

**VSU MLIS Program**  
**Tenure and Promotion Guidelines**  
**Adopted September 2005**

The VSU MLIS Program is an academic graduate teaching program situated within Odum Library. The program director is responsible to the University Librarian. The University Librarian serves as the dean equivalent within the structure of the University.

To develop its tenure and promotion policy, the VSU MLIS Program is guided by the **Board of Regents Policy Manual: Section 800: Personnel**; the **VSU Faculty Handbook**; and by the **VSU Graduate School's Criteria for Membership on the Graduate Faculty**. Relevant sections of these three documents are appended.

VSU MLIS Faculty must meet the requirements for graduate faculty status as a requirement of appointment. The VSU MLIS program is a graduate program. To meet promotion and tenure criteria, an MLIS faculty member must exceed Graduate Faculty minimum requirements.

Each Candidate for promotion and/or tenure will, in the fall semester of the year s/he is (a) qualified on the basis of length of service and (b) wish to be considered for promotion and/or tenure will request in writing that his or her candidacy be considered. Faculty members are to address their request to the Program Director; the Program Director will make similar requests to the University Librarian.

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion are to follow the agenda and timetable as established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or other designated University officers for the tenure and promotion process.

Each candidate for tenure and/or promotion in mutual agreement with the Program Director (or in the case of the Program Director, the University Librarian) will nominate a committee of at least three tenured faculty members of the MLIS Program not placed in an administrative position over that faculty member. In the event that there are too few MLIS faculty members who meet the specified criteria, other tenured Valdosta State University faculty will be nominated.

The committee for faculty members seeking promotion must consist of tenured faculty of a rank equal to or superior to the rank to which the candidate is seeking promotion.

## Criteria for Promotion

The Board of Regents specifies for minimum criteria for promotion. These are:

1. Superior teaching.
2. Outstanding service to the institution.
3. Academic achievement.
4. Professional growth and development.

The Valdosta State University Faculty Handbook adds the following criterion for promotion: Regents policies also state that there should be appropriate involvement of faculty in making recommendations for promotion. Each department should have written procedures for making recommendations for promotion and these procedures should be available to all faculty members.

At a minimum for a faculty member to be considered for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor or from associate professor to professor, that faculty member must have met requisite time requirements for promotion and hold the earned PhD degree or equivalent. In addition, the faculty member must, at a minimum meet the definitions for superior teaching, outstanding service to the institution, academic achievement, and professional growth and development as outlines in the Board of Regents Policy, the VSU Faculty Handbook, and the Criteria for Graduate Faculty Membership.

The VSU MLIS Program defines each of the four criteria as follows:

### **Superior teaching**

The candidate shall present evidence to document superior teaching. Candidates may present as evidence of teaching copies of course syllabi, course materials, teaching evaluations by students, teaching evaluations by peers or administrators, and/or other pertinent documentation.

The definition of “Teaching” includes, but is not limited to, demonstration of both traditional and distance education abilities as well as advising skills.

### **Outstanding service to the institution**

The candidate shall present evidence to document outstanding service to the institution.

Outstanding service is demonstrated through participation by the faculty member in university governance at the university, college, and departmental levels. This service can be demonstrated through participation on standing

Faculty Senate Committees, Graduate School Committees, and other university wide standing and *ad hoc* committees.

Faculty members also participate in university governance by participation on departmental standing and *ad hoc* committees.

Faculty members also provide service to the institution through participation in activities outside the university that support university and departmental accreditation.

## **Departmental Service**

### **Policy Statements**

*VSU Faculty Handbook:*

“Faculty accept responsibility for discharging their appointed share of committee assignments, student advising, and other governance tasks assigned to the faculty.” p. 28, 5.4

Office Hours and Absences. “All faculty members are expected to observe reasonable office hours during the week and to post the schedule, in order to provide time on a systematic basis for student conferences and consultations with colleagues and visitors.” p. 38.

### **Effective departmental service entails:**

- Maintaining current knowledge of department activities and policies
- Maintaining current knowledge of relevant documents
- Discharging an equitable share of departmental governance activities
- Observance of reasonable and equitable office hours
- Discharging an equitable share of consultations with visitors
- Discharging an equitable share of oversight of support staff
- Responding to an equitable share of the inquiries from prospective students
- Responding to inquiries from colleagues in a timely manner
- Discharging an equitable share of student recruitment activities
- Meeting deadlines for departmental paperwork

Tenure and promotion applications will include evidence of effective departmental service. This evidence may include a narrative, lists of departmental committee membership assignments, lists of committee accomplishments, a statement from the Department Chair, statements from faculty colleagues, or other forms of evidence.

