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### **3.1 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The University is firmly committed to the principle of freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression. Learning flourishes only in an atmosphere where this principle of liberty prevails, where issues are openly debated, ideas exchanged, convictions freely expressed, and truth vigorously pursued. Academic freedom is a valuable right of both faculty and students, dependent, in turn, on corresponding responsibilities for its proper exercise. No member of the university community may, in the exercise of academic freedom, deny the corresponding right of any other member of the university community, nor interfere with the legal and proper function of the University.

#### **3.1.1 Statement on Professional Ethics**

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.

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 advisors. Professors make every reasonable effort 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.

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. Professors strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.

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.

As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of these obligations in 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.

American Association of University Professors, 1966, revised 1987

Modified by the University of North Alabama, 1993

## **3.2 WORKLOADS**

Faculty members who have full-time appointments should understand that they are obligated to full-time service to the University, including classroom teaching, class preparation, grading and evaluation, office hours, student advisement duties, committee or other institutional affairs activities, professional enrichment experiences, research and/or other creative activities, and service.

### **3.2.1 Assignments**

During regular school terms, full-time faculty members are considered to be on duty beginning the first day of registration through the last day of the term as published in the University Calendar. Beginning with the 2018-19 academic year, new faculty employment contracts will begin on August 15. Teaching assignments are determined by the chair of the department, the dean of the college, and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The chair of the department is encouraged to consult with the faculty in determining assignments.

### **3.2.2 Faculty Workloads and Teaching Loads**

The full-time teaching assignment will be 12 credit hours per semester. Each hour of scheduled lecture is to be considered an academic credit hour with laboratory, studio, clinic, field, and activity courses being equated on the basis of each contact hour being equal to three-fourths academic credit hour. Thus, the full-time teaching assignment in contact hours is 16 hours. Each student teacher assigned shall be equivalent to three-fourths academic credit hour. Normal class assignments may include evening, weekend, or off-campus classes, and alternate schedules may be made for faculty who have these assignments and/or other university-related responsibilities.

In the calculation of the faculty teaching load, the following conditions will be observed:

1. The faculty or department chair workload will exclude independent study courses or other special arrangement courses with enrollments of fewer than 10 students. Full-time or adjunct faculty or departments chairs with advanced approval may be compensated for such special courses for credit on an overload basis at the rate of \$40 per credit hour generated in such courses.
2. Full-time faculty teaching regular class overloads and adjunct faculty teaching regular classes will be compensated at the rate of \$800 per class credit hour or \$700 per class contact hour, except for applied music lessons where the rate will be established administratively in accordance with availability of funds, principles of equity with respect to other university wide adjuncts and overloads, and rates of pay for adjunct faculty teaching applied music at other institutions in the region.
3. Full-time faculty are restricted to no more than one class overload in any semester (normally three semester hours or equivalent contact hours). Exceptions must be approved by the college dean.
4. In the calculation of faculty workloads, cross-listed courses will count as one course.
5. When faculty offer courses taught concurrently even though the numbers of the courses are different, they will count on the faculty workload as one course.
6. Team-taught classes will be credited to only one faculty member and will rotate faculty members being given the credit each semester the course is offered.
7. With exceptions for small departments, activity classes, other one-hour credit courses, and special occasions, faculty workloads normally should not exceed three different class preparations.
8. Released time beyond the 12-hour teaching load will not be routinely granted unless it follows conditions involving graduate courses or approved released time research. Faculty that are to teach less than a full load because of other assignments should have such arrangements approved in writing well in advance through the department chair, college dean, and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.
9. The following teaching loads apply when faculty teach graduate courses.
  - a. nine credit hours if only graduate courses are taught;
  - b. faculty who teach at both the undergraduate and graduate level may have an appropriate reduction in workload if scholarly activity supports the reduction and,

- upon recommendation of the department chair, approval by the college dean and academic vice president; and
- c. summer term teaching loads are six hours whether they be graduate or undergraduate hours.

10. Clerical help will be provided to each faculty member through the departmental administrative assistant. Departmental administrative assistants are assigned according to departmental needs and are subject to university budget limitations. Generally, a full-time administrative assistant is assigned only to departments having six or more faculty members.

### **3.2.3 Office Hours**

Faculty-student interactions outside of the classroom are among the most important on a college campus. To facilitate these interactions, faculty hold regular office hours each week during semesters and terms in which they have teaching assignments. Faculty office hours may be held physically, virtually, or a combination of both as best fits the needs of the course(s) and academic program. Working with the department chair and subject to approval by the dean of the college, the full-time faculty members in each academic department are responsible for determining the office hour policy for the department. Scheduling office hours in excess of seven hours per week or on days that the faculty member does not have scheduled classes is at the discretion of individual faculty members. Faculty members will list their office hours on all syllabi at the beginning of each semester.

### **3.2.4. Department Chairperson—Appointment, Workload, and Supplement**

Department chairpersons are appointed to four-year term appointments that are renewable at the option of the University. Renewals shall be on a four-year term. All department chairpersons hold "at will" appointments which are not replaced by indicating the term of appointment.

