

Valdosta State University Part-Time Faculty Handbook

(Revised August 2000)

Mission of Valdosta State University

Since 1913, Valdosta State University has been a major provider of educational services for south Georgia. The beauty and consistency of its Spanish Mission style of architecture are indicative of its dedication to serving the region's heritage while developing programs and services to enhance its future.

Within the context of the University System's mission and vision, Georgia Southern University and Valdosta State University share core characteristics as regional universities. While these two universities both embody the common characteristics presented below, variations in their purposes, histories, traditions, and settings allow each also to focus on its own distinctiveness and accomplishments.

The core characteristics include:

- a commitment to excellence and responsiveness within a scope of influence defined by the needs of a specific region of the state, and by particularly outstanding programs or distinctive characteristics that have a magnet effect even beyond the region;
- a commitment to a teaching/learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, that sustains instructional excellence, serves a diverse and well-prepared student body, promotes high levels of student achievement, offers academic assistance, and provides developmental studies programs for a limited student cohort;
- a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary academic programming at the baccalaureate and master's levels as well as a range of professional programs at the baccalaureate and postbaccalaureate levels, including a limited number of professionally-oriented doctoral level programs;
- a commitment to public service, continuing education, technical assistance, and economic development activities that address the needs, improve the quality of life, and raise the educational level within the university's scope of influence;
- a commitment to scholarly and creative work to enhance instructional effectiveness and to encourage faculty scholarly pursuits, and a commitment to research in selected areas of institutional strength and focused on regional need.

As a regional university in south Georgia, Valdosta State cooperates with other University System institutions to insure that the region receives the services it needs. To expand its programmatic outreach, it develops and offers programs by distance learning and at off-campus locations throughout the region. It will continue to exercise a leadership role in meeting the needs

of the region, particularly in providing access to professionally-oriented doctoral programs, primarily in education, and to applied research.

VSU prides itself on offering nationally accredited programs in Art, Business, Music, Nursing, Sports Medicine, Speech and Language Pathology, School Psychology, and Teacher Education, which have a magnet effect beyond the institution's primary setting. In its academic credit programming, VSU will place a priority on developing existing programs that aid the educational, economic, cultural, and social advancement of its region and new programs in health-related professions and public administration. The programs will continue to be supported by strong preparatory courses and majors in the humanities, sciences, and social studies. VSU also remains committed to pre-professional programs preparing its undergraduate students for medical, legal, technical, and other professional study.

In its service to students, VSU concentrates on those from the region including a large number of older, non-traditional students who live and work off-campus and many who transfer from other institutions. To serve its region and to attain maximum educational benefits, the university promotes an atmosphere which attracts a diversified student body, of which a representative proportion will be minority students.

VSU promotes a successful learning experience by maintaining services for minority, disabled, veteran, international, and other students with special needs. To aid in developing the whole student, it provides counseling, health services, academic advising, special assistance, honors programs, international programs, career planning, and many co-curricular activities.

VSU is committed to providing life-long learning and to the economic and cultural development of its region. It offers various non-credit programs and services through the South Georgia Institute, ArtSouth, the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, the Music Society, and other organizations. Community relations are enhanced through alumni services and VSU-TV and Radio. Community service and technical assistance are offered by faculty and staff in a variety of forms.

Research, scholarship, and creative endeavors exist primarily to meet the regional needs of schools, businesses, and other organizations, and to promote faculty development and instructional improvement.

VSU aspires to improve continuously the quality of its programs, scholarship, and student services. Assessment of programs, the raising of standards, and the refinement of learning technologies will improve the university. To aid in obtaining this objective, institutional research and planning, external funding, and collaborative relationships with other institutions will be promoted. To a great extent, VSU will continue to develop as a regional university serving its south Georgia constituency by implementing programs that meet student needs and providing the maximum opportunity for faculty development.

[Source: VSU Undergraduate BULLETIN; approved and adopted by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, July 9, 1996.]

The following Part-Time Faculty Handbook is designed to assist part-time faculty with fulfilling their responsibilities. The handbook also contains policies and practices that will assist department heads, directors, and deans in the employment, orientation, and evaluation of part-time faculty. Recommended changes to this document should be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

I. Introduction

Part-time faculty play a vital role in the learning community at Valdosta State University (VSU). It is VSU's intention that part-time faculty comprise an integral part of the academic community and that they participate as fully as possible in campus life.

Definitions, procedures, and policies concerning part-time faculty are, in essence, Board of Regents' policies found in the Academic Affairs Handbook 4.01.05 and 4.01.10 (attached). Part-time faculty are those who are employed for less than .75 EFT for the academic year to teach on a per course or per semester basis. Employment of part-time faculty is generally below the .50 EFT level. Employment of .50 EFT or more requires special justification and specific approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President, and the Chancellor.

Part-time faculty do not have voting rights at meetings of the general faculty. They do not earn credit for tenure and are non-tenure track appointments. Part-time faculty are recommended for employment by the appropriate department head, dean, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President, and are approved by the Chancellor. They have Board of Regents' approval to teach within a designated department or program. In addition to Board of Regents' policies and VSU policies, policies concerning part-time faculty appointments are de-centralized and described in part-time faculty handbooks found in each college employing part-time faculty. Policy in those handbooks reflects VSU policies described below which conform to Board of Regents' policies. A copy of this Handbook, the College Part-Time Faculty Handbook and the VSU Undergraduate and/or Graduate BULLETIN is given to each approved part-time faculty member by the department head or college prior to the beginning of the first semester of employment.