Recognition will be given for leadership activities. This may include such activities as chairing a departmental committee, organization of procedures for use by all Department personnel, lead authorship of documents for use by all Department personnel, or initiation and operationalization of new projects.

## **Academic achievement**

The VSU MLIS program defines academic achievement as the production on average of at least one “knowledge product” per year. We define “knowledge product” as the result of scholarship organized so that it can be shared or disseminated to professional audiences in a state, national, or international venue.

The LIS profession is collaborative by nature, and collaborative projects are encouraged. Therefore, knowledge products resulting from collaborative activities will be given recognition equal to the recognition awarded to products created by an individual.

Knowledge products that qualify to fulfill the academic achievement criteria include, but are not limited to:

- A monograph published by a recognized press
- An article in a peer reviewed journal
- A chapter in a professional book
- An article in a professional journal
- Editorship of a professional publication
- Development of a professional online resource
- A presentation before a state, national, or international professional association

Rationale: The VSU MLIS Program trains professional librarians. While the faculty of a library science program have a responsibility to contribute to the scholarly, peer reviewed literature, they have an equal responsibility to contribute to the professional literature. Through publication in professional journals or presentations at professional meetings, MLIS program faculty contribute to the knowledge base while they provide continuing professional guidance for their practitioner peers.

While there is no specific requirement to do so, MLIS faculty are encouraged to publish at least one of these knowledge products during each promotion period: (1) a monograph or (2) a substantive article in a peer reviewed journal.

## Professional growth and development

Professional growth and development is defined as all other activities not as yet defined that the candidate engages in that contributes to the candidate's professional expertise. These activities include but are not limited to

- assistance to or consulting with the MLIS Program's professional constituency. These may be librarians or librarians and similar organizations.
- participation in professional associations at the local, state, national, and/or international levels.
- membership on boards of information related organizations
- peer-reviewer or editorial board membership for professional publications
- taking courses to enhance professional or teaching skills
- other related activities.

## Advising

### Policy Statements

*VSU Faculty Handbook:*

p. 28, 5.4 "Faculty accept responsibility for discharging their appointed share of committee assignments, student advising, and other governance tasks assigned to the faculty."

p. 39, Advisement of Students

"All students with a declared major will be advised by a faculty member from that major department."

*BOR Policy Manual*, accessed 20050907

<http://www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/300.phtml>

### Section 309 ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Each institution shall have a program for the advisement of its students. Academic advisement is the primary responsibility of the faculty and should be integrally related to the education process. Effective advisement shall be credited toward retention, tenure, and promotion. It shall be a specific topic of faculty evaluation (BR Minutes, 1980-81, P. 85).

### **Effective advisement entails:**

- Maintaining current knowledge of department, Graduate School, and University requirements of students
- Maintaining current knowledge of relevant documents
- Discharging an equitable share of the advising load
- Responding to an equitable share of the inquiries from prospective students
- Responding to student inquiries in a timely manner
- Helping to create and edit advising communications that are sent to all students
- Giving advice that accurately reflects department, Graduate School, and University requirements of students
- Helping students to make reasonable progress toward graduation
- Processing student paperwork, including but not limited to course withdrawal forms and graduation applications, in a timely manner
- Giving useful advice for career development, including but not limited to appropriate course choices to prepare for sub-specialties of the discipline

Promotion applications will include the number of students advised and other evidence of effective advisement. This evidence may include a narrative, copies of advising correspondence, letters from advisees or other forms of evidence.

Recognition will be given for activities that improve advising for the entire Department. This may include such activities as lead authorship on advising communications that are sent to all students, creation and maintenance of advising files, or organization of procedures for use by all advisors and students.

## Criteria for Tenure

The VSU MLIS Program's criteria for tenure are similar to those for promotion. The Board of Regents specifies **excellence in teaching** as the primary criterion for granting tenure to teaching faculty. The Board of Regents also specifies that:

- Tenure resides at the institutional level
- Normally, only assistant professors, associate professors, and professors who are employed full-time (as defined by Regents' policies) by an institution are eligible for tenure.
- Tenure may be awarded, upon recommendation by the President and approval by the Board of Regents, upon completion of a probationary period of at least five years of full-time service at the rank of assistant professor or higher.