While department chairpersons are appointed by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, they report to the respective college dean who supervises their work. Thus, the college dean has the major responsibilities in the selection and supervision of the department chairperson. This responsibility includes utilization of a standardized plan for selection of department chairpersons, revision of the generic job description for department chairpersons specific to each department, and development of a standardized plan of evaluation that will be used for all department chairpersons during the review of a completed term and before recommendations are made for the renewal of a term. Recommendations for appointment and renewal or non-renewal of a term are made by the college dean to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Department chairpersons have responsibilities according to their job descriptions which may, in turn, vary somewhat according to the size and type of department. However, department chairpersons have some general responsibilities that apply to all. These general responsibilities include: teaching classes in the department, developing departmental curriculum, requesting and administering an adequate departmental budget, and recruiting outstanding faculty for the department. The department chairperson has major responsibilities for leadership in the university's institutional effectiveness program. The department chairpersons also have the responsibility of representing the Administration to the faculty as well as the faculty to the Administration. Due to the special nature of the department chairpersons' position that involves both faculty and administration and due to the duties they have that go beyond the normal teaching responsibilities and workload policies as described in this Faculty Handbook, relief is given to the chairpersons through a teaching load reduction and a salary supplement. The supplement is strictly for the administrative duties, and it ceases when administrative responsibilities are no longer held by the department chairperson; however, department chairs retain any increases that were realized throughout the term appointment. "Across the board" raises will be applied to base department chair supplements in the same manner that they are applied to base salaries.

Department chairs will receive a \$6,073 supplement each year, a six-hour teaching load reduction in the fall and spring semesters, and a three-hour teaching load reduction during the summer term.

### **3.2.5 Off-Campus Instruction**

The University schedules a limited number of credit courses in off-campus locations. Assignment to off-campus instruction may be made a part of the regular teaching load or may be requested of faculty on an overload basis.

### **3.2.6 Interim Periods**

Courses and workshops are offered from time to time in the interim periods of May, August, December, and the spring recess. Interim session courses may be assigned to and taught by any qualified member of the faculty, subject to the concurrence of the department chair and college dean. Instruction for such courses may be requested at additional payment. Interim credit work through study abroad is arranged with individual faculty members through the department chair and college dean.

### **3.2.7 Overloads**

During the academic year, chairs of departments may participate on university administrated grants and contracts where the grant provides funding support for course buyouts or course releases. Specifically, the funding agency authorizes the use of grant funds to offset that portion of the department chairs' time and effort dedicated to executing the grant, with no resulting increase in responsibilities. In regular school

terms, and where the grant does not provide funding support for course buyouts or course releases, chairs of departments may not assume course overloads or extra-duty responsibilities associated with university-administered grants or contracts except as required by unforeseen emergencies and as based on determination of the chair of the department and approval of the dean of the college.

### **3.3 PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES**

In addition to the primary academic responsibility, the obligations for a faculty member extend to participation in other activities and functions through which the purposes of the University are served.

#### **3.3.1 Academic Advisement**

Faculty responsibility for student academic advisement includes both informal contacts with students and formal advisory assignments made by the chair of the department or the dean of the college. Faculty are also expected to accept responsibility for advisement in minor fields upon request by a graduate student.

The purpose of academic advisement at UNA is to provide students a supportive relationship with an academic advisor. This relationship offers information and guidance to assist students in making decisions leading to the fulfillment of their educational, career, and life goals. Given this purpose, the goals of academic advising are:

1. To promote a clear understanding of the courses required to fulfill degree requirements;
2. To monitor student progress toward completion of degree requirements;
3. To assist students in the selection of courses with regard to the level of difficulty and class load, especially as that pertains to employment, campus involvement, and personal lives; and
4. To promote student awareness of opportunities and experiences that will enhance their educational experiences such as practicum, internships, honors, and study abroad programs.
5. To assist students in interpreting academic policies and procedures.
6. To serve as an institutional gateway to campus resources and services that will enrich students' university experience and facilitate student retention.
7. To encourage the development of short-term and long-term educational goals and an action plan for goal attainment.

8. To model professional behaviors as encouragement for students to develop similar behaviors in readiness for the world of work.

### **3.3.2 Commencement**

In an effort to celebrate student academic achievement, members of the faculty are invited to participate in commencement exercises. Faculty who volunteer to attend must wear proper academic regalia, which may be purchased through the University Bookstore.

Members of the faculty are allowed to present diplomas to children, spouses, and parents at commencement. Anyone wishing to present a diploma must request the opportunity to do so in advance and must wear full academic regalia.

