dedicated use of university equipment, facilities, personnel, funding, or resources not ordinarily available to or used by all or virtually all members of the Mars Hill University community. The use of a university-owned computer, incidental supplies, shared facilities, and, when reasonably limited, the compensated efforts of university personnel is not typically considered substantial use. In contrast, the utilization of university laboratories, specialized instruments, dedicated assistance by university employees, special financial assistance, or extensive use of shared facilities constitutes substantial use. Funds and facilities provided by the government, commercial, or other private organizations that are administered and controlled by the university are considered university resources for purposes of this policy. If a work results from research sponsored in whole or part through governmental or other outside funding, the research agreement shall govern the disposition of intellectual property rights, but no research agreement shall be entered into without the review and approval of the Provost in order that the university may protect its intellectual property rights to the greatest extent possible. If the sponsor does not assert an ownership interest, ownership vests with the university as provided in this policy. Where a question arises as to whether a particular work involves compensated effort or substantial use of university resources, the matter shall be referred to an ad-hoc committee comprised of the Provost (or designee), the Vice President for Finance (or designee), the Chair of the Faculty (or designee), and the Chair of the Staff Personnel Committee (or designee). Should the question of ownership involve the work of a student, the President of the Student Government Association (or designee) shall also serve.

If an author creates a work that is potentially covered by this policy, he or she is required to notify his or her supervisor and the Provost immediately and provide them with sufficient detail to permit the university to evaluate the work and, if appropriate, take steps to protect the intellectual property rights. If the university elects not to exercise its ownership in a particular work, the ownership rights and responsibilities related to such rights for patenting, copyrighting, and licensing shall rest with the

author(s). The university retains a nonexclusive, royalty-free right to use for non-commercial purposes works produced by its employees acting within the scope of employment or by students producing works in fulfillment of curricular requirements even if ownership is ceded to the author(s). The university endorses the legitimate expectation of authors to share in the net revenues produced by licensing or other development of the works, but given the university's substantial cost involved in supporting scholarship and research, the university is also entitled to a share in any such royalties. Accordingly, for any work in which the university asserts ownership interest under this policy, the university and the author(s) will share the net royalties (revenues less recovery of all legal and other costs

involved in protecting rights to the work, licensing costs, and other directly related administrative costs) in the following percentages:

- ≤\$5,000: 100% author, 0% university
- \$5,001-\$25,000: 75% author, 25% university
- \$25,001-\$100,000: 60% author, 40% university
- >\$100,000: 50% author, 50% university

Net royalties received by Mars Hill University shall be restricted to support the scholarly, research, and creative activities of members of the university community. If the work is a joint creation, the authors will divide their share equally, unless they provide the university with an alternative royalty distribution agreed upon by all authors. If a work is a compilation involving the university's intellectual property, the author(s) shall retain all ownership interests in the work, but by allowing the work to become part of the compilation thereby grants a nonexclusive royalty-free license to the University for the use of the contributed work. While the university shall own rights to the compilation, it shall own no rights to the underlying work beyond said license. Notwithstanding the royalty-free license, the university will share the net proceeds from the compilation as described above.

## **Article VII Adoption**

This constitution shall become effective when approved by two thirds of the voting members of the faculty after consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting.

## **Article VIII Written Ballots**

Many votes in Faculty Meetings can be oral. However, for all votes involving new curricula, constitutional amendments, governance committee members, faculty chairs, and other matters deemed by the faculty chair to warrant such, written or electronic ballots shall be held, ballots coordinated with beforehand and counted afterwards by the Committee on Committees. Announcements of results to Faculty will be made by the Administrative Assistant to the Provost.

# **FACULTY CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

## **5.1 Constitution**

The Faculty Constitution and Bylaws are drawn under the authority of the Board of Trustees and the President of Mars Hill University.

## Article I Purpose

The purpose of this constitution shall be to provide for the organization of, and the laws governing, the faculty of Mars Hill University.

## Article II Membership

All persons of the rank of instructor or above who have full-time faculty contracts with full-year appointments at the university shall be voting members of the faculty and shall be entitled to vote in general meetings, in committees, and in departments to which they are appointed.

Tenured faculty members who move to part-time teaching contracts at the university shall continue to be voting members of the faculty and are eligible to serve on committees. Full-time staff with faculty status may vote and serve on faculty committees (even if they are not assigned to teach credit-generating courses). Membership also includes other full-time administrators and staff with faculty rank, provided they continue to teach at least one credit-generating course per academic year, and provided the following restrictions do not apply: senior administrators who must enforce university policies do not vote at faculty meetings or serve as voting members of faculty committees (even if they teach); other full-time administrators or staff with faculty rank do not vote or serve as voting members of committees when there is a potential conflict of interest between their administrative or staff duties and faculty policies and procedures.

Unless otherwise specified, the term “faculty” shall refer in this document to those individuals with faculty rank and those with faculty status.

Some committees include a representative for an individual with faculty status. When filling a vacancy for these faculty status positions, the Executive Committee will first consider individuals with faculty status. However, if there is not a faculty status person who is willing or able to serve in this capacity, the Executive Committee will select an at-large representative from those with faculty rank for a one-year appointment. At the end of that academic year, the Executive Committee will try again to select an individual with faculty status for this committee position. If this is again not possible, the Executive Committee may choose to renew the appointment of the faculty rank representative for an additional year (or select a different faculty rank representative).

If a faculty status position is filled with a faculty rank individual, the following conditions must apply:

1. When selecting a faculty rank representative, the Executive Committee must maintain balance between divisions represented on this committee (such that no division dominates representation on a committee),
2. At the end of each academic year, the Executive Committee should attempt to appoint a faculty status individual, and
3. A faculty-rank individual’s one-year term of service may be renewed for no more than the number of years of service that the faculty status individual would have served.

## Article III Jurisdiction

Except as otherwise provided by the charter of the university, the faculty shall have general legislative powers over its own affairs, including admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examination, and recommendations through the President to the Board of Trustees for the

granting of degrees.

#### **Article IV Officers and Committees**

1. The faculty shall elect from among its tenured members a chairperson and four other members to serve staggered three-year terms on the Executive Committee (EC). No academic division will have more than two representatives on the EC. The chair acts as the principal representative of the faculty and the presiding officer at all faculty meetings. The chair and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will jointly establish priorities and set an agenda for faculty meetings. The presiding officer may, at his or her own discretion, resolve a tie vote.
2. A secretary, chosen from the EC members, shall be appointed by the elected EC members.
3. Any other officers the faculty may require for the academic year shall be appointed by the elected EC members.
4. The faculty may, in its bylaws, provide for as many committees as it deems advisable. Such committees may recommend action to the general faculty, or they may take specific action as set forth in the bylaws, subject always to review by the general faculty.

#### **Article V Meetings**

1. Monthly meetings shall be held during the academic year, unless the faculty is notified otherwise. Other meetings may be called by the CAO or the Faculty Chair as deemed necessary. Also at the written request of at least ten voting members of the faculty, the CAO or the Faculty Chair shall be required to call a meeting.
2. Written notification of meetings must be given to all members of the faculty at least five days prior to the time of the meeting except in emergencies. Notification of the meetings must also go to the President of the university. A quorum shall consist of one half of the voting members of the faculty.
3. Parliamentary procedure in faculty meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (text available at <https://robertsrules.com>).

#### **Article VI Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by the agreement of two thirds of the voting members of the faculty, provided that (a) a copy of the proposed amendment has been sent to each member of the faculty before the meeting at which it is first considered, and (b) the motion to amend the constitution is then tabled for at least one month.

#### **Article VII Adoption**

This constitution shall become effective when approved by two thirds of the voting members of the faculty after consideration at a regularly-scheduled meeting.

#### **Article VIII Written Ballots**

Many votes in faculty meetings can be oral. However, for all votes involving new curricula, constitutional

amendments, governance committee members, faculty chairs, and other matters deemed by the Faculty Chair to warrant such, written or electronic ballots will be used. The ballots coordinated with beforehand and counted afterwards by the EC. Announcements of ballot results to faculty will be made by the Faculty Chair or the Administrative Assistant to the CAO.

To facilitate the conduct of timely business by the EC, electronic ballots may be conducted outside of faculty meetings to allow the faculty's desires and intentions to be sampled to inform priorities and conversations with administration. These matters shall not involve final votes on new curricula, constitutional amendments, governance committee members, or matters deemed as ordinarily conducted within faculty meetings.

### **5.2.1 Structure and Jurisdiction of Faculty Committees**

Generally, membership of the committees is balanced across divisions. Unless prescribed differently by an individual committee description in the following bylaws, student members of university committees will be nominated by the Executive Branch of the Student Government Association and elected by the Senate of the Student Government Association. No student may serve on more than one university committee at a time. No student shall serve on any governance committee nor the shared governance committee on Admissions, Academic Standards, and Financial Aid (AASFA).

The CAO is an ex officio member of all committees. They will designate the appropriate administrative officer as an ex officio member of the Committee on Admissions, Academic Standards, and Financial Aid and of the Committee on Curriculum & Assessment. It is understood that an ex officio member has the right to be present at meetings and to consult, but has no vote.

All governance, shared governance, and ad hoc committees will submit a brief written report at the end of each academic year to the EC. All governance committees will work with a liaison member of the EC, and chairs will make regular reports to the EC.

All full-time faculty-with-rank members are expected to participate in some committee work as part of their responsibility to the university. Membership on all committees should be spread equitably across the faculty. No person shall serve on committee work that exceeds 30% service without the advice and consent of their academic supervisor and/or the CAO. If such service is deemed essential to the university and beneficial to the faculty member, compensation in the form of release from other duties shall be considered.

Staff with "faculty status" may choose to serve on designated committees with the advice and consent of their department supervisor and/or CAO. This committee work should not exceed 12 hours per week (30% of a 40-hour workweek), which fall under the umbrella of the 40-hour workweek. If the work does exceed 12 hours of the 40-hour workweek, additional compensation in the form of a stipend shall be considered. Staff with faculty status may decline participation in committee work if their normal job duties or unforeseen personal or professional responsibilities would make it hard to fulfill the requirements of committee participation.

All committees function from August 1 to May 31 unless otherwise agreed upon and meet during the Faculty Workshop to elect a chair and a secretary and to begin making plans for the year.

If a faculty member is experiencing unusual circumstances that would make a faculty governance committee placement unfeasible, they must email their justification to the faculty secretary of the executive committee. The appeal will be considered by the full Executive Committee, and the decision will be communicated to the faculty member.

## 5.2.2 Governance Committees

Each committee must have at least one member from each division – other members are elected at-large to provide adaptability to revised division structures OR equal distribution with two committee members per division when the seats allow. No person shall serve, at one time, on more than one governance committee. Members may succeed themselves no more than once on any governance committee. No married spouses can serve on the same governance committee, and no department may have more than one member on the EC.

### Executive Committee

The EC, which contains the Faculty Chair and four other members, serves as the faculty's executive body. All members are tenured and have voting privileges in the executive session. They collaborate to oversee the governance of faculty, plan with members of administration and the Board of Trustees, recommend candidates for honorary degrees to the faculty, review policy change prior to full faculty vote, and deploy faculty across committee service.

