



# Faculty Handbook

*the* FRIENDLIEST CAMPUS *in the* SOUTH

# Chapter 1

## University Overview, Organization, and Governance

### OVERVIEW

#### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The Jacksonville State University faculty handbook, as approved by the Board of Trustees, is the result of a collaborative effort between members of the Faculty Senate, the faculty at large, and the Academic Affairs leadership team. It is meant to guide faculty through their careers at JSU and help them navigate through many of the complex policies and procedures in place at the university. It outlines the university overview, organization, and governance ([Chapter 1](#)), faculty rights and responsibilities ([Chapter 2](#)), hiring procedures and academic ranks ([Chapter 3](#)), faculty annual reviews and reappointment ([Chapter 4](#)), promotion and tenure ([Chapter 5](#)), separation, termination, and grievance ([Chapter 6](#)), academic policies ([Chapter 7](#)), salaries and extra compensation ([Chapter 8](#)), leave and benefits ([Chapter 9](#)), and academic support ([Chapter 10](#)). The Appendices contain the Faculty Senate Constitution ([Appendix A](#)) and the Faculty Senate Bylaws ([Appendix B](#)).

This handbook serves as a reference manual for faculty members and administration. It is the product of faculty and administration collaboration, which reflects broad-based participation in the governance of the university. The Faculty Handbook is a compilation of selected policies, regulations, procedures, and guidelines currently in operation. It may be revised from time to time to reflect official policy changes. When official policies are changed by the Board of Trustees or other duly constituted authority, such changes become effective on the date designated at the time of their adoption and supersede any contrary provisions of the Faculty Handbook.

This handbook is housed on the Academic Affairs webpage<sup>2</sup> and chapters will be periodically updated by the Faculty Handbook Committee as policies and procedures are revised. Policies that apply to all employees are found in the Policies and Procedures Manual housed under the Finance and Administration webpage.<sup>3</sup> This handbook is not to be construed as a contract of employment or a promise of future or indefinite employment.

#### Definition of Faculty<sup>4</sup>

The faculty generally includes all persons appointed as regular full-time faculty, temporary full-time and temporary part-time faculty, adjunct faculty, visiting faculty, and special appointment faculty. Specific employment contracts are awarded to all faculty. A ranked faculty member is an employee of the university who has been appointed to one of the six regular full-time academic ranks: instructor, distinguished instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor, or distinguished professor. Librarians have the same rank structure as faculty.

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<sup>1</sup> Revised 02/2024; 06/2023

<sup>2</sup> [Faculty Handbook - Academic Affairs \(jsu.edu\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Policies and Procedures Manual - Finance and Administration \(jsu.edu\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Revised 02/2024; 06/2023

## **MISSION STATEMENT<sup>5</sup>**

Jacksonville State University, a learning-centered community, provides distinctive educational, cultural, and societal experiences to prepare students to be competent, ethical professionals and engaged, responsible, global citizens.

## **Definition of Learning-Centered Community<sup>6</sup>**

At Jacksonville State University, a public, regional comprehensive institution, we believe that students, faculty, and staff comprise a community of learners. We believe it is important for learners to take responsibility for their learning, which means presenting a willingness to learn, being proactive in the acquisition of knowledge, and behaving with integrity and honesty in the learning environment. We believe that learning takes place when learners are engaged, assumptions are challenged, expectations are shared, and relationships are built around the purpose of learning.

Jacksonville State University promotes a learning environment with relevant programs of study supported by current technologies, opportunities for experiential learning and other high impact practices, and flexibility in the learning process. Faculty will use various methods of teaching to meet different learning preferences and will set learning outcomes that emphasize the application of knowledge, ensuring that graduates are prepared with skills necessary for careers in a global marketplace.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN<sup>7</sup>**

The 2023 strategic plan is to reach, engage, and discover.<sup>8</sup>

- REACH: As a thriving learning community, we depend on a strong financial foundation based on diverse student enrollment, a spirit of generosity, and a culture of accountability.
- ENGAGE: As a university, we ensure the vibrancy of our campus, community, and region through the benefit of belonging, mutual relationship, and power of place.
- DISCOVER: As educators, we do not provide the answers. We provide the experiences, environments, and expectations that allow learners to discover the answers.