### **3.3.3 Curriculum Development**

Curriculum development leading to new majors, programs or courses, or the revision of existing programs or courses, normally originates in the academic department. Typically, faculty members with expertise in a particular area develop proposals for departmental review. Proposals are developed outlining the changes and a rationale and are submitted with recommendations to the department chair. The chair reviews the proposal, signs the appropriate approval documents, and forwards the proposal to the college dean. The college dean convenes the college-wide curriculum committee to review the proposal. Once approved and endorsed by the college dean, it is forwarded to the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for initial review. If approved, this office submits the proposal to the appropriate university-wide faculty curriculum committee. For undergraduate changes, the proposal is submitted to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. For graduate changes, the proposal is submitted to the Graduate Council and to the university Director of Graduate Studies/ACHE Liaison. In addition, proposals for new degree programs will be posted by campus e-mail for review by the faculty. Comments are to be submitted to the Curriculum Committee Chair for undergraduate proposals and Graduate Council Chair for graduate proposals. The comment period will be 15 working days before a Curriculum Committee/Graduate Council agenda is issued, excluding holidays. Once the comment period has been completed, the Curriculum Committee and/or Graduate Council will review the proposal, any faculty comments, and any comments from the department and/or college submitting the proposal and take action on the proposal. Different forms are used to transmit curriculum changes to the appropriate faculty committee. At the undergraduate level, the UCC (Undergraduate Curriculum Committee) form is used. At the graduate level, the Graduate Council New Course and Course/Curriculum Change Proposal Form is used. If the curriculum changes are approved by these campus-wide faculty committees, they are transmitted back to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for final approval and addition to the university catalogs. If proposals involve new curriculum programs (majors) or course fees, they must also be approved by the Council of Academic Deans,



the President, and University Board of Trustees. Significant changes in existing programs and/or new programs must also be submitted to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education for review (departments should refer to the ACHE website for procedures). If curriculum changes represent a substantive change in program mission for the University, they must be reviewed and/or approved by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (departments should refer to the SACSCOC website for procedures). Significant changes in teacher education programs leading to certification must be further reviewed by the Alabama State Department of Education and significant changes in nursing must be further reviewed by the Alabama Board of Nursing and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

In certain situations, proposals for broad-based and/or multidisciplinary changes may originate and be proposed by units outside the academic departments. Examples include the university-wide curriculum committees, the Council of Academic Deans, and/or ad hoc faculty committees appointed as part of the shared governance process. The types of changes these groups might submit include changes in the general education curriculum or graduation requirements, and/or new programs that include multiple disciplines. Multi-disciplinary and other curriculum proposals originating outside of traditional departments are submitted to the Council of Academic Deans to be reviewed by the Non-Traditional and Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee (NTICC). After review by the NTICC, such proposals and/or change recommendations are submitted to the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and are subject to the same approval procedures outlined above. Consideration of curricular change normally involves informal discussion, not only within academic departments, but also within and between the several levels of academic administration. Proposals are presented in writing and include the reasons and justification for the change; the impact of the change on other courses and program; and an analysis of the staff, equipment, library, and other instructional resources to be required. A timeline for submission of proposals is developed each year to ensure inclusion in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

Members of the Non-Traditional and Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee (NTICC) will be nominated by the Council of Academic Deans and the Faculty Senate at the last meeting in the spring semester and be appointed by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The NTICC will consist of eight faculty members with staggered two-year terms. The first appointment effort would identify four faculty members for two-year terms and four faculty members for a one-year term so that at least half of the membership will return in year two. After that, four faculty members will be replaced annually. The membership of the NTICC will be constituted as follows: there must be at least one full-time faculty member selected from each of the four colleges, and one full-time faculty member selected from among Library Services, Educational Technology Services, or University College. The remaining three NTICC members will be at-large and will be selected by the Faculty Senate. They can come from any discipline. During even-numbered years in the spring semester, the Deans of the Colleges of Business, Education and Human Sciences, and the University Librarian. and the

Director of Educational Technology Services will appoint faculty members from their respective colleges/areas to the NTICC from among eligible faculty, and the Faculty Senate will nominate one faculty member to serve on the committee. The University Librarian and the Director of Educational Technology Services will nominate a faculty representative from among Library Services, Educational Technology Services, or University College faculty members. During odd-numbered years in the spring semester, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions will appoint faculty members from among the eligible faculty of their respective colleges, and the Faculty Senate will nominate two faculty members. Members may serve up to two consecutive terms but must then rotate off the NTICC for at least one term before being eligible for reappointment as a NTICC member. All selections of faculty for membership on the NTICC shall be submitted to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs by June 1, and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide the appointment. The NTICC will select a chair from among its second-year members and a vice chair from among its first-year members. The Vice Chair will automatically become Chair the following year.

Any course or curriculum proposal originating outside of a traditional academic department (or any interdisciplinary proposal) must be submitted to the Council of Academic Deans (COAD) via the Executive Assistant to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. With concurrence from the COAD, the Executive Assistant to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will forward the proposal to the Chair of the Non-Traditional and Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee. The NTICC Chair will be responsible for convening the NTICC as needed and will report to the COAD. After review by the NTICC and the COAD, curriculum proposals will then be forwarded to the appropriate university-wide curriculum committee (UCC) or Graduate Council for review. Proposals will then follow the same procedure as those originating within traditional academic departments.