The Faculty Chair oversees the work of the EC and serves as the primary liaison between the faculty, the administration, and the Board of Trustees. The Faculty Chair, or their designee, serves ex officio on the Deans Council and as a voting member of the Budget Advisory Committee. The Faculty Chair receives two course releases per semester to be used at the chair's discretion for themselves or by other members of the EC, if significant responsibilities over the academic year are distributed by the chair to others in the EC. The EC shall be responsible for:

#### A. Planning Faculty Governance

The committee meets at least once a semester with the CAO to discuss and make long- and short-term plans for the academic program. The Faculty Chair meets on a regular basis with the CAO and brings information back to the EC for discussion to develop and evaluate plans for the academic programs of the university. The EC serves as an advisory committee to the CAO and the President and will review requests for honorary doctorates, making nominations to the faculty for its approval.

#### B. Determining Committee Assignments

The EC undertakes the tasks of nominating faculty members for elected governance committees; appointing faculty members to shared governance and ad hoc committees; and collecting data from faculty regarding committee preferences and service on other campus committees. The EC will use this information in order to nominate, appoint, or approve faculty to committees.

The committee nominates elected replacements for faculty governance committees after studying committee membership for preceding years and faculty preference surveys.

- For Policies & Impact, Curriculum and Assessment, Faculty Personnel, Professional Development & Scholarship, and Co-curricular Connections, the EC nominates at least two candidates for each vacancy and presents them to the faculty at least one week before the faculty meeting at which voting occurs. With any additional nominations from the floor, balloting then proceeds.
- For the EC, academic divisions will be notified of all eligible members of their division by the beginning of February. Ranked choice voting will be used for elections with three or more candidates. For the division representative, each academic division will nominate at least two candidates to go to the full faculty for a vote. To ensure balanced representation no more than two members of the EC may come from the same academic division at any time. For an at-large member of the EC (other than Faculty Chair), each academic division that does not already have two representatives will nominate at least one candidate EC presents these candidates to the faculty at least one week before the faculty meeting at which voting occurs. All elections to EC will conclude by the end of the academic year.

The EC appoints replacements for faculty on shared governance and ad hoc committees. After reviewing faculty preference surveys, faculty committee service surveys, and consultations with appropriate campus constituencies, the committee will appoint the replacement.

Nominations and voting for annual faculty committee reorganization should occur no later than the April faculty meeting. Annual committee appointments should be finalized by the end of April.

The EC has a responsibility to staff all committees listed in the bylaws while striving to balance staffing needs with faculty committee preferences and workload.

### Policy & Impact

This five-member committee is chaired by the Faculty Chair. Three of its members will hold tenure and represent distinct academic divisions and the fifth seat is reserved for someone with faculty status designation. It will maintain policy for all committees in the governance structure and work to evaluate the impact of policy and governance on faculty and the institution.

The primary functions of the committee include:

1. Proposing new policies for academic programs of the university, to be approved by the EC and full faculty
2. Evaluating current policies of academic programs of the university
3. Reviewing (in consultation with the EC) any substantive changes proposed by faculty committees prior to full faculty consideration
4. Ensuring faculty decisions are implemented; and
5. Reviewing and updating as necessary the Faculty Handbook to accurately reflect changes in policy, practice, and information:
  - a. The committee issues an annual report of handbook changes
  - b. Every three years, the committee completes a review of the handbook in its entirety.

The committee considers questions referred to it by the CAO, other committees of the university, and individual faculty members; it may also initiate discussion if it desires.

The committee will consult with the Student Government Association and/or other relevant student groups on matters that pertain directly to students.

### **Curriculum & Assessment**

The Curriculum and Assessment Committee consists of seven members. These include one person with faculty status, three tenured divisional representatives appointed by the EC, and three at-large representatives appointed by the Assessment Committee for Academic Programs.

This committee will elect a chair from its tenured members and have a member of the EC as a liaison. The committee provides oversight on matters pertaining to the academic curriculum at Mars Hill University. The Registrar serves as an ex officio member. The committee acts on proposals submitted and/or approved by Division Deans, department chairs, and program directors in all academic programs. Such proposed changes include the addition of new courses, dropping of listed courses, changes of title or number, and substantial changes in content of and prerequisites for any existing course in any undergraduate program. When the committee reaches a decision, the chair will convey it in writing to the person or program that submitted the proposal; the committee's actions become final unless objections or alternative proposals are submitted within one month following this notification. The committee also considers any proposed curricular changes of a university-wide nature. Examples of such changes would include revision of the general education program, new majors or minors, deletion of majors or minors, and any new academic programs. After deciding whether to recommend for or against such proposed university-wide changes, the committee forwards the proposal to the faculty for a vote at a regular faculty meeting. Procedures governing the work of the committee are specified in the Curriculum Committee Policy Statement.

### **Faculty Personnel**

This committee consists of five members who are tenured, have associate or full professor rank, and a minimum of two years of service at the institution. The membership includes at least one faculty member from each academic division (one division representative for each division and at-large members from different academic divisions). Note that in addition to duties to review faculty, this committee chair reviews faculty grievances should the need arise.

#### Faculty Personnel Committee duties:

The committee advises the CAO on all university personnel issues such as salaries, fringe benefits, tenure, promotions, merit increases, dismissals, and general personnel matters, including investigations of faculty members for cause (See Section 3.5 "Termination by Institution"). Committee recommendations are not binding on the CAO.

The committee considers matters brought before it by the CAO and may initiate other matters for consideration except as noted herein. No promotion in rank can be initiated by the committee without a prior recommendation by the Division Dean. However, any faculty member may bring before the committee a claim for promotion or tenure. The committee may act at its discretion.

All statements pertaining to particular recommendations for promotion or tenure are to be read in full to the committee. The CAO is to provide the committee with all relevant information about any candidate for promotion, tenure, or merit increase, i.e., length of service, previous promotion and merit increases, current salary, teaching ability, educational achievement, etc. The committee bases its recommendations on these objective criteria and presents them to the CAO with a clear and concrete explanation of its position.

In the matter of merit increases, the committee should attempt to bring into line the variances in the recommendations of the Division Deans and to consider each faculty member in the light of his or her achievement and in relation to the other members of the same rank.

Any member of the faculty has the privilege of obtaining a hearing before the committee on any personnel matter except merit increases. Only Division Deans may obtain a hearing on the latter. (This, of course, does not prevent the faculty member from taking up the matter of merit increases with the Division Dean or the CAO, either of whom may take it up with the committee.)

The committee has the right to obtain as complete information as possible on any matter pertaining to personnel that has been brought before the committee.

The CAO advises the committee on all administrative decisions concerning matters that the committee has discussed and on which recommendations have been made. The CAO also informs the Division Deans and all individuals who bring special cases before the committee of the final disposition of all matters pertinent to them, individually or collectively.

The meetings of the committee in which personnel are discussed are strictly confidential. Members do not discuss these matters outside the committee. As indicated above, the CAO reports final action. Matters of a non-confidential nature, such as new policy concerning personnel, are reported to the faculty.

The committee will work with the CAO, Office of Human Resources, and the Office of Institutional Research to produce an annually updated report on Mars Hill University faculty salaries and benefits compared with those of national and regional peer institutions. The committee will present the report and provide copies to the faculty, the administration, and the board of trustees each spring.

### **Professional Development & Scholarship**

This committee consists of five members. Each member has at least five years of service to the University. The membership includes at least one faculty member from each academic division with at-large members from different academic divisions. At least one of the at-large members is appointed by the IRB Committee. This committee assists the EC in planning the Faculty Workshop, acting as liaison with the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning regarding faculty development, facilitating the Institutional Review Board for human-subjects research oversight, and hosting the annual Celebration of Artistic and Scholarly Achievements (CASA) in partnership with the Library.

This committee oversees the budget line for Faculty Enrichment and Renewal grants by reviewing and recommending faculty applications for the CAO concerning funding for professional development, including: study grants, workshops, professional meetings, visits to other campuses, and other opportunities for renewal and enrichment. Committee recommendations are not binding on the CAO.

The committee considers matters brought before it by the CAO and may initiate other matters related to the professional development of faculty. Any faculty member or faculty group may bring before the committee a proposal related to professional renewal or enrichment. Recommendations for distribution of funds may not be initiated by the committee without a prior request from the individual or group concerned or from the CAO.

The primary sources of funding for faculty development are endowed accounts. At the beginning of each

academic year, the CAO informs the committee of the amount of funding that will be available for distribution that year.

The committee chair informs, in writing, applicants and the CAO of recommendations about requests brought before the committee.

### **Co-curricular Connections**

Three members (not the chair nor secretary) will oversee distribution of the Visiting Artists and Lectures Committee (VALC) budget line as the faculty members on VALC. The full committee is charged with coordinating functions related to student life and activities for campus, including working with shared governance committees of Student Experience, Athletics, Cothran Career Center, Religious Life, SLAM, and Committee on Accessibility. It will have a chair and secretary elected from its five members. The other three members of this committee will serve as the three faculty members on the Shared Governance Visiting Artists and Lecturers Committee.

## **5.2.3 Shared Governance Committees**

These committees may include non-faculty voting members and be chaired by staff or administrative members of the institution. Faculty participate as active members of these committees. Governance committees provide coordination to encourage collaborative feedback loops with the faculty at large to assist in maintaining functional and efficient reporting of committee work.

Unless otherwise noted, faculty appointed by the EC will serve for three years. Revolving service committee duties are sporadic, limited to specific points in the academic calendar, or occur on an as-needed basis. The duties are key to the holistic mission of educating students at the institution, and thus, all faculty should have an opportunity to learn from the processes on these committees. Training for committee service will orient faculty to the committee's purposes prior to their service commitment. Rotation of no more than 50% of the committee is the goal to retain a majority of experienced faculty in service at any one time point.

Second year faculty-with-rank members may be assigned to revolving committees to help integrate them into governance and the institution at large.

### **Admissions/Academic Standards and Financial Aid**

This committee consists of the following:

1. Eight voting members:
  - a. Five faculty members appointed by the EC to serve under a system of rotation
  - b. Representative from Student Life
  - c. Director of Admissions
  - d. Director of Financial Aid.
2. Ex officio non-voting members include:
  - a. Registrar
  - b. Representative from Athletics
  - c. Director of Student Persistence
  - d. Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies

In case of a tie in any voting matter, the attending representative of the Office of the Registrar will vote.

This committee reviews and acts on students' appeals regarding academic suspension. Actions taken by the committee in response to these appeals impact students' financial aid awards as well as their enrollment eligibility. This committee assists with policies and regulations, which influence the level of academic achievement required for admission to the university and for academic progress towards a degree. The committee participates in interpretation and evaluation of policies regarding admissions and persistence, quality of academic performance required for graduation, academic records, the promotion and recognition of academic achievement.

The semester-end summary of activities shall be submitted to the Curriculum & Assessment Committee.

### Athletics

This eight-member committee is composed of the following voting members:

1. Four faculty members
  - a. Three faculty members appointed by the EC under a system of rotation
  - b. The Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) will serve as chair.
2. Male and female student-athlete representatives: Student members are selected for one-year terms according to the procedures outlined under Structure and Jurisdiction of Faculty Committees; student-athletes that are active in leadership roles on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee are preferred.
3. One member of the coaching staff, appointed by the Director of Athletics
4. Director of Athletics

The Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), named by the President, shall serve as the representative of the Mars Hill University faculty at meetings of any conferences and university athletics associations of which the university is a member. Another member of the committee, designated by the FAR, may serve as an alternate for these meetings should the FAR not be able to attend.

It shall be the function of this committee to:

1. Periodically review the university standards of the South Atlantic Conference (SAC) and NCAA Division II, which govern student participation in athletics. This committee shall review policies that govern who may represent Mars Hill University in intercollegiate athletics.
2. Monitor the student-athlete experience and advise the appropriate parties concerning the development, approval, and implementation of policies that would enhance this experience. This may include recommendations directed to the faculty, athletics, student life, and academic support, among others.
3. Members of this committee will be available to the athletic department to participate in student-

athlete exit interviews.

