



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

MEMORANDUM TO:

Jay Gogue  
President

THROUGH:

Ronald Burgess  
Executive Vice President

FROM:

Bill Hardgrave  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE:

3/31/2020

SUBJECT:

Modifications to Academic Policies in the *Faculty Handbook*  
following the COVID-19 Pandemic

The attached list provides a summary of the academic policies that require short-term modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These *Faculty Handbook* changes were authorized to give faculty and students the necessary flexibility following the extraordinary and unprecedented disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis. With input from faculty and student leadership, I am confident these recommendations present the most effective and efficient way to maintain the academic mission of Auburn University, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attachment A includes a summary of these recommendations that reflect short-term changes. These changes reference the immediate academic and personal challenges posed by the current health crisis, including a tenure clock extension for Auburn's untenured faculty, the use of student teaching evaluations, and policy changes that offer individual students the opportunity to modify their grading options.

Attachment A: Faculty Handbook Policies that Require COVID-19 Accommodations

Faculty Handbook Policy		Short-Term Recommendations During 2020 Pandemic
3.6.4	<a href="#">Eligibility for Promotion and Tenure ‡</a> (Note changes to this policy require BOT approval)	Allow probationary faculty to opt-in to a one-time one-year extension of their probationary period while waiving the right to de facto tenure.
3.6.5	<a href="#">Policy and Procedure for Promotion and Tenure ‡</a> Subsection .C.3.a (Note changes to this policy require BOT approval)	Remove the requirement for including Student Evaluations of Teaching from Spring 2020.
3.6.5	<a href="#">Policy and Procedure for Promotion and Tenure ‡</a> Subsections .D, .E & .H (Note changes to this policy require BOT approval)	Allow for remote meetings for the review of the candidates' dossiers with anonymous voting, if necessary.
3.7.1	<a href="#">Faculty Annual Review</a>	Remove the requirement for an in-person meeting between the supervisor and the faculty member to allow for remote meetings and electronic signatures.
3.7.2	<a href="#">Third-Year Review</a>	Remove the requirement for in-person meetings to review the candidate's materials and allow remote meetings with anonymous voting.
3.7.4	<a href="#">Provost's Administrative Review Guidelines</a>	Given the time and human resources required, suspend all new Administrative Reviews.
4.1.2	<a href="#">Minimum Class Size Guidelines</a>	Suspend class size guidelines to support students' needs to take courses in a timely manner.
4.2.1	<a href="#">Responsibilities of Faculty Members Conducting Classes</a>	Require that these responsibilities also apply to remote teaching.
4.2.2	<a href="#">Textbooks and Instructional Materials</a>	Require the use of electronic textbooks and materials when available for remote teaching.
4.2.3	<a href="#">Academic Contingency Policies</a>	Implement fully.

Attachment A: Faculty Handbook Policies that Require COVID-19 Accommodations

Faculty Handbook Policy		Short-Term Recommendations During 2020 Pandemic
4.2.5	Evaluation of Teaching	Spring 2020 Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) will be provided to faculty for developmental purposes but will not be used as part of the Faculty Annual Review process or the Promotion and Tenure process.
4.3.1	Policy on Class Attendance	Suspend documentation requirement for excused absences (as allowed in Academic Contingency Policy).
4.3.2	Policy on Classroom Behavior	Extend to remote classroom environment.
4.4.1	Policy on Undergraduate Examinations	Suspend approval and reporting requirements associated with final examinations.
4.4.2	Policy on Number of Final Exams in One Day	No change needed.
4.5.1	University Grade System	Allow the assigning of S-U grades that correspond to the earned course grades.
4.5.3	Faculty Policy on Assigning Grades of Incomplete	Expand time from 6 to 9 months for students to clear incomplete grades.
4.6.1	Academic Honesty Code	Allow for remote facilitated meetings and committee meetings.
4.7.1	Student Academic Grievance Policy	Expand time for allowing students to file grievances by 4 weeks.