The process for ongoing evaluation of curriculum is embedded in the institutional effectiveness assessment plan for the University. All academic departments complete annual planning and assessment reports. The reports are two-fold. The first report occurs at the beginning of the academic year and identifies programmatic goals related to curriculum. The second report occurs at the end of the academic year and identifies accomplishments related to those goals and proposed curriculum and programmatic changes needed to address academic improvement. These reports are prepared by the academic department chair in collaboration with departmental faculty and are submitted for review and analysis by the appropriate college dean who in turn submits them to the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). Academic departments also conduct a five-year evaluation based on a rotating schedule. The five-year report affords an in-depth evaluation of departmental programs and curricula. These reports are reviewed by the college dean. The University also maintains a five-year Strategic Plan. With each five-year cycle, academic departments are asked to assess curriculum and propose changes as part of the strategic planning process. It is also expected that departments will review the

feedback from student course evaluations that are conducted each semester to help improve instruction and curriculum.

### **3.3.4 Faculty Meetings**

All faculty are expected to attend faculty meetings as scheduled. Meetings of the faculty as a whole occur on the call of the President or the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. College and departmental meetings are called as needed.

### **3.3.5 Learned Societies and Professional Associations**

Faculty membership and regular, active participation in relevant learned societies and professional associations are encouraged as a matter of professional development and responsibility. Through the approval of the chair of the department and the dean of the college, provision is made for attendance at society and association meetings, particularly at the state and regional levels. Attendance at meetings at total or partial expense reimbursement is not restricted to program participants or officers, although these evidences of recognition through presentation of papers, program responsibilities, and office holdings are given due consideration in initial approval. Except for select institutional membership, no provision is made for the payment of individual membership dues. Approval for attendance does not remove the faculty member's obligation for proper advanced arrangements for classes. To the extent possible, requests for absence and for travel expense in connection with meetings should be anticipated for the forthcoming year and directed to the chair of the department early in the fall term.

### **3.3.6 Sponsorships**

Most student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, honorary societies, academic clubs, and service groups, are dependent upon faculty and staff sponsor-advisers. Some organizations direct requests for service to faculty and staff members individually. In other cases (e.g., the Student Government Association, the University Program Council, the Panhellenic Council, the Interfraternity Council, etc.) advisers are administratively appointed. Since these organizations contribute substantially to the purposes of the University, faculty members are encouraged to accept such service when requested, provided the service does not interfere with regular assignments.

## **3.4 UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Faculty members are encouraged to participate in and support appropriate out-of-class university functions and activities of an educational, cultural, recreational, civic, or social nature. On occasion, classes are dismissed for special programs on the authority of the President and/or the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Announcements in class of important programs and events are requested of faculty from time to time through official channels. As citizens of the community, as well as members of the university staff, faculty members similarly are encouraged to participate in and support those affairs and activities of the community through which their expertise, standing, and leadership may make a contribution and through which university-community relations are enhanced.

### **3.5 RESEARCH AND CONSULTING ACTIVITIES**

From time to time, the University receives requests from business and industry, governmental agencies, schools and school systems, and other agencies and individuals for consultative services, research, and project leadership by university personnel. In addition, individual faculty members often wish to apply for project or research grants from governmental agencies or other external sources of funding. The university administration desires to cooperate in and facilitate such endeavors whenever feasible and possible and to maintain adequate records regarding them. Requests for such contractual services or proposals for grants must be referred to the Director of Sponsored Programs prior to the submission of a proposal or execution of a contract. The proposal or contract should be submitted to the Director of Sponsored Programs seven business days in advance of the proposal or contract deadline to allow adequate review and processing time.

Review of contracts or proposals is required to verify that the information contained in the documents is in compliance with university, state, and federal guidelines. The Director of Sponsored Programs is responsible for these activities and functions. Policies, definitions, and procedures which relate to faculty and staff research and consulting activities are set forth in [Appendix 3.A](#).

### **3.6 PATENT POLICY**

The University's Patent Policy can be located on the university's website at <https://www.una.edu/employee-policy-manual/PDFs/Policies/Patent%20Policy.pdf>.

### **3.7 COPYRIGHT POLICY**

The University's Copyright Policy can be located on the university's website at <https://www.una.edu/employee-policy-manual/PDFs/Policies/Copyright%20Policy.pdf>.

### **3.8 STUDENT COPYRIGHT NOTICE**

UNA courses may incorporate material contributed or licensed by individuals, companies, or organizations that may be protected by U.S. and foreign copyright laws. All persons reproducing, redistributing, or making commercial use of this information are expected to adhere to the terms and conditions asserted by the copyright holder. Transmission or reproduction of protected items beyond that allowed by fair use

as defined in the copyright laws may require the written permission of the copyright owners.

### **3.9 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Faculty positions, unless otherwise stated, are considered to be full-time positions. Before accepting other additional employment or entering into self-employment activities, full-time faculty must determine that such employment would not adversely affect their responsibilities to the University. If it can be reasonably anticipated that such outside employment might interfere with fulfilling these responsibilities, the faculty member must discuss the matter with and obtain written approval from appropriate university officials. (refer to [Appendix 3.B](#)) No outside teaching obligations with another institution or high school should be accepted without prior written approval from the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Faculty members should not accept outside employment which impairs their ability to fulfill their contractual obligations to the University. Outside employment cannot be used to justify unusual teaching schedules, office hour times, or relief from other normal faculty responsibilities.