4. Help foster understanding between academics and athletics.
5. Serve as the appeals board for any grievance brought by student-athletes.
6. Review the status of Mars Hill University in SAC, NCAA-Division II, or other such memberships, and shall recommend to the President any proposed changes in such status.
7. This committee will meet on an as-needed basis, determined by the chair, which shall be no fewer times than once a semester. The semester-end summary of activities shall be submitted to the Co-curricular Connections Committee.

### **Assessment Committee for Academic Programs**

Annually, at the end of an academic program assessment cycle, the committee convenes to review all academic program assessment reports and evidence of student learning to make specific recommendations to academic programs for improvements. Because the majority of this committee's work falls outside of the usual faculty contract, service on this committee is compensated with a stipend.

This committee consists of the following individuals:

1. Six faculty members equally representing divisions appointed by the EC under a system of rotation with four year terms. The committee appoints three of its members to serve as at-large representatives on the Curriculum and Assessment Committee.
2. Director of Assessment, who serves as chair
3. Officer of Institutional Research

The committee strives to provide a report summarizing the assessment work completed each year to academic and institutional leadership (including the Curriculum & Assessment governing committee), as well as make recommendations based on data analysis. Additionally, when appropriate, this committee strives to provide evidence to support financial or budgetary requests. Through its work, the Assessment Committee for Academic Programs fosters a culture of inquiry across the institution by serving as a source of information and assistance within divisions, disciplines, and content areas, in part by contributing to the identification of opportunities for training and support .

### **Student Experience Committee**

The purpose of the Student Experience Committee is to provide a campus community perspective and guidance on issues of student life.

Membership: This 10-member committee is composed of the following individuals:

1. Four faculty members: three division representatives and one individual with faculty status appointed by the EC, all of whom serve under a system of rotation.
2. Student representative: student members are selected for one-year terms; students that are active in

leadership roles in Student Government are preferred.

3. Three representatives from the Student Life Leadership Team: these representatives are appointed by the Vice President for Student Life
4. University Chaplain or appointee
5. Vice President for Student Life, who serves as chair

It shall be the function of this committee to:

- Contribute to development of strategic initiatives
- Help shape and foster participation in campus traditions and events
- Review data on PAWS program, and serve as advisory board and ambassadors for PAWS
- Discuss student issues of institution-wide concern and make recommendations (For example alcohol, local vs national Greeks)
- Annually review data about student life (for example: conduct, programming, housing)
- Serve as an advisory board on policies that affect student facilities.
- Provide guidance on other matters regarding student life

This committee will meet on an as-needed basis, determined by the chair, which shall be no fewer times than once per semester. A year-end summary of activities shall be submitted to the Co-curricular Development Committee.

### **General Education Council**

Membership:

- Dean of General Education, Chair
- Assessment Coordinators (see description below) for the components of the General Education Curriculum
- Director of Advising
- Faculty Chair (ex officio)
- Associate Provost of AGS (ex officio)
- Director of QEP (ex officio)
- Other faculty and staff members invited by the Dean of General Education based on their experience with GE-courses

The General Education Council oversees the administration of the general education curriculum at Mars Hill University under the direction of the Dean of General Education through the following responsibilities:

1. Advise and assist the Dean of GE on all matters related to administration of the GE Program.

2. As needed, lead and execute strategic planning initiatives related to the design and redesign of the General Education program at MHU
3. Review and recommend approval or denial (to the Curriculum Committee) of addition of any Curriculum Committee-approved course to be considered as a candidate for meeting GE requirements in any particular area of the GE curriculum.
4. Assist the Dean of General Education in assessment of all GE-program-related Program Learning Outcomes in all areas of the GE Curriculum.
5. Assist GE program faculty in all areas of the GE program in their efforts to “close the loop” in assessment, thus promoting a culture of continuous improvement of learning outcomes in GE-related programs.
6. As needed, conducting ongoing review of current GE program offerings, enrollments, schedules, staffing, and outcomes, and, when needed, suggesting and implementing changes to GE program offerings and staffing that may be necessary for maintaining program efficiency and high standards while meeting the needs of the MHU students and the institution as a whole.

The GE Assessment Coordinators are appointed to three-year terms by the Provost in consultation with the Dean of General Education and the General Education Council.

#### GE Assessment Coordinator Description

1. Communicate with council and/or dean about assessment.
2. Collect and maintain artifacts and records for end-of-year assessment.
3. Organize and lead end-of-year assessment workshop; gather suggestions for classroom-based instructional modifications.
4. Write and submit assessment report.
5. Remind instructors of SLOs and classroom-based instructional modifications from previous year’s assessment.
6. Spearhead changes to common assignment, if needed.

#### Benefits Committee

The Benefits Committee has the responsibility to review employee benefits and to make recommendations to the administration for changes, revisions, additions, etc. In addition, the committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Office of Human Resources with respect to employee benefits.

The committee, appointed by the President or his designee in consultation with the EC, is composed of the following:

1. Two faculty members
2. Two staff members
3. Director of Human Resources, who serves as chair
4. Benefits manager
5. Vice President for Administration and Marketing meets with the committee as needed.

#### Budget Advisory Committee

The major responsibilities of the committee will be to become thoroughly familiar with the annual operating budget of the university and advise the CAO as to recommendations on the distribution of

resources through the annual operating budget to be made to the President and the Board of Trustees. The committee will review and recommend priorities for budget expenditures in light of the strategic plan and five-year financial plan adopted by the Board of Trustees.

The committee will be made up of the following members appointed by the CAO in consultation with the EC:

1. Chair of the faculty
2. Three faculty members
3. Two staff members
4. One administrator

These appointments are annual and renewable.

### **Cothran Center for Career Readiness**

This five-member committee is composed of the following individuals:

1. Two faculty members appointed by the EC to serve under a system of rotation.
2. One member from Athletics, preferably a coach or assistant coach appointed by the Director of Athletics.
3. One representative from a student support-oriented staff group (i.e.: Chaplain, DEI, Residence Life, etc.); recruited by the Cothran Center Director.
4. The Cothran Center Director, who serves as chair

The purpose of the committee is to act as a conduit of information to and from the Cothran Center, and to help the Cothran Center director and staff better understand and navigate the intricacies of the academic structure of the institution in the following ways:

- Enhance communication and awareness of the key goals and underlying programming of the Cothran Center
- Periodically review First Destination Survey data, helping to find new and improved ways of tracking alumni and their post-graduation career paths
- Assist in the development of programming that helps integrate stages of professional development throughout all four years of a student's time at MHU
- Help pioneer new ways of building awareness of, and utilization of, the services and mission of the Cothran Center to our students, other faculty members, and the alumni community at large

The committee will meet on an as-needed basis, determined by the chair, which shall be no fewer times than once per semester. Other business will be addressed via email. A year-end summary of activities shall be submitted to the committee members, which then, upon recommendation of the committee, will be submitted to the Co-curricular Connections Committee.

### **Committee on Accessibility**

The MHU Committee on Accessibility is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment that proactively

addresses the needs of individuals with disabilities across the Mars Hill University community, including students, faculty, administrators, staff, and visitors. Committed to upholding the tenets of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, this committee pledges ongoing support to ensure universal access to academic programs, facilities, and activities for all individuals.

The responsibilities of the MHU Committee on Accessibility encompass:

1. **Raising Awareness:** Cultivating awareness and sensitivity among students, faculty, and staff at Mars Hill University about the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.
2. **Consultation and Advocacy:** Providing guidance and input to the Director of Accessibility Services on matters pertaining to accessibility, support, and program access within the MHU campus.
3. **Enhancing Campus Accessibility:** Collaborating with university Housing and Residence Life to identify and address specific areas requiring improvement for the accessibility of the Mars Hill Campus.
4. **Supporting Student Transitions:** Facilitating a positive transition experience for students with disabilities entering the campus community.
5. **Policy and Protocol Feedback:** Offering input to the Director of Accessibility Services regarding the refinement of forms, protocols, and documentation related to accessibility services.

Committee members are appointed by and serve under the direction of the Director of Accessibility Services. The committee consists of:

1. Director of Accessibility Services
2. Senior Director of Student Success
3. Director of Housing and Residence Life
4. Director of Student Support Services
5. Director of Safety and Security
6. Director of Medical Services
7. Director of Counseling Services
8. Director of the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
9. Faculty Member with expertise in disabilities
10. Faculty Member at-large (committee-selected, three-year term)
11. Dean (Ex officio)
12. IT Representative (as needed)
13. Marketing Representative (as needed)
14. Facilities Representative (as needed)

### **Institutional Review Board Committee**

This committee provides oversight for human-subject research at Mars Hill University, including the responsibility to hear any allegations of research misconduct. It shall investigate those allegations fully and fairly and recommend appropriate disciplinary action should the allegation be confirmed to the CAO. The board meets regularly for the timely review of research proposals submitted during the academic year. The IRB shall be coordinated through the Professional Development & Scholarship governance committee.

It shall include the following individuals:

1. Four faculty members of departments that conduct human-subject research. One of these faculty members also serves on the Professional Development and Scholarship governance committee.
2. One faculty member whose department is in a nonscientific discipline
3. One member who is not otherwise affiliated with the university

### Religious Life

This committee consists of members selected by the University Chaplain, who serves as chair. It is composed of the following individuals, each of whom has expressed interest in the religious identity of Mars Hill University and engagement with the offerings of the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life (CRSL):

1. Two faculty members (serving a revolving two-year commitment)
2. Two staff members
3. Two current students.

The Religious Life Committee will serve as an advisory board to the staff of the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life and will meet on an as-needed basis to provide feedback and advice on matters regarding CRSL policies, strategic planning, and the offering of programs and events for the MHU community.

This committee will be guided by the MHU Mission Statement and Religious Identity Statement. This committee supports the chaplain, who has the responsibility to ensure the harmony, diversity, and inclusivity of religious activities and programming on campus.

### SLAM

The SLAM committee organizes and manages the Student Liberal Arts Mosaic (SLAM) event that takes place each spring during the thirteenth week of the semester.

The committee consists of a chair and a faculty representative from each division. Additionally, there are representatives from the Student Success office, Student Activities office, the office of Marketing and Communications, and two student representatives.

Committee responsibilities include the choosing of a speaker, advertising and marketing the event across campus, evaluating student proposals, communicating with presenters, mentors and volunteers, choosing and preparing all venues (along with facilities), working with groups that assist with the event (e.g. Alpha Chi, faculty and staff volunteers, print, video and technology personnel) and coordinating the production of artwork and programs used for the event.

### Visiting Artists and Lecturers (VALC)

The committee is composed of the following members:

1. Three faculty members from the Co-curricular Connections Committee not serving as Chair or Secretary for the governing committee. One of these individuals serves as VALC chair
2. CAO (ex officio)
3. Director of Student Involvement (ex officio)

The committee is responsible for selecting and approving all programs supported by VALC. All

programs the committee supports are to serve the university's academic function. Funds budgeted for the committee's work will be allocated to provide budgetary assistance to MHU faculty for programming small events on campus. A grant-review process supports bringing in speakers who will enrich certain programs but will have broad campus appeal.

Each year the committee will establish guidelines and deadlines for the submission of proposals by departments/divisions to support visiting lecturers or artists who can make an important contribution to the intellectual climate of the university or provide excellent aesthetic opportunities for the university community.