In addition to excellence in teaching, the candidate for tenure will demonstrate:

1. Outstanding service to the institution.
2. Academic achievement.
3. Professional growth and development.

The VSU MLIS Program defines each of the four criteria as follows:

### **Superior teaching**

The candidate shall present evidence to document superior teaching. Candidates may present as evidence of teaching copies of course syllabi, course materials, teaching evaluations by students, teaching evaluations by peers or administrators, and/or other pertinent documentation.

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While there is no specific requirement to do so, MLIS faculty are encouraged to publish at least one of these knowledge products during each promotion period: (1) a monograph or (2) a substantive article in a peer reviewed journal.

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# Appendices

## Board of Regents Policy Manual: Section 800: Personnel<sup>1</sup>

### 803.08 CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

Each University System institution shall establish clearly stated promotion criteria and procedures that emphasize excellence in teaching for all teaching faculty. These policies will be submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for review.

- B. Minimum for all three types of institutions in all professorial ranks:
  1. Superior teaching.
  2. Outstanding service to the institution.
  3. Academic achievement.
  4. Professional growth and development.

Noteworthy achievement in all four of the above need not be demanded, but should be expected in at least two. A written recommendation should be submitted by the head of the department concerned setting forth the reasons for promotion. The faculty member's length of service with an institution shall be taken into consideration in determining whether or not the faculty member should be promoted.

- C. Research and Regional Universities: In addition to "A" above, promotion to the rank of associate or full professor requires the earned doctorate or its equivalent in training, ability, and/or experience. Neither the possession of a doctorate nor longevity of service is a guarantee per se of promotion.
- D. State Universities: In addition to "A" above, promotion to the rank of professor requires the earned doctorate or its equivalent in training, ability, and/or experience. Neither the possession of a doctorate nor longevity of service is a guarantee per se of promotion.
- E. State and Two-Year Colleges: In addition to "A" above, promotion to the rank of professor requires at least the equivalent of two years of full-time study beyond the bachelor's degree. Longevity of service is not a guarantee per se of promotion.

### 803.09 TENURE

- A. Each institution in the University System shall establish clearly stated tenure criteria and procedures that emphasize excellence in teaching for all teaching

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/800.phtml>

faculty. Such policies shall conform to the requirements listed below and shall be reviewed and approved by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academics and Fiscal Affairs. The requirements listed below shall be the minimum standard for award of tenure, but they are to be sufficiently flexible to permit an institution to make individual adjustments to its own peculiar problems or circumstances. These policies are to be considered a statement of general requirements which are capable of application throughout the System and are not a limitation upon any additional standards and requirements which a particular institution may wish to adopt for its own improvement. Such additional standards and requirements, which must be consistent with the Regents' policies and approved by the Board of Regents, shall be incorporated into the statutes of an institution.

- B. Tenure resides at the institutional level. Institutional responsibility for employment of a tenured individual is to the extent of continued employment on a 100% workload basis for two out of every three consecutive academic terms until retirement, dismissal for cause, or release because of financial exigency, or program modification as determined by the Board.
- C. Normally, only assistant professors, associate professors, and professors who are employed full-time (as defined by Regents' policies) by an institution are eligible for tenure. However, faculty members holding these professorial ranks who are employed by or on the staff of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) on less than a full-time basis, and who also hold an appointment at the Veterans Administration Medical Center-Augusta, shall be eligible for promotion and/or the award of tenure by the Board of Regents (BR Minutes, 1979-80, p. 73; 1980-81, p. 303; 1990-91, pp. 369- 70). The term "full-time" is used in these tenure regulations to denote service on a 100% work load basis for at least two out of three consecutive academic terms. Faculty members with adjunct appointments shall not acquire tenure. The award of tenure is limited to the above academic ranks and shall not be construed to include honorific appointments (BR Minutes, 1990-91, pp. 369-70).
- D. Tenure may be awarded, upon recommendation by the President and approval by the Board of Regents, upon completion of a probationary period of at least five years of full-time service at the rank of assistant professor or higher. The five-year period must be continuous except that a maximum of two years interruption because of a leave of absence or part-time service may be permitted, provided, however that an award of credit for the probationary period of an interruption shall be at the discretion of the President. In all cases in which a leave of absence, approved by the President, is based on birth or adoption of a child, or serious disability or prolonged illness of the employee or immediate family member, the five-year probationary period may be suspended during the leave of absence. A maximum of three years\_ credit toward the minimum probationary period may be allowed for service in tenure track positions at other institutions or for full-time service at the rank of instructor or lecturer at the same institution. Such credit for prior service shall be defined in writing by the President and approved by the