### **3.10 ABSENCES**

In the event of illness or other unanticipated circumstances requiring absence from duty, the chair of the department (or the dean of the college if the department chair is not available) should be notified as soon as possible. Any personal time off with pay can be considered only under provisions for sick leave and must be reported to the Office of Human Resources via Banner Self-Service.

The full policy on sick leave can be located at <https://www.una.edu/employee-policy-manual/PDFs/Procedures-Processes-Programs/Sick%20Leave.pdf>. Sick leave is granted to faculty in relation to eight-hour workdays. When a faculty member is absent from the University for a full day, eight hours of sick leave should be reported as long as the faculty member had a class or office hour during that day. Four hours of sick leave should be reported if the faculty member is absent only one-half day and thereby misses a class or office hour. When a faculty member is absent less than one-half day and misses assigned duties, sick leave should be reported in one-hour increments.

Requests for approval for absence in connection with appropriate meetings and other off-campus activities are made in advance to the chair of the department and the dean of the college. Time away from assigned duties on approved university activities is not chargeable to sick leave. Approval for absence does not remove the obligation for proper arrangements for classes.

### **3.11 FACULTY RESEARCH/DEVELOPMENT**

The performance of the University is the cumulative result of the performance of each person employed by the University. The purpose of faculty development is to

increase the teaching or research effectiveness of individuals to enable them to contribute to the University's overall mission. Thus, the goals of development are of mutual benefit to the faculty and the University. This is accomplished by enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes that have a positive impact upon teaching performance and on helping them reach their fullest potential as members of the university team.

Each university-funded grant for development should be based on this philosophy. The University makes available a limited amount of resources for faculty development grants which, within specific regulations found on the Application for Faculty Development, allow faculty to:

1. Be partially reimbursed for costs for additional graduate course credit;
2. Attend noncredit workshops or seminars that extend a faculty member's knowledge in his or her current teaching area or broaden teaching areas which will benefit the University;
3. Attend noncredit workshops or seminars related to accreditation; and
4. Pay costs in relation to specific certification which, in turn, are of benefit to the University.

Faculty research and development monies are disbursed to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs who will distribute to the college deans, University Librarian, and Director of Educational Technology Services percentages of those monies based on full-time faculty. The money will be distributed according to the following procedure.

Deans/University Librarian/Director of Educational Technology Services will establish a Research and Development Committee which will review requests for research and development support and will recommend approval to the Dean of the College/University Librarian, and Director of Educational Technology Services who will grant final approval. Requests should be submitted to the offices of the college dean/University Librarian/Director of Educational Technology Services. Interested faculty will submit proposals to the committee.

1. Grants will be made for October 1 to September 30 time periods (or less as designated in the proposal). Projects lasting more than one year may be extended by notifying the appropriate college dean/University Librarian/Director of Educational Technology Services.
2. Faculty development monies will be limited to full-time faculty.

A proposal not approved will be returned to the faculty member. For funded projects, documented evidence that the objectives were accomplished must be submitted to the department chair and dean upon completion of the project.

### **3.12 LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

At the convenience of the University and subject to the approval of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, a faculty member may be granted leave of absence without pay for up to one year for purposes of advanced training, health or disability, parenting responsibilities, or other justifiable cause. A second year may be granted by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs after review of university needs and, in the case of health or disability, a medically documented reasonable expectation that the faculty member will be able to return to full academic activities. If a faculty member has been granted a one-semester leave of absence and wishes to be granted a second semester of leave, he/she must request such in writing to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs by November 1 for the following spring semester or by April 1 for the following fall semester. If a faculty member has been granted a one-year leave of absence and wishes to be granted a second year of leave, he/she must request such in writing to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs by April 1. The University will hold the faculty position open only during the granted leave of absence but will not hold the position beyond two academic years. A faculty member on leave cannot return to work prior to the end of the granted leave period. Time taken as leave of absence, unless otherwise stated in writing prior to the beginning of the leave of absence, does not add to experience levels for purposes of promotion, salary, tenure, accrual of absence leave, or retirement benefits. A faculty member approved for leave of absence may arrange for continuation of health, vision, dental, cancer, and intensive care insurance benefits as well as long-term disability at the member's expense. Other university-sponsored insurance is not in effect while the faculty member is on leave.

### **3.13 PARENTAL LEAVE**

Full-time faculty may seek workload adjustment options for parental leave by working in conjunction with their department chair and dean in order to allow for eight weeks of leave provided the baby is born or adopted during the academic year or close to the beginning of the academic year. This policy only applies to full-time regular faculty members. It does not apply to adjunct faculty or graduate assistants.

Some examples of workload adjustments options that may accommodate the leave include:

- A faculty member teaching courses for the first 8 weeks of the semester and then holding a 100% research appointment for the last 8 weeks of the semester.
- A faculty member having a reduced teaching load and increased service responsibilities (e.g., assisting with responsibilities relating to program assessment plans or an upcoming accreditation visit).
- A faculty member having a continuity plan for their courses (i.e., teaching their courses in-person at the beginning of the semester and switching to online delivery the latter part of the semester).