### Advising Committee

This committee consists of the following individuals:

1. Director of Advising, who serves as chair
2. Five faculty members-one division representative for each academic division and at large members from different divisions. Faculty members are appointed by the EC in consultation with the Director of Advising
3. One representative from the Registrar's Office
4. One representative from the Admissions Office

This committee will meet 3-5 times per semester. The duties of this committee include:

1. Reviewing advising materials annually
2. Providing regular updates on new majors/minors to the campus community
3. Sending reminders to advisors about advising-related deadlines and responsibilities
4. Sending out the list of general education course offerings before the beginning of Registration Week
5. Organizing the Majors and Minors Fair
6. Consulting with the Dean of General Education about the implementation of new advising practices
7. Considering ways to constantly improve the advising experience both for students and advisors
8. Coordinating training for academic advisors
9. Assisting with creation of schedules for incoming students

### The Graduate Council

#### Mission and Purpose

The Graduate Council is the governing body over academic policies, procedures, and programs for graduate education<sup>1</sup> and graduate research at Mars Hill University. The Council is a forum in which issues and advocacy may be discussed and fulfilled. The Council reviews, establishes, and updates policies in a manner that best represents the interests of graduate education as a whole, beyond specific programs. The Council advises the Provost in all matters related to graduate studies and reports to the University Provost.

#### Responsibilities

The Graduate Council:

- Considers new graduate programs, changes to graduate programs or courses,
- Reviews graduate programs for quality and effectiveness,
- Reviews graduate distance learning for quality and effectiveness,
- Serves as the official advocate for graduate faculty and students,
- Establishes policies and procedures related to graduate admissions, financial aid, and degree completion,
- Establishes policies related to graduate program coordinator and faculty qualifications, and
- Responds to requests made by the Provost, Dean’s Council, and Faculty Chair.

### Membership

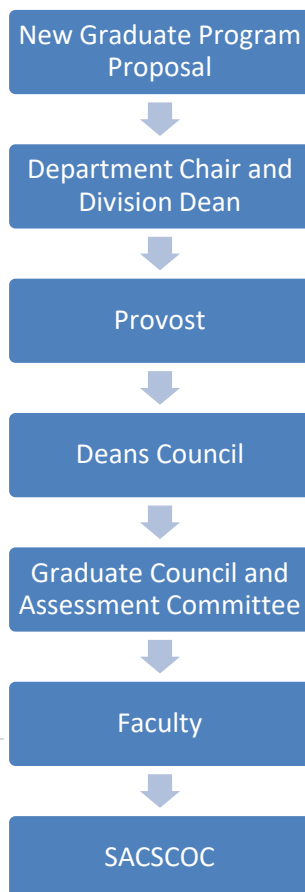
Members of the Graduate Council are the stewards of graduate education and graduate research at the university. The Graduate Council meets once a month, or as needed. Members of the Graduate Council are responsible for reviewing all materials prior to the meeting.

The membership of the Graduate Council (as appointed by the Provost):

- Chair – Dean of Professional Programs
- Academic Deans
- Program Coordinators of Graduate Programs\*
- A representative from the University Library
- A representative from the Office of the Registrar

\* When the number of graduate program coordinators on the Graduate Council exceeds five, the Provost shall appoint five coordinators, making an effort to include coordinators from across programs and divisions. Only one graduate program coordinator from an academic department may serve.

Graduate Program Approval Process:

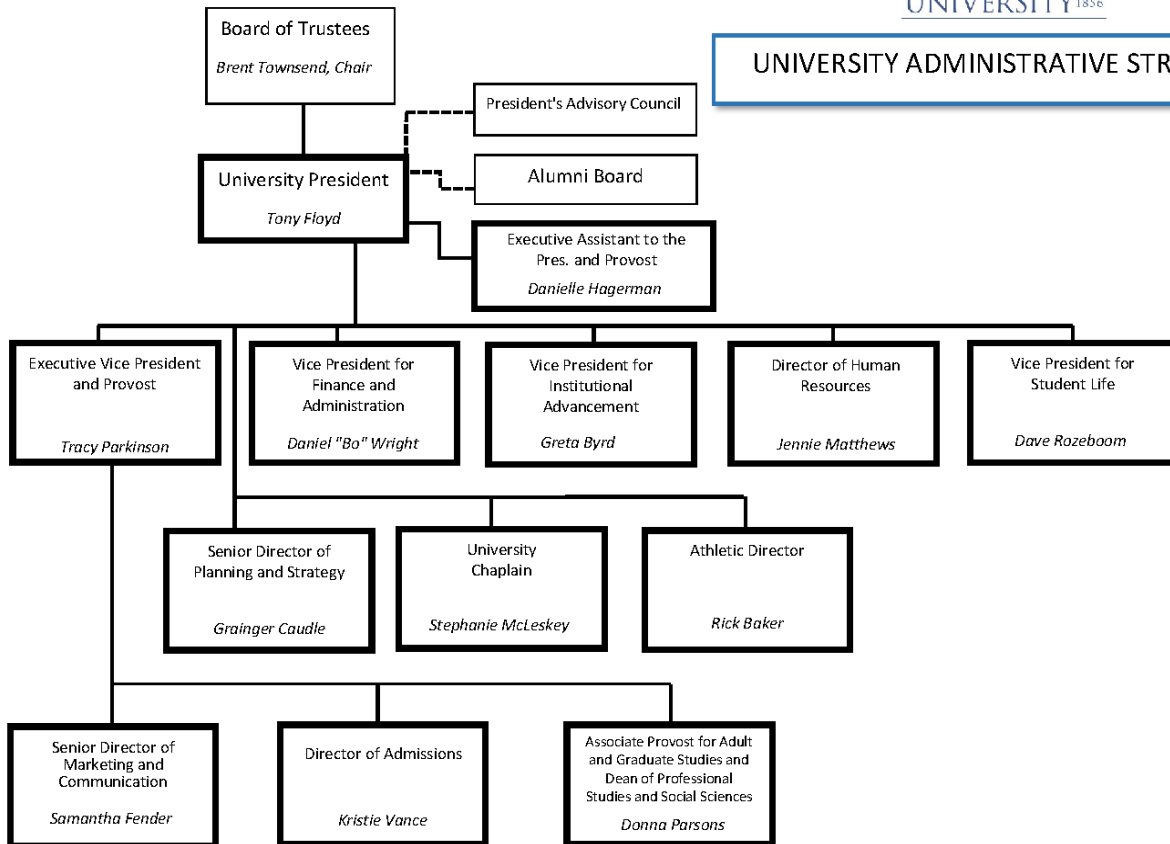


<sup>1</sup>To include post-baccalaureate programs or certificates

## APPENDIX A: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



### UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



## **APPENDIX B: FACULTY SEARCH & RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Search and Recruitment Procedures for Faculty**

A search is initiated only when a new or replacement position has been recommended by the Provost. The process is initiated by the Department Chair and Division Dean who submits a position request form to the Office of Academic Affairs.

When a defined-term or tenure-track position has been approved, the Provost and appropriate Division Dean will review the position to decide on whether a national or local/regional search is warranted. For visiting appointments, a limited search with or without the participation of an organized committee will be implemented.

For positions that involve a full search process, the Division Dean will consult with the department chair and the Provost in appointing the committee, composed primarily of faculty members in the department in which the vacancy exists but including at least one representative from another discipline.

The search committee will draft a position description that includes the duties and both required and desirable (or preferred) qualities of successful applicants for approval by the Division Dean and the Provost.

When approved, the job description, in the standard format, must be submitted electronically to the Director of Human Resources for posting on the university website and appropriate outside job listing sites.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for placing position announcements, referring prospective applicants to the website, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and other registries as determined by the Provost and the Division Dean.

### **Application Procedures**

Applicants must submit required materials to the Office of Human Resources so that acknowledgments and an affirmative action questionnaire can be sent to candidates. The Human Resources Office will maintain a list of applicants' names and contact information and will make all applications available to the search committee chair for review. Applications usually include a letter of intention, a current curriculum vitae, a list of references, and any other requested information.

When the search committee reviews the files of applicants and determines its level of interest in the candidates, it may request letters of reference and/or conduct telephone/video interviews with references. In most instances, the committee will conduct telephone/video interviews with the short list of candidates before the selection of finalists to invite to campus. The search committee, in consultation with the Division Dean, selects a maximum of three candidates to bring to campus for interviews. Additional on-campus interviews may be approved if one or more finalists are local.

### **Interview Process**

At the time of the campus visit, applicants are interviewed by the search committee, the Division Dean, the Provost, and the President (if available). As part of the interview process, each applicant will be required to conduct a class in the discipline or make an oral presentation to the members

of the search committee and interested students. Applicants must also be scheduled for a time to meet with a staff member in the Human Resources Office to obtain necessary forms and instructions for travel reimbursement.

### **Reimbursement**

All documentation required for reimbursement of travel and/or meals relative to a faculty search interview must be sent for approval to the Human Resources Office within ten days of the interview. This applies to the interviewee and any faculty member who has used a personal vehicle for transporting an interviewee and/or paid for a meal.

Late submissions may not be paid. Requests for reimbursement must be on the appropriate form as described below.

### **Travel**

If it is necessary to have an applicant fly in for an interview, the search committee chair must first notify the Human Resources Office for guidelines concerning the booking of flights. Applicants who fly in for an interview must complete a travel and expense report and attach all receipts for airfare and any meals required en route. Meal receipts must include the itemized restaurant bill. A request for mileage reimbursement to and from the applicant's home airport must have documented mileage. A member of the search committee should pick the applicant up at the airport in Asheville and take him or her to overnight accommodations. The search committee member will be reimbursed mileage with a completed travel expense report that has appropriately documented mileage attached.

Applicants driving more than twenty-five miles to Mars Hill must complete a travel expense report for mileage reimbursement. The university will reimburse an applicant for a meal during travel only if the applicant's home is more than four hours' drive from campus.

### **Accommodations**

For applicants who, because of distance from the university, require an overnight stay in Mars Hill, the search committee chair must make arrangements for the applicant to stay in the Carter-Humphrey House on campus or the Comfort Inn in Mars Hill, with the bill sent to the Human Resources Office. The Human Resources Office must be informed when applicants are scheduled to be housed at either the Carter- Humphrey House or the Comfort Inn, including the applicant's name, date of stay and the position for which he or she is applying.

### **Meal with an Applicant**

For applicants who arrive the day before their interview, an evening meal on the day of arrival and breakfast and lunch the day of the interview are approved. For applicants who spend a single day on campus, only lunch the day of the interview is approved. The university will cover the reasonable costs of up to three individuals at any meal, including the applicant and no more than two members of the search committee. For a meal off campus, the person who pays for the meal must complete a cash reimbursement form, attach an itemized restaurant bill, and write the names of the applicant and the other diners on the back of the receipt. For a meal in Pittman Dining Hall, a meal pass may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

Any situation not covered specifically by the above guidelines must be presented to the Provost for discussion and approval prior to any action. The Provost must notify the Human Resources Office in advance of any such situation and what has been approved.

### **Appointment & Credentialing Process**

The search committee and Division Dean give the Provost a ranked slate of acceptable candidates, with rationale for the inclusion and ranking of each. The committee must justify excluding any known minority candidate. If the Provost agrees with the top choice of the committee, the Provost will contact the candidate to inform him or her of the university's interest in extending an offer, contingent on the results of a background check. If, however, the Provost disagrees with the top choice, he or she will meet with the search committee and the Division Dean to discuss the rationale for making an offer to a candidate who was not top-ranked prior to proceeding with recruitment.

