Procedure Statement

The procedure for academic freedom, ethics, and responsibility at Texas A&M University-Texarkana (A&M-Texarkana) applies equally to current faculty members and future appointees.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure seeks to provide useful statements concerning academic freedom and responsibility and the employment and definition of faculty.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

1.1 Institutions of higher education serve the common good, which is based on an open search for truth and free expression. Therefore, a faculty member must be free to pursue scholarly inquiry without undue restriction and to state and publish materials pertinent to the significance of evidence deemed relevant.

1.2 Each faculty member has the right to full freedom in the classroom (face-to-face or online) to discuss the subject that he or she teaches without restrictions that violate the First Amendment. A faculty member shall be cautious of introducing controversial subjects that are irrelevant to the subject matter.

1.3 Every faculty member possesses the right to participate in political activities provided such activities do not interfere with the discharge of the duties and responsibilities that the employee has to the institution and A&M System.

1.4 Faculty members have the right to exercise constitutional rights as citizens without institutional censorship or discipline. Faculty shall understand that the public may judge their profession and institution by their statements. Faculty must strive for accuracy, appropriate restraint, and respect for others' opinions; and make clear that they are not speaking for the institution.
2. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY OF FACULTY MEMBERS

2.1 Faculty members assume ethical obligations and responsibilities to students, fellow faculty members, the institution, the profession, and society at large. Those responsibilities require the faculty to address the following:

2.1.1 Meet assigned teaching, research, and service obligations;
2.1.2 Teach the subject matter in a professional manner and strive to foster scholarly values in students and encourage them to engage in open discussion and inquiry; and
2.1.3 Maintain respect for the student and the student's role as a learner, evaluate students fairly on their academic performance, and be available at responsible intervals to consult with students.

3. EMPLOYMENT OF FACULTY

3.1 Employment Contract

3.1.1 All faculty appointments shall be for a fixed term of nine months (September through May) unless otherwise stated in the appointment letter and are subject to renewal or non-renewal each year or until tenure, for tenure-track positions, is achieved. Employment during the summer months (June through August) is not guaranteed but is determined by the needs of the university and the availability of faculty. The appointment letter for a faculty with an administrative position shall state the portion of the employee's salary that is associated with the administrative position. Annual notice of salary shall reflect this structure. Also, in such case, the appointment letter shall state that the administrative position and the salary associated with such position may be terminated without cause. All appointment letters must indicate whether the appointment offered is with tenure, tenure-accruing, or non-tenure accruing.

3.1.2 All new tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members shall be provided with an appointment letter stating the initial terms and conditions of employment. The appointment letter shall indicate the necessary teaching, research and/or service requirements expected of the faculty member as well as whether, if for a tenure-track position, any years of prior teaching may be counted toward tenure requirements at A&M-Texarkana.

3.2 Definition of faculty

In general, a faculty member is any full-time or part-time employee of A&M-Texarkana with an appointment as a professor at any rank, instructor, visiting, ad interim, practice, or clinical faculty member. The following further defines faculty positions at A&M-Texarkana:

3.2.1 Full-time appointment: a 100% time assignment for a minimum of nine months (September through May).
3.2.2 Part-time appointment: a faculty member who is employed for less than 100% time. Such faculty may be involved in advising, committee work, and other assignments as the department may require. Employment of part-time faculty is
contingent on the generation of sufficient enrollment in classes they are assigned to teach. These part-time appointments may not hold tenure or tenure-track status.

3.2.3 Tenured and tenure-track faculty: faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor employed in a tenure-track position. Only tenured and tenure-track faculty members may hold academic administrative positions.

3.2.4 Non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty: faculty members of any rank whose letter of appointment does not specify that the position is tenure-track or that tenure is awarded at the time of employment. If a faculty member who holds a non-tenure-track position is later appointed to a tenure-track position, time served in the non-tenure-track faculty position does not automatically count toward tenure but the faculty member may request from the respective college dean that the time count as credit toward tenure. Faculty members holding this designation of employment are appointed annually based upon need and annual review of the faculty member's performance in teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs.

3.2.5 Ad Interim Faculty: members so designated when needed to fill temporary short-term appointments and when timing of a vacancy does not allow for an appropriate search to be conducted. The appointee must have at least a Master's degree in the appropriate discipline. If assigned to full-time responsibilities, the appointment shall not exceed a total of one academic year.

3.2.6 Instructor: members so designated when a program has an ongoing need for faculty other than those in the tenure-track process. Members of this rank may or may not have a terminal degree, but must have a master's degree in the appropriate discipline or a professional degree in the appropriate discipline. Appointment is year-by-year, based on need. Satisfactory performance by members of this rank, as determined by adequate supervision and evaluation, is required prior to consideration of reappointment. Faculty holding this title shall be evaluated for teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs.

3.2.7 Clinical Faculty: members who are full-time appointments of highly skilled and experienced practitioners (usually in nursing, health and behavioral sciences, social work, or teacher education) who address a specific need in a department or college. Members of this rank may or may not have a terminal degree, but must have a master's degree in the appropriate discipline or professional degree in the appropriate discipline. Appointment is year-by-year, based on need. Satisfactory performance by members of this rank, as determined by adequate supervision and evaluation, is required prior to consideration of reappointment. Faculty holding this title shall be evaluated for teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs.

3.2.8 Visiting Faculty: members who are typically faculty from another university or professional staff of a research laboratory who are invited to serve as a member of the A&M-Texarkana faculty for no more than one academic year, unless an extension is authorized by the Provost/VPASA. Although visiting professors
may be tenured at another university, they may not hold tenure or tenure-track status at A&M-Texarkana. Visiting faculty must hold a degree appropriate for the position, equivalent to that required for a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in this position.

3.2.9 Faculty of Practice: members with full-time non-tenure-track appointments who have skills and expertise primarily acquired in non-academic careers. These appointments are typically for faculty members who have had primary employment in a profession outside of academia. Members appointed as Professor of Practice must have a terminal degree in one of the disciplines related to the programs in the College for which they are hired and shall have achieved exceptional distinction as practitioners in any of the respective disciplines. Members without a terminal degree shall be appointed as Instructor of Practice. Faculty of Practice may have a term of three to five years of service with annual renewable appointments permissible after the first year of employment and may be terminated for just cause such as unsatisfactory performance or programmatic changes, including budgetary limitations. Satisfactory performance by members of this rank, as determined by adequate supervision and evaluation, is required prior to consideration of reappointment. Faculty holding this title shall be evaluated for teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs. Faculty of Practice will be reviewed on an annual basis by their department head or supervisor.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy 12.01, Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure
System Policy 12.07, Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty

Contact Office

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Approved:

[Signature]
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