## **UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATION<sup>9</sup>**

Accreditation seeks to ensure constituents and the public that the quality and integrity of higher educational institutions meet acceptable levels of quality. These outcomes are achieved through rigorous internal and external peer review processes during which the institution is evaluated against a common set of standards. Jacksonville State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE), which it means that JSU has (1) a mission appropriate to higher education, (2) resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain its mission, (3) clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that it is (4) successful in assessing its achievement of these objectives and demonstrating improvements.<sup>10</sup> Accreditation by SACSCOC is a statement of the

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<sup>5</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>6</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>7</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>8</sup> [JSU STRATEGIC PLAN | HOME](#)

<sup>9</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>10</sup> [FAQs - SACSCOC](#)

institution's continuing commitment to quality and integrity as well as its capacity to provide effective programs and services based on agreed-upon accreditation standards. JSU has been approved to offer the baccalaureate degree, master's degree, education specialist degree, and doctoral degree.

### **JSU ORGANIZATIONAL CHART<sup>11</sup>**

This chart outlines the current organizational structure of JSU.<sup>12</sup>

## **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES<sup>13</sup>**

The Board of Trustees is the governing body for Jacksonville State University. The Board has the statutory authority to organize the university; to appoint the faculty and other employees; to fix salaries and compensation and increase or reduce the same at its discretion; to regulate, alter, or modify the government of the university; to prescribe courses of instruction and rates of tuition and fees; to confer degrees; and to do whatever else it may deem best for promoting the interests of the university.

The Board of Trustees consists of two members from the congressional district in which the institution is located, one from each of the other congressional districts in the state, and one member from the state at large. The Governor is president of the board and, together with the State Superintendent of Education, is an ex-officio voting member. The trustees are appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the State Senate, and hold office for a term of twelve (12) years or until their successors are appointed and qualified. The board is divided into three groups, as nearly equal in number as possible, so that one third may be chosen quadrennially.

The Board of Trustees holds its annual meeting at the university on the third Monday in October. Quarterly meetings are scheduled at this session unless the board determines to hold its meetings at other times. Special meetings of the board may be called by the Governor or upon the written application of any three members of the board.

The Board appoints the President and other officers of the university. The President serves as the Secretary to the Board.

### **PRESIDENT<sup>14</sup>**

The Board of Trustees invests the President with full administrative responsibility for the institution. As the chief executive and administrative officer of the university, the President is responsible for the governance of the institution and for carrying out the policies of the board.

In the implementation of the overall administrative responsibility for the university, the president seeks the advice and assistance of faculty, students, and administrative personnel. This assistance is

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<sup>11</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>12</sup> [Organizational Chart - Office of the President \(jsu.edu\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>14</sup> Revised 06/2023

accomplished primarily through elected and appointed faculty and student representatives and through administrative appointments and delegations of authority.

### **PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS<sup>15</sup>**

The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost/SVPAA) has administrative jurisdiction over all academic affairs personnel and programs. The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends to the President long-range plans for academic affairs development and formulates policies to implement approved plans, coordinates and furnishes direction and guidance to the associate vice presidents and deans in the development and operation of their academic affairs programs, presides at meetings of the academic faculty, and serves as chair of the University Executive Council and the Council of Deans. All academic affairs personnel and departments report through their appropriate department heads and deans/directors to the Provost/SVPAA who, in turn, reports to the President.

### **VICE PROVOST<sup>16</sup>**

The Vice Provost reports to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice Provost is responsible for divisional activities such as, but not limited to, the Rebecca O. Turner Faculty Commons, dual enrollment, institutional research and effectiveness, International House and programs, sponsored programs, and Online@JSU. The Vice Provost is a member of the University Executive Council, Council of Deans, and other standing committees as deemed appropriate by the Provost/SVPAA and president.

### **COLLEGE DEANS<sup>17</sup>**

College deans are responsible for coordinating and managing the operations within their respective colleges. Deans report to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The individual dean is the administrator of the college and serves as a liaison between the Provost/SVPAA and the college. College deans have certain responsibilities for personnel matters; the development and maintenance of programs, plans, and goals for the college; and other assigned duties. College deans are members of the Council of Deans and the University Executive Council.

### **DEPARTMENT HEADS<sup>18</sup>**

Department heads are responsible for the general direction and supervision of their departments. Department heads report to their respective deans. The department head is an administrator and the academic leader of the faculty in the development of the department's programs, plans, and goals. The department head maintains liaison between the department, the dean, and external agencies. Department heads are members of the Department Head Council.