The Human Resources Office informs all candidates who were not selected for an interview of the conclusion of the search. For candidates who interviewed but were not chosen for employment, the search committee chair may wish to inform those individuals of the conclusion of the search. If so, the chair must inform Human Resources Office. All original and copied vitas must be returned to the Human Resources Office within ten days of the finished search for proper maintenance and/or disposal.

The Provost will request that the Human Resources Office initiate the background check for the preferred candidate. Once the background check process is completed and meets Mars Hill University standards, the President signs a faculty appointment letter, thereby extending an offer of employment to the prospective faculty member, who has a reasonable length of time to decide whether to accept the offer. No offer of employment is official prior to the written offer from the President.

Once an offer is extended and accepted, the Human Resources Office will ensure all appropriate credentials required for the position are indeed in place, by securing graduate school transcripts and other supporting documents that provide evidence of the new faculty member's qualifications. Those records are kept in both the HR Office and the Office of Academic Affairs.

### **Part-Time Faculty Appointments**

Requests for part-time faculty positions are made by the department chair or program coordinator to the division dean, after determining that the program has need of additional instructional resources. Credentials for potential candidates for part-time positions are reviewed by department chairs/program coordinators for disciplinary qualifications. Part-time faculty must meet the same credentialing requirements as full-time faculty, with the exception of instructors of physical skills and activities courses who have specialized credentials or experience.

## **APPENDIX C: EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

### **Guidelines for Faculty Evaluation**

The following guidelines represent general ideas and objectives upon which evaluation should be based.

To be effective, faculty evaluation must be performed consistently and rationally, linked directly to stated incentives and/or disincentives, and related directly to core faculty responsibilities, as outlined in faculty contracts.

Evaluation should serve both formative and summative functions, but these functions should be clearly separated and well-defined.

- **Formative** evaluations should be more frequent and connected with stated developmental goals. They should not be tied to financial incentives, thus encouraging faculty and supervisors to discuss openly strengths and weaknesses, and provide opportunities for improvement. The most typical formative evaluation is the annual Performance and Planning Record (PPR). This is submitted by faculty in early August and includes a checklist of faculty performance in the previous academic year along with developmental goals for the new academic year. Chairs (or Deans for Chairs) provide formative feedback each year.
- **Summative** evaluations are less frequent, more extensive, provide perspective on previous performance and goals. They are tied to possible merit raises every four years (i.e., Four Year Review) and with promotion (i.e., to Associate or Full Professor). They are also part of the more extensive feedback provided to new faculty after their first, second, and fourth year before tenure review. While these early-career summative evaluations are not tied to merit raises, they reflect the university's commitment to new faculty development towards tenure. Tenure review is also summative, reflecting the serious and virtually permanent institutional commitment to a faculty member when granted. Chairs, Deans, and the Faculty Personnel Committee provide summative feedback.

The following principles should guide all faculty evaluation procedures

**Evaluation Categories.** Individual faculty members are evaluated in three categories: teaching, scholarship & professional development, and service, though effective teaching, our core business, must remain primary as the measure of faculty achievement. If there are questions about which category(ies) an activity belongs to, these issues must be resolved with the faculty member and their Chair or Dean. Activities may be counted in more than one area of evaluation.

**Evidence-Based.** Evaluation should be based upon information gathered regularly and from a variety of sources (e.g., student evaluations, self-evaluation, supervisory assessment, portfolios, etc.). The evaluation forms currently in use at Mars Hill, when used consistently and fairly, provide an adequate basis upon which evaluators can make informed decisions. Note that the annual PPR does not require source materials, but Chairs or Deans may request materials as part of their annual formative evaluation. Faculty should maintain source materials for inclusion with their summative evaluations (e.g., four-year review, promotion, and tenure), where they will be required.

**Personalized.** Good evaluation procedures recognize that evaluation is not essentially a popularity contest nor a competition to see which faculty members are good at self-promotion or self-

marketing. Faculty evaluation must recognize that the personalities of teachers contribute to their teaching styles and that a variety of teaching styles can be effective and valuable to the institution.

**Faculty Response to Evaluators.** All formal evaluation activities (Department Chair, Division Dean, and/or Faculty Personnel Committee) must include a formal means by which individual faculty members may respond in writing to their evaluation. Faculty members evaluated must sign the evaluation document to indicate that they have read it and must be given a means by which to reply to the evaluation in writing.

**Peer Evaluation.** Individual faculty members may choose peer review mentors for a formative peer evaluation at their own discretion. Such evaluations should be designed to improve teaching. The designated peer should be someone who shares professional interest and expertise. Peer review should be open-ended (in terms of the type of documentation produced), collaborative, and growth-promoting (formative as opposed to summative evaluation). Peer reviewers should function as faculty mentors for pre-tenure faculty members. Except in extraordinary circumstances, peer reviewers should be tenured.

**Administrative Oversight.** The existence of the faculty evaluation program and the faculty members' adherence to its procedures shall not be construed as suspending the institution's right to terminate a faculty member with cause and following due process as described in the Faculty Handbook, Section 3.6, "Termination and Grievances." An evaluation addendum may be placed in a faculty member's file at any time by a Division Dean. The Department Chair or Division Dean shall have the option of doing additional evaluations of any faculty member. However, a tenured faculty member may be additionally evaluated only if the Division Dean receives prior approval from the Faculty Personnel Committee after showing just cause for the extra evaluation(s).

**Timeline.** Evaluation materials represent all contributions made across a traditional academic year (i.e., August – May). Faculty who were employed for less than a full academic year, or who participated differently within a given academic year (e.g., due to leave, sabbatical, administrative duties, etc) should note the altered timeline in their materials.

The materials for an evaluation cycle (i.e., August – May) will be due at the beginning of the next evaluation cycle (i.e., the following August). The timeline for submitting formative and summative evaluation materials will be communicated to the faculty by the end of the

academic year being reviewed (i.e., by May). The recommended timeline is:

- Friday of the first full business week in August – faculty materials due to Department Chairs
- Two weeks later – Chair feedback is due to Division Deans
- Two weeks later – Dean feedback is due to the FPC
- The FPC works with the Provost to establish the deadline for the FPC to submit recommendations to the Provost to bring to the Board of Trustees

Failure to submit or late submission of evaluation materials will be regarded as one of the factors considered during the faculty evaluation review process. The Faculty Personnel

Committee will report any such failure or lateness to the Provost when making its final recommendations concerning evaluations.

### **Evaluation Criteria and Ratings**

Faculty shall be evaluated on each criterion with the following ratings:

1. Exceptional (EX), reserved for recognizing faculty performance and development that far exceeds the typical.
2. Highly Valued (HV), meant to recognize the characteristic contributions of our faculty that, while substantial, align in degree and numbers with most of our faculty peers.
3. Developing Skills (DS), meant to focus feedback and development plans on specific areas within which improvement is needed. This rating is not meant to be detrimental to merit raise eligibility or potential promotion and tenure. Used effectively, evidence of development following this rating can lead to a favorable summative reflection.
4. Requiring Improvement (RI), reserved for more extreme circumstances when development is needed. It is given to those activities and behaviors that fail, in significant and specified ways, to demonstrate levels of excellence expected of tenured faculty members at Mars Hill University.

**Formative Use.** In the formative annual evaluation process (i.e., the PPR), Chairs and Deans may use these evaluation criteria to focus feedback. If a faculty member is considered in the Highly Valued (most likely) or Exceptional category, their evaluating Chair or Dean may choose to include that rating in the annual feedback, but it is not required. If a faculty member is considered in the Developing Skills or Requires Improvement category, their evaluating Chair or Dean is required to include that rating in the annual feedback, detail the reasons and evidence, and provide specific developmental goals.

**Summative Use.** In a summative evaluation process (i.e., first year, second year, fourth year, promotion, or tenure review), faculty members are given one overall rating based upon performance in each of the three categories of performance designated below. Faculty, Chair, and Dean will holistically evaluate a person eligible for summative review, giving special consideration to teaching. For summative reviews connected to merit raises, ratings of Exceptional, Highly Valued, and Developing Skills all warrant the same merit raise. This is meant to free the use of these categories from potential over-inflation, and allow them to work as development tools towards the best interests of our students and university community.

Faculty shall be evaluated according to the following three categories:

1. Effectiveness in Helping Students Learn
2. Scholarly and Professional Activity and Development
3. University and Community Service

See the PPR checklist form for the list of activities associated with each category. Below, find additional guidance for assessment.

[Effectiveness in Helping Students Learn](#)

Faculty members are expected to perform the activities listed in the PPR. There is more of an expectation that faculty will perform most, if not all, of the activities in this category.

However, a person may be rated Highly Valued or Exceptional without having to check every box in this category of the PPF. Faculty should use the list in the PPR in discussions with Chairs and Deans when identifying developmental goals related to helping students learn. In particular, it is important to discuss unchecked items from this list with the Chair or Dean to determine if adjustments should be made, and plans added to the development goals. Ratings in summative reviews should reflect successful progress and completion of identified developmental goals.

With our strong focus on helping students learn at MHU, we provide additional detail to help interpret the activities in the PPR for this category.

#### 1. Curriculum Design and Course Preparation

- Mastery and maintenance of knowledge of teaching field(s)
- Review and revise syllabi as appropriate each time a course is taught
- Ensure that course objectives and policies are clearly articulated in course syllabi
- Customize course content rather than relying exclusively on the instructor resources provided by publishers (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, publisher created quizzes or exams, etc.)
- Provide up-to-date syllabi to the university
- Provide textbook and material orders to the bookstore when requested
- Maintain appropriate materials in the university's learning management system (i.e., Moodle)

#### 2. Instruction and Advising

##### A. Traditional Instruction (defined broadly as instruction taking place in a classroom, laboratory, studio, online, or clinical setting)

- Maintain an inclusive, professional, and respectful rapport with students
- Arrive to class on time and meet during assigned classroom hours
- Notify the Department Chair and Division Dean if class must be cancelled
- Create a classroom environment that encourages effective learning, including:
  - Ensure that learning goals, learning activities, and assessments interface appropriately with one another
  - Communicate clearly and effectively orally and in writing (including visual presentation)
  - Respond to student communication and work in a timely, accurate, and respectful manner
  - Return sufficient graded work to students prior to the last date to drop a course to enable an informed decision for students considering dropping the course
  - Set and uphold clear and equitable expectations for graded assessments
  - If teaching online or hybrid courses, complete required training and comply with university guidelines for online instruction

##### B. Non-Traditional Instruction (including supervision of independent studies, student research,

and similar)

- Establish clear expectations, learning outcomes, and assessment strategies
  - Ensure that lines of communication remain strong throughout the experience through regularly scheduled meetings or other pre-established means
  - Ensure that work proceeds through established institutional review processes (e.g., IRB) as relevant
- C. Advising and Supplemental Instruction (including formal advising meetings and other meetings with students outside of the classroom)
- Meet with formal assigned advisees (e.g., majors) and informal unassigned advisees (e.g., minors) to assist with course selections and course planning
  - Maintain regular communication with advisees to facilitate their goals while students at MHU and after graduation (i.e., career goals, graduate school, etc.)
  - Follow Faculty Handbook guidelines for office hours; it is important for faculty members to be available to students outside of the classroom, though the form this takes may change by student, faculty member, and reason for meeting

### 3. Program Review, Assessment, and Student Evaluation

- Follow the university's guidelines and policies related to teaching, such as policies regarding syllabus content, use of the learning management system, attendance, student confidentiality (FERPA), midterm and final grade submission, final exam schedules, etc.
- Maintain records of student work, including graded assignments not returned to the student, for a minimum of three years following the conclusion of the course
- Participate in program-level curricular discussions and assessment efforts, including collecting course-specific data and conveying it to the program in a timely manner, helping interpret assessment data, and/or completing program assessment documentation, as requested
- Encourage student completion of the university-approved instrument for Student Evaluation of Teaching for each course and reflect on the student feedback gained through that process (Note: The instrument for Student Evaluation of Teaching must be a summative, norm-referenced instrument that assesses teaching effectiveness. It should not simply measure a faculty member's popularity and should adjust for student motivation, academic discipline, class size, grade distribution, and other known sources of bias.)