II. Employment Eligibility

The primary responsibility for identifying and recommending part-time faculty rests with the department head. All part-time faculty must be approved by the appropriate officials prior to the commencement of classes. Departments may retain lists of approved faculty. Appointments are based upon instructional needs of the unit, the college, and VSU. Employment during a given semester/term or for a given period of time does not obligate VSU to provide employment for a subsequent semester/term. Employment is also contingent on sufficient student enrollment. Courses may be cancelled through the second

class meeting or the end of the first week of class without compensation to the part-time instructor.

III Qualifications

The University System of Georgia Board of Regents and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) define the academic qualifications for part-time faculty members. In general, a candidate for part-time employment must have at least a master's degree from an accredited institution with a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the teaching field. VSU expects to hire the most qualified faculty for all faculty positions, including part-time positions. In addition to degrees, VSU considers the candidate's professional work experience, demonstrated teaching excellence, and commitment to enhancing student learning.

IV. Application Procedure and Compensation

A prospective part-time faculty member must submit a completed faculty application form, additional application materials, curriculum vitae, and official copies of all college transcripts to the department head in which the individual would teach. Those selected to teach, if not previously approved, will be interviewed.

Appointment Procedure: An individual, recommended by the department head, dean, and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who is eligible to teach, is submitted to the Chancellor at the University System of Georgia Board of Regents for approval.

Documentation: For appointment, a part-time teacher must provide all requested documentation and confirm the terms of the appointment with the department head. Appointments are not complete until the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs has received official transcripts mailed directly to VSU from each institution from which the candidate received a degree.

Part-time faculty assigned to classes that do not meet enrollment quotas will not be compensated for instruction time or course preparation that occurs prior to cancellation. Normally, notice of cancellation of the appointment will be given before the second class meeting.

Compensation: Compensation will be at the prevailing rate at the time of appointment. Under special circumstances, additional compensation for travel might apply.

V. Orientation

In addition to orientation provided by the Office of Human Resources, each college hiring part-time faculty has an orientation process noted in their part-time faculty handbooks. College orientations for part-time faculty will at a minimum review the following matters:

1. General Policies and Expectations for all Teaching Faculty
2. Policies and Practices for Reporting/Posting In-Progress and Final Course Grades
3. Equal Opportunity (including ADA) and Sexual Harassment Policies
4. Student and Faculty Absence Policies
5. Academic Code of Conduct (Student Handbook)
6. Mission and/or goals of the College

VI. Course Management

Department heads and other academic supervisors have a responsibility to make clear expectations for part-time faculty and to assist part-time faculty with securing appropriate supplies, course materials, and a desk copy of textbook(s). Part-time faculty members are expected to adhere to institutional and unit expectations regarding the content and timely distribution of the course syllabi, meeting times, student attendance policies, and testing procedures. In general, part-time faculty members are subject to the same expectations as full-time faculty regarding faculty class attendance, reporting of faculty absence from class, adequate office hours, and professional conduct. Part-time faculty members are expected to complete proof roles and report grades by announced deadlines. Final examinations must be administered by the part-time instructor during the assigned date and time, as listed in the Schedule for Final Examinations (Schedule of Classes and the VSU Registrar's Web Page).

At the end of the semester, part-time instructors must forward to departmental offices copies of relevant grade book pages and an explanation, if the grading process is unclear, of how grades were calculated. Part-time instructors should keep their grade books and final examinations for one year following the conclusion of the class. Policies regarding posting and change of grades follow university procedures.

VII. Evaluation of Part-Time Faculty

Instructional performance will be evaluated using a variety of methods. Successful evaluations are required for continued employment.

Selected assessment methods include one or more of the following:

1. Student evaluations of instructor/course (**required** each semester for each course)
2. Direct in-class observations or student consultations by the department head or his/her designee
3. Grading appropriateness and grade distributions

4. Quality and effectiveness of course materials (including the course syllabus)
5. Measures of student learning
6. Availability to students outside of class periods
7. Maintenance of appropriate professional behaviors (punctual class attendance, appropriate interactions with students, etc.)

VIII. Professional Responsibility

Part-time faculty members are expected to meet professional responsibilities such as: punctual attendance in class, keeping records of student attendance, attire, punctuality, maintaining office hours, understanding university policies relative to sexual harassment and discrimination, and adhering to established university procedures.

A faculty member who anticipates missing a class or a significant portion of a class must clear the absence in advance with the department head or other appropriate academic supervisor. When the absence is caused by illness the department head should be notified as soon as possible. In the event the department head cannot be contacted, the faculty member should notify the appropriate dean. The department head and/or dean will determine what assignments need to be made for the class.

Valdosta State University supports and complies with the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988, the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989, and the Drug Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990. Faculty, staff, and students are advised that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illicit drugs and alcohol is prohibited, and violations of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action, to include suspension or termination.

IX. Parking

Part-time faculty can purchase either a red (faculty@\$60/year) or a green (staff@\$36/year) sticker for parking. Stickers may also be purchased for a semester instead of the whole year. Refer to Parking and Transportation for purchase of a decal and policies regarding parking. Permission to obtain a decal is granted through the Office of Human Resources.

X. ID Cards

Part-time faculty identification cards are available through the One Card office. These cards will be used to obtain services on campus (e.g. Odum Library). Permission to obtain an ID card is granted through the Office of Human Resources.

XI. Exit Procedure

At the end of the employment period, the part-time faculty members should return all keys, roll books, departmental, college, or university supplies/equipment, course records, grade books, and other relevant materials to the appropriate offices.