## **GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE**

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<sup>15</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>16</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>17</sup> Revised 01/2024; 06/2023

<sup>18</sup> Revised 06/2023

### **UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL<sup>19</sup>**

The University Executive Council represents all divisions of the university and serves as the main administrative unit that recommends policy to the President. The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs serves as chair of the University Executive Council and establishes additional standing and ad hoc committees as deemed necessary.

### **COUNCIL OF DEANS<sup>20</sup>**

The Council of Deans serves as an advisory unit to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The membership of the council includes all deans, the Vice Provost, chair of the Department Head Council, a Faculty Senate Executive Committee Member, and others as deemed necessary. The Provost/SVPAA is the chair of the Council of Deans.

### **DEPARTMENT HEAD COUNCIL<sup>21</sup>**

The Department Head Council consists of department heads from all colleges. This council serves as an advisory body to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and as a means of communication between departments, the Provost/SVPAA, and the university at large. Two co-chairpersons representing different colleges with staggered three-year terms are appointed by the Provost/SVPAA with the council's assent. The co-chairpersons will serve three years, with the option of renewable terms.

### **JOINT COUNCIL<sup>22</sup>**

Joint Council serves as an information-sharing body of faculty and staff. This group meets quarterly following each Board of Trustees meeting. The membership of Joint Council is made up of representatives from Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, Student Success, Athletics, Student Accounts, Human Resources, Marketing, and Information Technology.

### **FACULTY SENATE<sup>23</sup>**

The faculty elects from among its members a representative body known as the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate is an advisory body and as such may consider and make recommendations through the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Those areas affecting the academic activities of the university and faculty welfare are appropriate for consideration by the Faculty Senate. The minutes of the Faculty Senate are published on its website.<sup>24</sup>

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION<sup>25</sup>**

The Student Government Association (SGA) is composed of four branches of government: executive, legislative, judicial, and student activities council. The student body elects the officers of the SGA and all registered students are automatically members of this organization. The SGA office is located on

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<sup>19</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>20</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>21</sup> Revised 01/2024

<sup>22</sup> Revised 02/2024

<sup>23</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>24</sup> [Minutes & Resolutions - Faculty Senate \(jsu.edu\)](#)

<sup>25</sup> Revised 06/2023

the fourth floor of the Theron Montgomery Building. The director of student life and orientation oversees the SGA.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES<sup>26</sup>**

Standing university committees are: Athletics, Budget Committee, Committee Management Committee, Diversity and Inclusion, Enrollment Management, Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use, Technology Advisory Committee, Undergraduate Admission Appeals, University Safety, and University Wellness. Ad hoc committees and task forces are appointed at presidential discretion. A current list of committee memberships can be found on the President's webpage.<sup>27</sup>

### **FACULTY HANDBOOK COMMITTEE<sup>28</sup>**

To assess the faculty handbook policies and procedures, there shall be a standing Faculty Senate committee called the Faculty Handbook Committee, which is charged with reviewing, modifying, and approving changes to the JSU Faculty Handbook, in consultation with subject matter experts. This committee will work with Faculty Senate, Council of Deans, Department Head Council, and the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs to ensure that the Faculty Handbook is consistent, accurate, equitable, and reflects current JSU policies, procedures, mission, and values.

The Faculty Handbook Committee will consist of one dean, two department heads, one Faculty Senate Executive Committee member (at time of appointment), two Faculty Senate Advocacy Committee members (at time of appointment), three at-large faculty members, and the Provost/SVPAA (or designee). Committee appointment will be for a three-year term and will meet either when (a) a modification to the Faculty Handbook has been recommended or (b) there is a call from the Provost/SVPAA for a full handbook review and revision (which should occur every 5 to 7 years). The Provost/SVPAA, Faculty Senate, Department Head Council, Council of Deans, or Faculty Handbook Committee may make recommendations for revisions to the Faculty Handbook. Minor changes to policies and procedures, such as wording clarification, title changes, links to new university policies, etc. may be approved by the committee and Provost/SVPAA for immediate inclusion in the current version of the handbook. Substantive changes to policies and procedures, including full handbook revisions, must be approved first by majority vote of the Faculty Handbook Committee, then majority vote of the Faculty Senate, Council of Deans, and Department Head Council. All proposed substantive changes are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

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<sup>26</sup> Revised 01/2024; 06/2023

<sup>27</sup> [Standing Committees - Office of the President \(jsu.edu\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> Revised 01/2024