Board of Regents at the time of the initial appointment at the rank of assistant professor or higher. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Policy Manual, in exceptional cases an institution may recommend to the Board of Regents that an outstanding distinguished senior faculty member be awarded tenure upon the faculty member's initial appointment. Each such recommendation shall be considered by the Board individually and shall be granted only in cases in which the faculty member, at a minimum, is appointed as an associate or full professor, was already tenured at his or her prior institution, and brings a demonstrably national reputation to the institution (BR Minutes, 1983-84, p. 94; May, 1996, p. 52; April 2000, pp. 31-32).

- E. Anything in this policy manual to the contrary notwithstanding, faculty members employed by the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) who hold a professorial rank in a tenure track position of assistant professor or above and who also hold a part-time or full-time appointment at the Veterans Administration Medical Center-Augusta (VA), shall as stated above (Section 803.09-C) be eligible for the award of tenure at MCG upon completion of at least five years of full-time or part-time service at the rank of assistant professor or higher. Such faculty members shall otherwise meet the same probationary periods, criteria for promotion, procedures and other requirements set forth in the Bylaws and Policy Manual of the Board of Regents and Statutes of MCG for the award of tenure to full-time faculty, provided, however, that such faculty members who have been employed previously by MCG for five consecutive years or more shall be eligible to apply for tenure. The tenure of a faculty member who also holds a VA appointment shall apply only to that portion of a faculty member's salary and benefits which are provided directly by MCG. In no event shall the award of tenure to faculty members holding such joint appointments obligate MCG to assume any portion of the salary or other benefits provided by the VA. In the event a faculty member who has been awarded tenure at MCG under the provisions of this section shall for any reason cease to be employed by the VA, the Medical College shall have the right, at its sole discretion, to revoke the tenure, employment or other affiliation of the faculty member by MCG without a hearing or other due process procedures or requirements set forth in the Bylaws and Policy Manual of the Board of Regents and the Statutes of MCG for other full-time tenured faculty. After termination of employment or revocation of tenure, MCG shall not be obligated to provide such faculty members with any further salary, benefits or other financial support.
- F. Except for the approved suspension of the probationary period due to a leave of absence, the maximum time that may be served at the rank of assistant professor or above without the award of tenure shall be seven years, provided, however, that a terminal contract for an eighth year may be proffered if a recommendation for tenure is not approved by the Board of Regents. The maximum time that may be served in combination of full-time instructional appointments (instructor or professorial ranks) without the award of tenure shall be 10 years, provided, however, that a terminal contract for the 11th year may be proffered if a

recommendation for tenure is not approved by the Board of Regents (BR Minutes, 1992 - 93, p. 188; April 2000, pp. 31-32).

- G. Except for the approved suspension of the probationary period due to a leave of absence, the maximum period of time that may be served at the rank of full-time instructor shall be seven years (BR Minutes, April 2000, pp. 31-32).
- H. Tenure or probationary credit towards tenure is lost upon resignation from an institution, or written resignation from a tenured position in order to take a non-tenured position, or written resignation from a position for which probationary credit toward tenure is given in order to take a position for which no probationary credit is given. In the event such an individual is again employed as a candidate for tenure, probationary credit for the prior service may be awarded in the same manner as for service at another institution.
- I. Upon approval of the award of tenure to an individual by the Board of Regents, that individual shall be notified in writing by the president of his/her institution, with a copy of the notification forwarded to the Chancellor or his/her designee.
- J. Each institution shall provide data annually to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academics and Fiscal Affairs showing the institution's tenure rates by gender and race.