### Procedure for Requesting Leave

As soon as possible, the faculty member should notify her/his department chair of the due date or adoption date and request assistance in planning a workload adjustment plan that would accommodate the parental leave.

The department chair, in consultation with the faculty member, will propose a workload that accommodates the leave. The plan will make clear the expectations for the portion of the semester that the faculty member will not be on leave. Depending on when the baby is born or adopted, the faculty member may be able to teach courses typically taught during the semester. To ensure that a faculty member has eight weeks of parental leave, a faculty member may be asked to pick up different responsibilities during the portion of the semester that s/he is available to work full time. This plan will be sent to the dean for review and commentary and then forwarded to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for final approval.

Faculty members and their supervisors must document leave time, and colleges will initiate a conversion to unpaid status if the faculty member does not return to work at the end of the approved paid leave period.

### Tenure Clock Extension

A tenure-track faculty member who becomes the parent of a child by birth or adoption will automatically be granted a one-year tenure clock extension. The extension is automatic in order to allow faculty members to make decisions in their best interests regarding work and family demands without fear of negative consequences for requesting an extension.

A faculty member who has qualified for FMLA leave while holding a tenure-accruing appointment will receive an automatic a one-year extension of the date on which the probationary period would end. Only two such extensions are allowed.

Under no circumstances would the length of a faculty member's probationary period exceed eight years of full-time service except where the faculty member has agreed in writing that a year in which the faculty member qualified for FMLA leave or took leave without pay will not count towards the probationary period.

Individual faculty may choose to opt out of the automatic extension and elect to come up for tenure in the original year established when the faculty member was hired.



### 3.14 FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

#### PURPOSE

A faculty member has three academic functions: teaching, service (to the university profession and community) and research (scholarly or creative pursuits). The faculty development leave program is designed to provide released time in support of a major initiative targeted toward one of these three functions. Development leaves are not available to support completion of an advanced degree.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Faculty development leave eligibility is limited to full-time, non-administrative, tenured faculty members (including department chairs) with:

1. at least six years of full-time service at UNA prior to submission of a faculty leave application;
2. at least six years of service since his or her last development leave; and
3. who have submitted the report(s) from previous leave(s) in a satisfactory and timely manner.

#### APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Faculty Development Leave Application Form is located in [Appendix 3.C](#). Applications for development leave must include (1) a Faculty Development Leave Application Form, (2) a current curriculum vita, and (3) an application, not to exceed ten pages, describing the activity and specifying how the leave will contribute to the faculty member's development, and how the leave will benefit the University of North Alabama and its students.

An application for development leave is submitted electronically by the faculty member to his/her department chair. Faculty are strongly advised to discuss their plan for leave with the department chair before first submitting an application. This discussion should, beyond a basic presentation of the leave application, address how the leave will affect the faculty member's development, length of the leave, the regular scheduling of his/her courses, discussion of alternative instructors for those courses, and how the leave will positively impact the University. This discussion is intended to create support for the application by the department chair. If an application is not supported at the department level, the applicant may directly solicit help from his/her dean.

Applications from department chairs are submitted electronically directly to the appropriate dean. Written recommendations concerning each application will be submitted electronically as the application is forwarded through each review level.

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE APPLICATION

1. APPLICATION. The application consists of two parts: (1) a formal written proposal (not to exceed 10 pages) and (2) an appendix of supporting documents. In general, the formal proposal should contain the following:
  - A. SUMMARY: a clear and concise summary of the request (one-page maximum).
  - B. INTRODUCTION: a detailed statement of the request, its objectives, its benefits to the applicant and the University in definitive and measurable terms, the results expected, and the period of time covered by the proposed faculty leave.
  - C. METHODS AND EVALUATION: a detailed description of the applicant's development leave, including activities to be employed to achieve the desired results, a detailed plan for determining the degree to which objectives will be met and can be assessed and evaluated.
  - D. FUTURE PLANS: describe a plan, if applicable, for the continuation of activities beyond the development leave period which will benefit the applicant's professional development and the University; the plan should relate to the objectives and expected outcomes of the development leave.
  - E. BUDGET: costs, other than salary (e.g., travel), associated with the applicant's development leave, and funding sources (grants, stipends, additional salary or compensation, etc.), for each of those costs.
  - F. APPENDIX: the appendix will contain supporting documents, including, but not limited to, (1) a current curriculum vita, (2) a summary of previous activities which qualify the applicant to undertake the proposed faculty leave activity, and, if applicable, (3) verification that any support grants, stipends, and consortia arrangements relating to the development leave have been authorized and approved. The appendix should include only relevant documents and summaries.
    1. The Faculty Development Leave Application Form stating the applicant's understanding and agreement to the terms of the faculty development leave program must also be included.