### Scholarly and Professional Activity and Development

Scholarly and professional activities are important to the maintenance and extension of a faculty member's area of expertise across their career. A focus on these activities ensures that our students are exposed to best practices and innovations in the field. Faculty with stated development goals for scholarly/professional activity must demonstrate engagement in the scholarly process. Scholarly endeavors may be conducted individually, with colleagues, or with students. All scholarly activity should adhere to academic standards with respect to attribution and ethical management of data and research involving human or animal subjects following university guidelines for IRB review.

The list of activities in the PPR is not meant to be exhaustive; it is not possible to specify all of the ways a faculty member might engage in scholarly or professional development activities. Faculty should use this list in discussions with Chairs and Deans when identifying scholarly and professional development goals. Ratings in summative reviews should reflect successful progress and completion of identified development goals.

Many items in the PPR include processes that are not specifically illuminated in the form, but represent the journey required to achieve the final product. These include:

- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Reviewing existing literature
- Writing and editing

If a faculty member is engaged in any of the processes that lead to publishing or presenting a scholarly or creative work, they are encouraged to identify these activities in the “Other” category on the PPR.

#### University and Community Service

Faculty members should use the PPR list of activities in discussions with Chairs and Deans when identifying development goals. In particular, community service (i.e., service outside the university) should be discussed and approved by Department Chairs and/or Division Deans before it is included in either formative or summative evaluations. The faculty member and their Chair and/or Dean should agree that the outside service is an appropriate aspect of their work. Ratings in summative reviews should reflect on the number and quality of service contributions (university and community), as well as the development goals identified and met. Highly Valued contributions reflect the strong expectation that all faculty contribute to the university in various forms, including serving on committees, sponsoring student organizations, participating in recruiting and orientation days, participating as CETL mentors, etc.

#### **Consequences of Evaluation**

When a tenure-track faculty member is evaluated as Requires Improvement in the first, second, fourth, or tenure years, the deficiencies should be clearly specified and the following must occur:

1. The faculty member shall forego any and all pay raises until the specified deficiencies have been removed.
2. Upon the Provost’s certification that the specified deficiencies have been removed, the faculty member will become eligible for cost-of-living adjustments.
3. Failure to remove specifically stated deficiencies within the agreed upon time period will result in a one- year, terminal contract.

When a tenured faculty member is evaluated in the fourth-year chair’s evaluation as Requires Improvement, the deficiencies should be clearly specified and the following must occur:

1. Immediate review by the Faculty Personnel Committee and the Provost.
2. Pay increases will be suspended in the same manner as for non-tenured faculty.
3. Until such deficiencies are removed, the department chair and division dean should evaluate the faculty member annually, with review by the Faculty Personnel Committee and the Provost.

A performance-based pay increase will be awarded to any faculty member whose work is evaluated Exceptional, Highly Valued, or Developing Skills. This pay increase shall apply to faculty members evaluated on a four-year cycle: for tenured faculty, this cycle begins the fourth year after receiving tenure. Performance-based evaluation for non-tenured faculty members begins with the initial fourth-year evaluation and any fourth-year evaluation thereafter until the faculty member is tenured. All performance-based pay increases take the form of permanent salary increases.

A faculty member's most recent evaluation must have been Exceptional, Highly Valued, or Developing Skills for a promotion to be granted.

A faculty member may become eligible for promotion in a year that is not designated as an evaluation year in the four-year evaluation cycle. If this occurs, evaluations conducted within the last two years may serve as recommendations for promotion by the Department Chair and Division Dean. If no recent evaluation is on file, a special evaluation must be conducted to establish grounds for the promotion.

A promotion in rank is accompanied by a permanent salary increase. It is possible for a faculty member to receive a performance-based salary increase and a promotion-based salary increase in the same year if the faculty member qualifies for both.

The granting of tenure does not result in a salary increase as tenure is itself an institutional commitment of significant value.

A salary increase may be granted to a faculty member who earns a terminal degree if the Division Dean recommends it, and if the most recent evaluation of the faculty member was Developing Skills or higher.

Cost-of-living increases, general salary increases, equity adjustments, etc., may be awarded to faculty in addition to other kinds of increases described above, except that the evaluation policy denies salary increases to a faculty member of the current evaluation is Requires Improvement.

All salary increases are contingent upon the university having funds available, but performance raises, raises with promotion, and equity adjustments recommended by the Faculty Personnel Committee will have a high priority.

## APPENDIX D: EARLY RETIREMENT PLAN

The early retirement plan is provided to tenured faculty who had completed at least 11 years of service with the university before July 31, 1999. The plan is available to a tenured faculty member retiring by the end of the semester before he or she is 70. The benefits vary according to the following conditions.

1. Medical insurance will be paid for those retiring between the usual earliest age at which one may receive Social Security (now age 62) and the age at which one may receive full Social Security benefits. When one begins to receive Medicare, this benefit will become the supplement to Medicare. The supplemental rate of the university health insurance plan or its equivalent will be paid. The faculty member must retire by the end of the semester before the seventieth birthday to receive this benefit. The university will pay 5 percent of the cost of medical insurance for each year of service after 10 years: e.g., after 20 years of service, 50 percent of the cost would be covered; after 25 years, 75 percent would be covered; and after 30 years, 100 percent would be covered. This is a life benefit.
2. A bonus incentive will be paid every year to those retiring between the usual earliest age at which one may receive Social Security (now age 62) and age 70. This bonus incentive will be paid each year at the rate of \$2,400 per year for those with a minimum period of service of 12 years. For those with less than 12 years of service, the bonus will be prorated at \$200 per year (e.g., 9 years, \$1,800 per year; 3 years, \$600 per year). The bonus would end at age 70.
3. A Social Security supplement will be paid to those retiring between the government specified the age of 62 (or the earliest age at which one may receive Social Security) and age 65 (or the age at which one would receive full Social Security benefits). The retiree will receive a supplement so that the benefits will be the equivalent of 100 percent of the amount he or she would receive if retiring with full benefits. This supplement will end at age 70. To receive the full supplement, the faculty member must have served for 10 years. If the service is less than 10 years, the supplement will be reduced accordingly: i.e., for each year of service, 10 percent of the supplement would be paid.
4. For those retiring from the university between the ages of 59½ and the usual earliest government specified the age at which one may receive Social Security, all of the above benefits in (1) through (3) would begin at age 62 (or the usual earliest age at which one may receive Social Security).
5. All benefits described above will be prorated according to the month in which one reaches the specified age.
6. All early retirees will receive a "VIP" card that will entitle them to the same privileges as the active faculty, such as admission to athletic events, cultural events, gymnasium facilities, and the like.

## **APPENDIX E: TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Mars Hill University will reimburse, within budget limitations, a faculty or staff member (traveler) who travels as a university representative for the ordinary and necessary expenses directly related to authorized domestic and international travel. Approval for travel must be obtained from the appropriate supervisor at least 10 working days prior to departure, and each traveler should be prudent in his/her travel expenditures.

A traveler who receives a fee, honorarium, or expense reimbursement from other organizations must deduct this amount from the total travel cost to determine the amount to be reimbursed by the university. Travel performed on a cost-sharing basis with another organization will be administered in the same manner as fully reimbursed travel.

Each department is expected to adhere to the following policy to help assure the university's compliance with IRS rules and regulations and to promote good stewardship of university funds. Specific schools, departments, and funding sources may choose to be more restrictive than this policy due to budget constraints or other reasons; however, they must not be less restrictive.

This policy was developed to encompass matters related to university travel and entertainment. Occasionally, an issue will arise that is not covered specifically by this policy. When this policy does not specifically address a situation, the Provost and the Vice President for Finance will coordinate the course of action required.

### **General Guidelines**

The General Guidelines are applicable to all aspects of travel and entertainment and must be followed in conjunction with the Specific Guidelines regardless of funding sources.

General Guidelines detail important information about:

- Consequences of Non-compliance
- Reimbursement
- Insurance
- Spouse, Relative, Guest
- Combining Personal Travel with University Business Travel
- Independent Contractors
- Tax Considerations
- Authorized Approvers

The Specific Policy Guidelines detail important information about:

- Transportation - Personal automobile, University vehicle, air travel, rental vehicles, and airfare equivalence
- Hotel - Motel Accommodations
- Meals - Allowable and disallowed meal expenses, meal expenses for one-day and extended trips,

- and grant considerations
- Fares, Parking Fees and Tips - Taxi and bus fares, parking fees, and tips
- Personal Telephone Calls and Other Expenses - Personal telephone calls, laundry, internet access and other personal expenses

### **Consequences of Non-compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy puts at risk the assurance that the individual will receive reimbursement for travel and entertainment expenses. In addition, the reputation of Mars Hill University may be harmed, and all other university travelers may be inconvenienced if noncompliance with this policy results in a determination of a non-accountable plan by the Internal Revenue Service. Consequences for travelers not complying with this policy include but are not limited to:

- Denial of reimbursement
- Payroll deduction
- Suspension or reduction of travel or entertainment budget for the current and/or subsequent years
- Disciplinary action in accordance with Mars Hill University Personnel Policies up to and including termination of employment

### **Reimbursement**

Documentation - The traveler/employee is responsible for maintaining complete and accurate records and submitting supporting receipts and/or other documentation for expenses incurred as required by this policy. Expense Reports (ER) - Expense Reports are required for reimbursement of University travel and entertainment expenses and must show costs by category.

Receipts - Original dated itemized receipts are required for lodging, rental car and airfare, meals and other expenses. Receipts that document proof of payment must be attached to the ER. Travel itineraries or non-itemized charge card tickets are not acceptable as receipts. When expenses are being shared with other organizations, a copy of the receipts will suffice if a copy of the travel report provided to the other party is submitted with the ER. In the case where an original receipt is lost or destroyed, the employee must make a concerted effort to obtain a duplicate receipt. If the employee is unable to obtain a duplicate receipt, a Lost or Destroyed Receipt Affidavit must accompany the printed ER. The Lost or Destroyed Receipt Affidavit should be used sparingly and only in the rare circumstance when an original receipt cannot be obtained.

Expense reports will be subject to audit and review.

### **Authorized Approvers of Expense Reports**

Unless otherwise specified, the authorized approver of a travel expense report is the individual responsible for managing the budget that will cover travel-related expenses. When the traveler is the budget manager, the traveler's supervisor will authorize travel.

The individual approving the ER is responsible for verifying the existence and validity of the receipts attached to support expenditures claimed and that expenses claimed are in compliance with this policy.

See Approval Checklist for procedures to be performed by the individual approving the ER.

## **Insurance**

When traveling on University business, employees are covered by the Mars Hill University travel insurance. However, to protect the employee and his/her estate, it is essential that evidence be presented that the travel in question was University business, and evidence must exist in the University's records. A Travel Authorization and Advance Request is one form of written documentation to confirm travel status. The form should be filed with the traveler's appropriate home department prior to travel and should be retained in the department.