## VSU Faculty Handbook<sup>2</sup>

### Promotion

Promotions in rank are based on merit and are not automatic. The Board of Regents has fixed certain minimum criteria for promotion from one rank to another; these criteria include superior teaching, outstanding service to the institution, academic achievement, and professional growth and development. In at least two of these four areas, the faculty member's accomplishment should be noteworthy, with the greatest emphasis on teaching. Regents policies also state that there should be appropriate involvement of faculty in making recommendations for promotion. Each department should have written procedures for making recommendations for promotion and these procedures should be available to all faculty members.

### Tenure

Tenure may be awarded, upon recommendation by the President and approval by the Board of Regents, after completion of a probationary period of at least five years of full-time service, defined as a one-hundred percent workload basis for three out of every four consecutive academic quarters [*sic*], at the rank of assistant professor or higher. The five-

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.valdosta.edu/vsu/facsen/handbook/handbook\\_r97.pdf](http://www.valdosta.edu/vsu/facsen/handbook/handbook_r97.pdf)

year period must be continuous, with the exception of a maximum of two years' interruption because of a leave of absence or approved part-time service. However, no probationary credit may be given for such interrupted service.

The maximum time that may be served at the rank of assistant professor or above without the award of tenure is seven years.

### **CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE GRADUATE FACULTY<sup>3</sup>**

To be considered for appointment or reappointment to Full Membership on the Graduate Faculty, the faculty member must meet all of the following criteria:

Possess the doctoral degree in an appropriate discipline or, in areas/disciplines which do not have such credentials, an appropriate terminal degree.

Hold a tenure track position at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor in a department which presently offers a graduate degree or graduate courses (or has Board of Regents approval to develop a graduate degree).

Demonstrate excellence in classroom teaching at the graduate level and/or senior undergraduate level. Such evidence is provided through the Department Head evaluations of teaching, peer/colleague evaluations, student evaluations, and/or letters of support from those having knowledge of the faculty member's teaching methods.

Publish scholarly papers and/or engage in creative endeavors in an appropriate discipline during the previous six years. Normally, evidence of such activities includes the publication of at least one or more articles/major essays/short stories/poems in appropriate journals/books or the publication of one scholarly book. In the arts, the evidence may be demonstrated by one or more creative activities (solo performances, featured performances, or juried exhibits) during the previous six years. However, the quality of the creative activity or the journal/publisher and the nature of the activity or the publication must be considered. For example, articles published in a journal which has wide distribution and which is "refereed" by professional peers provides stronger evidence of scholarship than an article which is published in a local, non-refereed journal. Also, a research article, review essay, or major creative endeavor typically provides stronger evidence than a book review. While publication in a vanity press cannot be considered as evidence of scholarship, publication in a commercial or university press would provide strong evidence of scholarship. Sole authorship of a book provides more evidence of scholarship than a text or an edited collection of articles by other scholars. In the creative arts, the nature and types of exhibits and the "level" of the audience for a musical or dramatic production may be used as evidence of the quality of the endeavor. Juried exhibits provide more evidence of quality than non-juried exhibits. Externally funded research grants may also be used as evidence of research productivity.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.valdosta.edu/GRADSCHOOL/GrFacApp.pdf>

Present scholarly papers at professional meetings of appropriate organizations during the previous six years. Normally, the presentation of at least one paper is sufficient. However, the nature of the organization (local, state, regional, national, international) and the type of presentation (research paper versus panel presentation) are used to judge the importance of the scholarship. In the creative arts, those activities that are not juried or reviewed by peers, and are more local in scope might be offered as evidence of professional presentations.

Provide evidence of professional involvement and/or service in an appropriate discipline during the previous six years. This involvement/service is demonstrated through attendance at professional meetings, membership on professional committees, holding offices in professional organizations, serving as an editor or reviewer for a professional journal or publisher, serving as a judge or on a jury for artistic work, and/or chairing sessions/panels at professional meetings. Furthermore, professional service is demonstrated through discipline-related, unpaid consultancies in appropriate organizations and/or agencies.

Provide service to the graduate programs in the institution during the previous six years, as evidenced by the following types of activities: teaching graduate courses, advising graduate students, administering graduate programs, creating/grading comprehensive examinations, serving on thesis/graduate committees, creating graduate courses/programs, serving on college-wide committees which are concerned with graduate programs, obtaining externally funded grants which involve graduate programs or which support academic programs, and/or advising graduate internships/practicums.