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE COMMITTEE

The Faculty Development Leave Committee shall consist of three tenured faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences, two from the College of Business, two from the College of Education and Human Sciences, one from the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions, and one from Library/Educational Technology Services – with representation to alternate between Library/Educational Technology Services.

Committee members shall be elected by a vote of full-time faculty from each College and Library/Educational Technology Services. Elections should be held as early in the semester as possible in order that the Faculty Development Leave Committee may commence its work in September of each year.

Should a vacancy occur on the Faculty Development Leave Committee, the Faculty Senate shall designate a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

#### CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The Faculty Development Leave Application should be considered in view of the value it would have for the applicant's professional growth and the contribution it will make to the University of North Alabama. Some likely proposals include:

- A. Advanced education. Advanced education **not** to be applied to a degree. A leave application should emphasize how the leave will update or improve knowledge in a field that will be taught in the immediate future as certified by the faculty member's department chair and dean.
- B. Scholarly research/creative pursuits. A leave application should explain how the research and/or creative activity will contribute to the applicant's professional growth and contribution it will make to UNA.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

The annual deadline for online application submission is October 1 of the academic year prior to the academic year of the proposed leave (e.g., an application for a leave during the spring semester must be submitted by October 1 of the previous year). If that date falls on a weekend, the due date is the Monday following October 1.

#### ROLE OF THE CHAIR

The applicant will submit electronically a completed application to his/her department chair. The chair verifies the applicant's eligibility, provides an evaluation of the application and a statement concerning the department's plan for dealing with the absence of the faculty member during the development leave, and forwards electronically the application to the dean on or before October 10. If that date falls on a weekend, the due date is the Monday following October 10.

#### ROLE OF THE DEAN

The dean adds an evaluation of the application and statements concerning the chair's plan to replace the faculty member during the development leave and forwards electronically the application to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs on or before November 1. If that date falls on a weekend, the due date is the Monday

following November 1. The electronic applications will be uploaded to a secure UNA server accessible only by the Faculty Development Leave Committee member and administration involved in the review process.

#### ROLE OF THE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE COMMITTEE

1. The Faculty Development Leave Committee evaluates and recommends faculty leave applications to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.
2. The Faculty Development Leave Committee provides applicants with written feedback concerning strengths and weaknesses of an application upon request.
3. The Faculty Development Leave Committee then will submit its rankings with explanations to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs on or before December 1. If that date falls on a weekend, the due date is the Monday following December 1.

#### ROLE OF THE PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs evaluates all applications and recommendations from the Faculty Development Leave Committee and plans for replacing the faculty member during the developmental leave. The decision as to the actual awarding of development leave will come from the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs by December 5. If that date falls on a weekend, the due date is the Monday following December 5.

After the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs makes a decision, he/she will inform the Chair of the Faculty Development Leave Committee, the individual applicant's dean, the individual applicant's department chair, and the faculty member. Upon request, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide individual applicants with written feedback concerning strengths and weaknesses of his/her application.

In special cases, the recipient can request that the leave be rescheduled. Rescheduling must be approved by the department chair, academic dean, and Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and be sufficiently justified in writing.

#### COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Faculty Development Leaves for one academic year are granted for half of the recipient's regular salary, leaves for one-half academic year (4.5 months) are granted at the recipient's full regular salary. No paid leaves are authorized for summer sessions. After a faculty development leave has been granted, any change in the terms of the leave requires prior written approval from the department chair, dean, and Provost and

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. A faculty member on Development Leave retains all benefits.

## CONDITIONS

Faculty members may have a Faculty Development Leave for one academic year at one-half their regular salary or for one-half academic year at their full salary. (An academic year is defined as the nine-month period contained in the fall and spring semesters; development leaves are not authorized for summer sessions.)

Faculty members, having signed a legal agreement to serve one full academic year at the University of North Alabama after completion of the development leave, shall be required to reimburse the University in the amount they receive as salary and fringe benefits from the University while on leave if they should refuse to fulfill the year of service after the leave. Permanent disability attested to by a medical doctor and exigent circumstances approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will constitute reason for exemption.

## PUBLICITY

A suitable news release to announce the recipients of development leaves and their proposed activities will be coordinated by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs in conjunction with the Office of University Communications and Marketing.

## FINAL REPORT

Within three months following the completion of leave, each leave recipient will present to the department chair and dean a report on accomplishments resulting from the leave. Eligibility starting date for succeeding faculty development leave begins with the academic year following submission of the report.

### **3.15 FACULTY ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OR EXCHANGE**

The University encourages faculty to avail themselves of opportunities for lecturing and/or studying abroad, whether under the auspices of UNA's Faculty Exchange Program or an external source such as the Fulbright Program. The following policy is intended to provide guidelines within which the faculty member can feel free to explore avenues for a fellowship or exchange abroad, while at the same time ensuring continuity of his or her status and security within the university community.

### **3.15.1 Faculty on International Fellowship Leave**

The faculty member will retain tenure or, if untenured, may choose to count the year abroad in the total number of years of university employment for purposes of tenure; pay family insurance premiums if applicable; be responsible for arrangements concerning property and personal effects during the time abroad; and comply with all regulations of the Alabama Teacher Retirement System regarding contributions to the TRS and RSA-1 annuities.