## **Spouse, Relative, Guest**

Travel and entertainment expenses for a spouse, relative, or invited guest are considered personal expenses unless there is a valid, documented business purpose for the university to incur the expenses. Spouse, relative, and guest travel must be approved in advance. See Spouse Travel policy.

## **Combining Personal Travel with University Business Travel**

The traveler may be reimbursed for the round-trip transportation costs incurred to and from a business destination when traveler combines University business and personal travel only when the primary purpose of the trip is to conduct University business. Transportation costs are considered entirely for business if the traveler is required or requested by the University to attend/engage in a business function, the travel would have occurred even without the personal travel component, and such travel is approved in advance by the Department Head.

The traveler should select a mode of transportation that is cost-effective and efficient. Any additional expenses incurred by the traveler for deviating from the normal, direct route of travel between the point of origin and the point of University business, or for stopping at an intermediate point for personal reasons, will not be reimbursed. If additional personal days increase the cost of the transportation, the traveler will be responsible for paying the difference. The traveler must provide quotes to document the lowest available airfare for the direct route to/from the business destination occurring during the business portion of the trip and include them with the Expense Report submission.

The University will only reimburse business expenses incurred during the trip. Reimbursements for meals, lodging, and other expenses covered by the Travel and Entertainment Policy will be limited to expenses incurred during the meeting, conference, or other business activity attended by the traveler. Any costs incurred by traveler outside of the business activities will be personal expenses. The University may reimburse for expenses incurred one day before or one day following the business function if extending the stay results in reduced transportation costs sufficient to cover traveler's additional meals, lodging, and other expenses covered by the Travel and Entertainment Policy. For example, if a convention starts on Sunday afternoon and traveler is able to attain an airline ticket for Saturday lower in price so that the overall cost will be less to the University, considering traveler's additional meals and night of lodging, the University will reimburse these expenses. The traveler must submit documentation with the Expense Report to justify the cost savings. Failure to submit the required documentation will result in the expenses not being reimbursed.

## **Independent Contractors**

Independent contractors (non-employees providing services for the University), such as guest speakers or consultants, will be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with Mars Hill University's Travel and Entertainment policy.

## **Tax Considerations**

One purpose of this policy is to create an accountable plan within the mandates of IRS rules and regulations. Note that approval of some expenses will create a taxable benefit to the employee/traveler (i.e., spouse travel, etc.). Also, approval of an expense as an exception to this policy may create a taxable benefit that must be reported to the Payroll Office.

## **Accommodations**

1. The University will reimburse the traveler for the actual cost of accommodations within a reasonable level. Where travel costs are charged to a sponsored project, the terms of the applicable contract or grant will take precedence if more stringent. See Grant Policy.
2. When the traveler is attending a conference at a host hotel-motel, the University will normally accept the conference rate at the host hotel-motel.
3. All lodging receipts must be itemized and are required regardless of cost. The ER must show costs by category. When meals, telephone, and other items are charged to a hotel room, the amounts must be separately entered from the lodging cost on the ER in the appropriate category of expense.
4. When the traveler is accompanied by someone whose trip is not authorized by the University, the University will reimburse for accommodations only at the single occupancy rate.
5. Movies, exercise facilities, or other forms of entertainment are not an allowed reimbursable University travel expense.

## **Transportation**

Reimbursement for transportation is normally based on the lowest cost mode of transportation available regardless of the mode of transportation selected by the traveler.

## **Personal Vehicle**

1. The University will reimburse the traveler at \$0.40 per mile for automobiles based on point-to-point mileage between cities based on actual odometer readings. It is not necessary to attach an internet map providing proof of mileage; however, all mileage reimbursements are subject to verification. The business purpose for any mileage reimbursement must be explained.
2. If University business requires travel to several points within a city, then reimbursement is based on actual mileage for such travel. The traveler must submit odometer readings and explain the business purpose.
3. When two or more employees travel to the same meeting or destination by personal automobile (or by University vehicle), they should travel together unless a justifiable business reason prevents it, and advance approval is obtained from the Department Head. Only one will be reimbursed for the mileage allowance.

## Air Travel

1. Direct airline booking or internet airfare charged to a personal credit card or University travel card will be allowed if there are cost savings. A Travel Authorization and Advance Request should be completed by the traveler and approved by the traveler's Department Head. The traveler is responsible for airfare purchases that the Department Head does not approve. The traveler is forfeiting services that contracted agencies provide (name change, date change, cancellation, etc.) To receive reimbursement, the original dated receipt must be attached to the ER.
2. The traveler should make flight reservations at least three (3) weeks prior to travel to assure the greatest opportunity to obtain the lowest fare possible.
3. The traveler should indicate flexibility to the travel agency regarding the time of departure, time of arrival and routing of flights and alternate airports. The travel agency must offer the least expensive routing for air travel based upon the traveler's flexibility. If the least expensive routing is refused for any reason, the least expensive rate and the reason for non-acceptance must be noted on the traveler's requisition for airfare.
4. First-class travel will not be reimbursed.
5. The traveler is responsible for any expense incurred as a result of lost tickets or change in itinerary due to personal reasons. Expenses incurred due to lost tickets or change in itinerary for business reasons must be documented and approved.
6. When two-for-one tickets are used that allows a non-University employee to accompany the traveler, the traveler will reimburse the University for the difference between a single ticket price (applicable at the time of ticketing) and the two-for-one ticket price.
7. To comply with the Terms and Conditions set by airlines, the following procedures are prohibited:
  1. Back to Back Ticketing: The combination of two or more round-trip excursion fares end to end for the purpose of circumventing minimum stay requirements.
  2. Throwaway Ticketing: The usage of round-trip excursion fare for one-way travel.
  3. Hidden City/Point Beyond Ticketing: Purchase of a fare from a point before the passenger's actual origin or to a point beyond the passenger's actual destination.
8. Frequent flyer miles earned on travel funded by the University may be maintained and redeemed individually by the University traveler for personal or business use. Whenever possible, University personnel are encouraged to redeem frequent flyer miles earned while traveling on University business to fund other University business travel. Because it is impractical to track whether frequent flyer miles are earned from personal or business travel and the difficulty of valuing frequent flyer miles redeemed, Mars Hill University will not reimburse personnel for University business travel tickets purchased with frequent flyer miles.

## Rental Vehicles

### Vehicle Rentals Originating Out-of-town

1. The University will reimburse the traveler for a standard size rental vehicle when necessary for authorized University travel at the destination and when approved in advance by the Department Head.
2. The traveler should decline "Collision Damage Coverage" and "Travel Accident/Life Insurance." The traveler may wish to accept both of these coverages if the vehicle is to be used for personal purposes. The traveler must pay for such personal coverage.
3. The traveler should purchase fuel before returning the vehicle to the rental agency to avoid the high fuel cost at the agency unless fuel is included in the rental fee.

### **Vehicle Rentals Originating in Mars Hill**

1. The University has established an agreement with Enterprise Rent-A-Car to provide cars and vans for University travelers whose vehicle trip originates and terminates in Mars Hill.
2. Arrange rentals through Facilities Department.
3. A rental vehicle should be used only if the cost is less expensive than reimbursing the traveler for personal vehicle use.
4. The traveler should decline "Collision Damage Coverage" and "Travel Accident/Life Insurance." The traveler may wish to accept both of these coverages if the vehicle is to be used for personal purposes. The traveler must pay for such personal coverage.
5. Mini- and full-size vans are available for groups.
6. Enterprise will charge the University for the actual cost to refuel the vehicle upon return.

If the traveler has an accident, it should be reported to the Business Office, ext 1100, immediately upon return to the University. Send copy of accident report to the Business Office.

### **Airfare Equivalence**

1. If a traveler takes his/her personal vehicle on an approved University business trip that entails distant travel, the University will reimburse the lower of the airfare equivalent amount or actual costs.
2. The airfare equivalent amount must be determined on the same basis as if air transportation were to be used. The traveler's ER must include documentation of the airfare equivalent amount at the time of the trip. Also included in the airfare equivalent amount is reimbursable mileage to and from the airport and the remote parking fee. The airfare equivalent amount will be compared to the total of the meal, lodging and mileage (point-to-point from Mars Hill) costs claimed. Since traveling by automobile usually takes longer than flying, the Department Head must approve the airfare equivalent option prior to departure.

### **Meals**

#### **Allowable Meal Expenses**

1. The University will reimburse the traveler for the actual cost of meals within reasonable limits. The University does not have a per diem for meals; however, \$40 a day (including tips) is considered reasonable for a day that normally includes three (3) meals. If the trip involves more than one day's travel, the daily meal expenses should average no more than \$40 a day (Example:

Day 1 = \$35, Day 2 = \$45, an average of both days = \$40). A reasonable tip does not exceed 15% of the meal cost.

2. Meal reimbursements require an itemized receipt which must include the name and location of the restaurant, date and amount of the meal(s).
3. Names of people related to the meal expense must be detailed with the ER along with their purpose for University business.
4. Any meal receipt exception must be documented on the ER, listed on a Lost or Destroyed Original Receipt Statement and approved by the Department Head.

### **Disallowed Meal Expenses**

1. The University does not reimburse for meal costs when meals, including a continental breakfast, are provided through the conference registration fee or are included in the lodging costs.
2. Snacks and refreshments are not an allowed reimbursable University travel expense except as a substitute for a daily meal.
3. Alcoholic beverages are not an allowable expenditure.

### **Grants**

1. When a trip is being paid for by a grant, the rules of the university apply unless the grant rules are stricter.
2. No tips are allowed on State of NC grants.
3. Some grants may have a specific meal or tip guideline. See Grant Policy.

### **Business Meals With Bona Fide Guests**

1. Business meals with guests will be reimbursed on an ER. See Business Entertainment Expenses.
2. Names of all guests and business reason for the guest must be documented and submitted with ER.

### **Fares, Parking Fees & Tips**

#### **Taxi, Bus, and Other Public Transportation Fares**

Costs for local transportation at the destination will be reimbursed when reasonable and justifiable for business purposes and supported by an original dated receipt.

#### **Parking Fees**

Reasonable and necessary costs for automobile parking will be reimbursed.

1. Remote parking at the airport is required unless there is a physical or business reason to justify an exception.
2. The least expensive parking arrangement should be used. Valet parking is discouraged but may be reimbursed if it is the sole parking available or if the traveler is using it for a physical safety or business reasons.

## **Tips**

Reasonable tipping, not to exceed 15% of the meal cost, will be reimbursed. No tips are allowed for State of NC grants travel.

## **Personal Telephone Calls & Other Expenses**

### **Telephone Expenses**

1. Business telephone/fax and business internet usage fees will be reimbursed. Business purpose must be documented on the ER.
2. Personal telephone calls are an allowed, reimbursable travel expense not to exceed \$10 per trip. The purpose is to "check in" with the traveler's family.

Laundry and other personal expenses are not an allowed reimbursable University travel expense.

Other expenses will be reimbursed if determined to be ordinary and necessary in the performance of University business and if supporting documents are provided.

Any expenses not related to travel submitted on an ER must be charged to the appropriate budget code. A receipt or other supporting document must be attached to the ER for these types of expenses regardless of dollar amount.

### **Business Entertainment Expenses**

Reimbursement will be made for business meals and entertainment when names of guests, names of organizations represented, guests' positions within the organization and business justification are provided on the ER. These entertainment expenses must be reasonable and not lavish or extravagant. If you entertain business and non-business individuals at the same event, Mars Hill University will not reimburse the non-business portion of the expenses. Reasonable tipping, which is normally 15% of the meal cost, will be reimbursed.

1. Documentation of the detailed business purpose must include date, the amount of expense, location, names and titles of those in attendance, and business matters discussed.
2. Detailed original receipts must accompany the request for reimbursement of the actual cost (meal or entertainment).
3. Meals with a clearly substantiated business purpose are those directly associated with the active conduct of Mars Hill University business. Examples of business meals include meetings with potential students, donors or prospective employees at which a bona fide business discussion takes place. The business discussion must not be secondary to the purpose of the meal. The employee receiving reimbursement must be present at the meal where the business discussion takes place. Meals eaten alone do not qualify as business \meals.
4. Entertainment expense must be directly related to the conduct of Mars Hill University business. IRS regulations require that the employee engage in the active conduct of business with the person being entertained. Entertainment expenses associated with the active conduct of Mars Hill University business will be reimbursed if they directly precede or follow a bona fide and substantial business discussion.

### **Lost or Destroyed Original Receipt Statement**

Individuals must make a concerted effort to obtain an original receipt from the vendor for travel and entertainment expenses. In lieu of original receipts, a Lost or Destroyed Original Receipt Statement must be signed by both the traveler and authorized approver with a complete explanation of the expense and the reason for the missing receipt.

By signing the Lost or Destroyed Original Receipt Statement, both the employee and the approver are certifying that no original receipt is available, the expense was on behalf of the University, the item and amount of the expense are accurate, and no other reimbursement of the expense has been or will be sought or accepted from any source.

The employee must include documentation showing proof of payment, i.e. credit card charge slip, a record of charge and billing statement, canceled check or other record of payment.

## **Approval Checklist**

### **Responsibilities of Anyone Approving an ER:**

1. Evaluate each expense item claimed, regardless of amount, as to its reasonableness given the circumstances of the travel/business entertainment.
2. Insure that receipts required to support amounts on the ER are included. The reviewer must look at each individual receipt to insure that the receipt is proper and that amounts are properly reported.
  - i. Any travel expense item must be supported by a detailed, original receipt. Original dated receipts are required for meals, lodging, rental car and airfare, regardless of cost.
  - ii. Any business entertainment expense, regardless of amount, must be supported by a detailed, original receipt.
3. Insure that required information is included for all guest and entertainment expenses.
4. Insure that the proper expense account coding is indicated.
5. Insure that any exceptions to University policies and procedures are noted.
6. Insure that the employee has signed the ER.
7. By approving an ER, you are indicating that you have read the University travel and entertainment policy and procedures and are familiar with its requirements and your responsibilities in approving such expense reports.

## **Spouse Travel**

Purpose: To provide the framework, in compliance with the IRS code, for determining the need for the spouse of an employee to travel for Mars Hill University to further its mission and purposes.

### **Policy**

All travel by spouses of other employees will be reviewed and a specific determination made as to University need and business purpose. In advance of travel, the divisional Vice President, applying the following criteria, must approve such requests for spousal travel.

The request for spouse travel must be made on the travel request form.

1. In some cases, it will be determined that there is a bona fide business purpose for the spouse to travel and represent the University at a particular function. In such cases, the University will provide approval, and the travel expenses of such spouse may be paid by the University in accordance with the University's travel policy. To be a bona fide business purpose, the presence of the spouse must be essential (not just beneficial) to the employee being able to carry out his/her business purpose for the University. The spouse's performance of some incidental service

does not make it a bona fide business expense. An employee's spouse performing some menial task (such as typing notes) and/or accompanying the employee to luncheons and dinners is not a bona fide business purpose. The spouse must perform substantive business related functions. The bona fide business purpose of the accompanying spouse must be clearly documented on the employee's Expense Report, and there will be no tax consequence to the employee.

2. In other cases it will be determined that it would be desirable, but that it does not serve a bona fide business purpose to the University, for the spouse to attend a particular function on behalf of the University. In such cases if the University approves the reimbursement of the spouse's travel, it will be necessary, under IRS code, to include such reimbursement in the employee's taxable wages as a taxable "fringe benefit."
3. In any other cases, a spouse's travel will be the personal responsibility of the employee.

### **Group Travel**

Departments typically know about an upcoming travel event months in advance. Travel arrangements should begin as soon as possible to ensure all aspects of the trip are processed in a timely manner.

### **Hotel Accommodations**

Direct bill credit accounts:

1. Individual departments are responsible for submitting a Purchase Requisition prior to travel to pay the invoice promptly after the event has occurred.
2. A copy of the approved Travel Authorization and Advance Request must accompany the Purchase Requisition before processing.
3. Accounts Payable requires all documentation before processing for

payment. Pre-payment by check (only if requested by hotel)

1. Individual departments are responsible for making all arrangements with the hotel and requesting an invoice.
2. A Purchase Requisition must be submitted for the total invoice amount as requested by the hotel.
3. A copy of the contract, if applicable, and a listing of all travelers must accompany the Requisition or Voucher before processing.
4. Accounts Payable requires all documentation before processing for payment.

### **Travel Advance**

Advances may be obtained for group travel by means of a Travel Authorization and Advance Request. The Request must include complete justification (who, what, when and where). A list of travelers must be attached to the Request.

### **Pre-travel Procedures**

1. Approved Travel Authorization and Advance Request must be submitted to Business Office not less than 10 working days prior to departure date
2. Student group travel requires completion of the Mars Hill University Travel Information and Roster

3. Prior travel approval is required if the cost will exceed \$150 or involves an overnight expense
4. Prior travel approval is NOT required for athletic team trips and / or contests in that the schedule has prior approval
5. Prior travel approval is NOT required for one day travel
6. University Cabinet members and advancement staff making donor visits are exempt from Pre-Travel Authorization

Traveler:

1. Submit Travel Authorization and Advance Request to Department Head for approval.
2. If a cash advance is needed for student group or athletic team travel, initiate a Check Request that includes the following:
  - a) Budget Number
  - b) Name of traveler
  - c) Purpose of and justification for trip
  - d) Destination
  - e) Inclusive trip dates
  - f) Mode of transportation
  - g) Amount of advance requested for estimated cost of reimbursable travel expenses
  - h) Department name and group/team name
3. Business related cash needed for individual travel may be obtained through a Travel Authorization and Advance Request.
4. If travel arrangements such as transportation or lodging are to be paid using a University credit card, initiate a requisition. Include items in b. above.
5. Submit requisition(s) to Department Head for

approval. Department Head:

1. Review requisition(s)/Travel Authorization and Advance Request for appropriateness, availability of funds and compliance with University travel and entertainment policy and procedures.
2. Notify traveler of approval (disapproval).
3. Sign/date requisition(s)/Travel Authorization and Advance Request when approving.
4. Forward to appropriate VP

Divisional Vice President:

1. Notify department head of approval (disapproval).
2. Sign/date requisition(s)/Travel Authorization and Advance Request when approving.
3. Forward to President if advance request exceeds \$499 Business Office:
4. Review Travel Authorization and Advance Request / Requisition for policy compliance.
5. Create a purchase order if applicable.
6. Issue check for amount of approved travel advance if applicable

## Post-Travel Procedures

## Individual Travel Traveler

Within 10 working days, complete an ER, attaching all required supporting documentation, including receipts, bills, etc.

1. Submit ER, with all required supporting documentation, to Department Head for approval.

### Department Head

1. Review completed ER for appropriateness, completeness, accuracy, compliance with University policies and procedures, and availability of funds. If sufficient operating funds are not available, restricted funds or other departmental funds should be used. Excess costs may not be reimbursed if there are no other funds available. A Budget Transfer Request form should be submitted to the Business Office if a budget change is needed as a result of the actual cost of the expenses.
2. Approve/disapprove and sign ER. Approved ERs must be routed to Accounts Payable. Disapproved ERs must be returned to the travelers to address unapproved expenses.
3. File printed approved copy of ER with original supporting documentation in a central location in the department of the faculty or staff member who incurred the expense.

### Business Office

1. Review ER.
2. Issue check for approved expenses.
3. File completed ER.

### Group or Team Travel

#### Traveler

1. Within 10 working days, complete an ER, attaching all required supporting documentation, including receipts, bills, etc. Cash advances not accounted for by submission of an ER within 10 working days from the date of completion of the trip are subject to inclusion in the employee's wages and taxed under the Internal Revenue Code. In addition, the employee may be denied future cash advances.
2. Sign and submit ER with attachments to Department Head for approval.
3. Deposit with the University Business Office the unused portion of any cash advance issued through the University. The cash deposit form must reference the Check Request number of the cash advance.
4. Submit approved ER to Business Office with any unused portion of cash advance issued.

#### Department Head

1. Review ER for appropriateness, completeness, accuracy, compliance with travel policies and procedures, and availability of funds if actual costs exceed the amount of the travel advance. If funds are not available to cover the excess costs, use of restricted funds or other departmental budget funds should be used. Excess costs may not be reimbursed if there are no other funds

available. A Budget Transfer Request form should accompany the ER if a budget change is needed as a result of the actual cost of the trip.

2. Sign/date ER, if approving.
3. Forward approved ER with original supporting documentation to the Traveler.

#### Business Office

1. Review ER for completeness, accuracy, compliance with travel policies and procedures, and availability of funds if actual costs exceed the amount of the travel advance.
2. Sign/date ER, if approving.
3. Forward approved ER to Accounts Payable Office to prepare check, if required, for reimbursement of expense in excess of the amount advanced and to clear outstanding travel advance.
4. Issue check for approved expenses.
5. File completed copy of paper ER.

#### Business Entertainment Procedures

##### Faculty or Staff Member

1. Requests for business entertainment expenses to be paid directly to the vendor by the University must be submitted on a requisition or check request, as appropriate. Documentation of business purpose must accompany request for payment.
2. Reimbursement requests for business entertainment expenses paid for by a faculty or staff member must be submitted on an ER.
  - Complete ER including all required information, and attach all required supporting documentation, including receipts, bills, etc.
  - Submit signed ER to Department Head for review and approval. Include all required supporting documentation.

##### Department Head

1. Review completed ER for appropriateness, completeness, accuracy, compliance with University policies and procedures, and availability of funds. If sufficient operating funds are not available, restricted funds or other departmental funds should be used. Excess costs may not be reimbursed if there are no other funds available. A Budget Transfer Request (BCR) form should be submitted to the Business Office if a budget change is needed as a result of the actual cost of the expenses.
2. Approve/disapprove ER. Approved ERs must be routed indicating approval to Accounts Payable. Disapproved ERs must be returned to the travelers to address unapproved expenses. Department Head must sign the approved paper copy of the ER.
3. If payment of the expense creates a taxable benefit to the employee, the Department Head must forward a copy of the ER to Payroll.
4. File printed approved copy of ER with original supporting documentation in a central location in the department of the faculty or staff member who incurred the expenses.

##### Accounts Payable

1. Issue check for approved expenses.
2. File completed ER. Expense Report Review

Process In accordance with University guidelines, the Business Office will review departmental travel and entertainment costs on a planned basis. Departments will be contacted by Business Office staff, who will retrieve the original signed/approved expense reports and supporting documentation.

Upon completion of the review, the expense reports and supporting documentation will be returned to the departments, accompanied by a report of any policy exceptions noted during the review. The Business Office will monitor resolution of reported issues. Consequences, as outlined in the University

Policy, will be applied for compliance issues that were not addressed and resolved within the departments. All expense reports will be subject to audit as part of the annual audit plan.

#### Forms & Instructions

Mars Hill University has specific forms that faculty and staff must complete for approved University travel and business entertainment. These forms can be found on the R: drive under Business Office Forms.