According to Alabama Teacher Retirement System policy, both TRS and RSA-1 annuity contributions must be payroll deducted. Therefore, unless the externally funded fellowship or grant is paid through the University (this arrangement must be explored on a case-by-case basis), the year abroad does not count toward the employee's total number of years as regards TRS status. Any supplement awarded by the University will be reflected as a fraction of a year in the TRS (calculated on the basis of the preceding year's salary). During the time abroad, RSA-1 annuity payments may be suspended, and interest will continue to accrue.

The University will continue to pay the basic insurance coverage; factor across-the-board pay increases, if any, into the employee's salary, as if the employee had been employed on campus during the fellowship year; provide support through the Office of Human Resources in matters pertaining to insurance claims or other employment-related issues while abroad; maintain the seniority status of the faculty member within his/her department; and upon recommendation of the dean to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, provide the faculty member additional assistance in meeting expenses during the leave year, provided funds are available.

### **3.15.2 Faculty in the UNA Exchange Program**

The UNA faculty exchange program is a true "exchange" of professors with an institution abroad, using the J-1 Visa. The following regulations apply to UNA faculty participating in the UNA Faculty Exchange Program:

1. the UNA faculty member will receive his/her salary as usual and is eligible for across-the-board pay increases, if any, while he/she is abroad with insurance and other fringe benefits to be paid as usual;
2. travel expenses, or a portion thereof, for the UNA faculty member may be reimbursed by UNA if monies are available and approved; and
3. the UNA faculty member retains tenure, or if untenured, may choose to count the year abroad toward tenure; and the faculty member retains seniority status within his/her department.

### 3.16 FACULTY EVALUATION

The purpose of the Faculty Evaluation Program is to provide for a valid and reliable assessment of faculty performance based on designated areas of engagement approved by the University. Toward that end, all faculty members are expected to demonstrate continuous involvement and effectiveness in the areas of: (1) teaching/professional effectiveness; (2) research, scholarship, and/or creative activities related to the faculty member's discipline and/or professional responsibilities; and (3) service performed on behalf of and/or in affiliation with the University, professional association, or as a civic or social service in the local community. Evaluation information (e.g., vita, faculty performance report, student evaluation rating summaries, and performance evaluation) shall be stored/maintained/archived in the online database that UNA has established for this purpose. Person(s) responsible for data entry of faculty information will be determined by department. It is the faculty member's responsibility to ensure accuracy of data entered.

#### 3.16.1 Components of the Program

Updated Curriculum Vitae. The vitae shall contain detailed background and professional achievement data – educational background, degrees, teaching and other professional experience, scholarly and creative activities, service to the department, university, and community – and any information deemed relevant to the department or faculty member. The vitae shall be updated yearly **by April 15**.

Faculty Performance Report. Each full-time faculty member will establish professional goals for the upcoming year. The faculty member will contact the department chair to establish a meeting date **prior to April 15** in order to discuss professional goals for the coming year (refer to [Appendix 3.D](#)). During the conference, the faculty member and department chair shall come to a consensus on the following year's goals. If the faculty member was employed the previous year, he/she will also complete and submit electronically on this form ([Appendix 3.D](#)) a statement of accomplishments relating to the prior year's goals. The faculty member and the department chair will, during the meeting, discuss the specific goals and the improvements made which the faculty member has documented. This form will be transmitted electronically to the appropriate academic dean for review.

Student Rating. Student rating of faculty will be used university-wide (except Kilby School and university libraries/educational technologies) to collect information about students' perceptions of courses and faculty. Departments may add items to the campus form (refer to [Appendix 3.D](#)). Student evaluations will be administered online by the Office of Academic Affairs every semester in each class section enrolling five or more students. Student comments should be collected and given to the faculty member in a format to ensure anonymity. Departments may use alternatives to the campus form in

laboratories, studio courses, and other courses taught in non-lecture format. The OIR will process the online evaluation in a timely fashion and forward results to the department chair. The summary of the ratings shall be shared with the faculty member.

Performance Evaluations. Using the faculty member's updated curriculum vitae, Faculty Performance Report, student ratings, and other appropriate information, department chairs will provide each faculty member a written performance evaluation on the following schedule: by **September 15** every year for nontenured faculty and every two years for tenured faculty. Performance evaluations may be provided more frequently at the discretion of the department chair or upon request by the faculty member or the dean of the college. The evaluation will be signed by the department chair, dean, and the faculty member. The faculty member has the option of submitting a written response to the department chair by **September 30**.

For department chairs, performance evaluations will be conducted in accordance with the above process and scheduled by the dean of the appropriate college and will include evaluation of administrative performance as well as the elements specified above. Deans are expected to consult department faculty and staff in conducting evaluations of the chair.

### **3.16.2 Use of the Results of the Program**

The Faculty Evaluation Program is an integral component of the University's institutional effectiveness program. Departments will use information collected through the Faculty Evaluation Program in their departmental and academic program reviews with special care to document use of the program to improve teaching, research, and service.